

ALTITUDE

Prepare to Soar



Want to know more?

INFORMATION BOOKLET

What is Altitude?

We have created a place where young people can:

- † have fun
- † grow in faith and friendship
- † be accepted for who they are;
- † hang out in a safe place on a Friday night.

All parts of an Altitude night work together with the aim of fostering safe and genuine community – and Altitude itself is a recognised and thoroughly supported part of our parish community. It strives to be a place of fun and acceptance where opportunities are provided to nurture old friendships and to build new ones... and in the end, it's building real friendships with other people of faith that knits the church community together. As all of us who're blessed with deep supportive friends know, these kinds of friendships help get us through stormy times and make the good times even better. From a high enough place – that is, with enough altitude - the inevitable storms of life don't look so big, and anything seems possible.

So.... Check out Altitude, and *Prepare to Soar*.



Who is Altitude for?

- | | | |
|---------------|---|--|
| Participants | - | Young people Grades 7 – 10+ |
| Leaders | - | Grades 10 and up, who love working with young people |
| Adult Support | - | Adults, of course! (Blue Card regulations must be met – It a requirement of All Saints Parish that every person working with children be required to hold a Suitability Card even if exempt) |

What is a typical Altitude night like?

The following is lifted from our website (www.parishes.bne.catholic.net/albanyck/Youth) and comes straight from one of the youth involved as a leader!

ALTITUDE – An insider’s view

Well where to start? Altitude has so much to offer for the students of years 8 and up. The night usually begins at 6:30 in Hang Out Zones. During this time music plays while the youth hang out and play various indoor and outdoor games including soccer, X-box, foosball, hand ball, Uno attack, Twister or even jewellery-making at our beading table. Games vary from night to night, but there’s always something for everyone!

After all the action of the Hang Out Zone has been called to a halt by the time keeper, the BIG Game commences (usually run by Zach). During the big game the kids have more time to run about and use up more energy by playing whatever game Zach has planned for the night. The Big Game usually takes about 30 minutes.

After the Big Game its dinner time! Joan Turner is the head chef in the kitchen and whatever she feels like cooking is what we get to eat. This can be anything from hot dogs to lasagne!

When all the food has been completely devoured, we then head back up to the staff room to listen to the speaker of the night who offers us a faith reflection. After this, we break into small groups for discussion about the speech. This is a time where friendships are formed, ideas shared and relationships built.

At the conclusion of small group pack up commences and then at about 9:30 parents start arriving to pick up the youth (hopefully).

Altitude socials out and about

As well as Friday night Altitude sessions, we have some awesome events ‘out there’ to help create lasting friendships. In the past we’ve had:

- † Laser Force
- † Skate and Pizza Night
- † Wet ‘n’ Wild breakup adventure (usually October or November)
- † Bowling

Parish Life

It is also important that our Altitudians and leaders feel that they are a part of our parish as a whole and this is reinforced by offering them opportunities to participate in liturgy (music, drama, reading), helping out at parish events (such as the Fair!) and going along to other parish outings (picnics, etc).



Why have Small Groups?

You'd think that in a night that has both active games and small group time that youth would prefer game-time hands down... Well, surprisingly, the reverse is often the case! While everyone loves games (and they're essential for breaking the ice and fun!), small groups seem to win out time after time.

Why is this? Well, partly, it's because in small groups, youth have the opportunity to say what they really think, safe in the knowledge that this is a group that is based on respect (it's one of the group rules we mention at the start). In a small group context of between four and six youth, plus a leader (and often an assistant leader) people speak their mind as well as get to know a bit more about each other than just their names and where they're from. Youth get the opportunity to be known individually, something not possible if all we ever had was large group time.

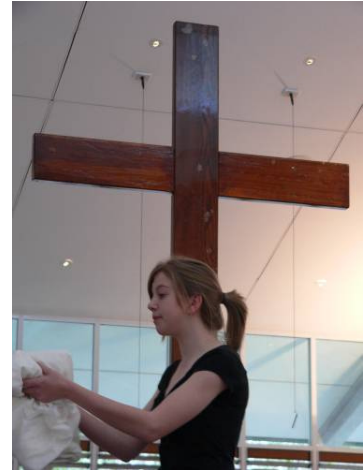
As said before, all parts of an Altitude night work together with the aim of fostering safe and genuine youth community. Far from just 'another thing we do', small groups are an integral part of each night – fun and accepting small groups build real friendships. It's important to nurture those friendships now because our youth are the church of the present *and* of the future.

In line with one of the Synod outcomes promulgated by Archbishop Bathersby, at Altitude a special emphasis is placed on forming fellowship in small groups. The sense of belonging and genuine care that is developed in these 'mini communities' is not only of benefit to those who are part of the small group, but then feeds into the community spirit of the whole youth group and parish. For this reason small groups are also known as 'cell groups' – just as healthy cells make up a healthy body, healthy friendships (and friendship groups) form the basis of every thriving community.

We need Parent Consent!

We must have a Consent Form completed before any child participates in Altitude. You can get them from:

- † the back of this Booklet
- † on the website:
(www.parishes.bne.catholic.net/albanyck/Youth);
or
- † the Parish Office



Everyone must sign-in and out

It is absolutely essential that each young person who attends Altitude signs in and out! We have processes in place to help ensure that this takes place.....we do not want to lose any of our Saints! Parents need to remind their young people of this and we ask your assistance in this, by requesting that you bring your son/daughter (and their friends) to the door and pick them up from the door. Our duty of care does not allow us to let them meet you in the car park.

Guidelines

Youth are expected to follow guidelines given during the night, so that everyone can have an enjoyable time. These include

- **Respect** – each person present deserves to feel safe and welcome, and is to be treated accordingly.
- **Listen & be positive** – whether someone's up the front talking or giving instructions for a game (which can be scary for some of us!), or whether someone's talking in small group, an important way to respect that person is by listening and being positive about them. Altitude is a pay-out free zone.
- **Participate** – just like any other area of life, willingness to engage and enjoy the various aspects of the night will guarantee you get more out of it!
- **Fun** – if all the above guidelines are followed, we're pretty much guaranteed to have a great time.

Mobile policy

To reduce interruptions throughout the night, please keep your youth's mobile at home, or alternatively, it may be left at the door. If you need to contact your youth, please call reception on 3264 8283. This policy has been put in place to enhance everyone's experience of the night.

Getting to Altitude

Transport dramas? Ask at the door if you are interested in car pooling, and we will endeavour to introduce you to someone who lives in your area, so that you can decide if you wish to go down this path. Not only will you assist the environment, and get to know other parents better, but on those nights you're unable to transport your youth group member, it means they may not have to miss out on coming!

Our leaders do not normally drive Altitudians to and from Altitude, but if there is ever a time when you really are stuck, then special consideration can be given to assisting in a one off situation. All Saints Parish has specific guidelines it must adhere to and we have selected trusted members of the youth team and parent helpers who may be able to assist if needed. These members are fully briefed on the Parish's policy for 'Driving Children and Young People', a copy of which is available from the Altitude Sign-in desk. Parents must sign a special consent form for this arrangement to take place prior to this assistance being able to be given.

Parents are part of the fun, too!

It isn't always easy being a parent! Too often the rush can get in the way of taking time with other adults just to chat and get to know each other. So, each term we have a night where parents arrive for pick up duty early just to have a coffee and a chat with each other. This is a great chance to catch up with friends as well as being an excellent contact point for parents new to Altitude in particular or the parish in general. Keep an eye out for dates. Your welcome extended to new families is most appreciated.

Helping Out

Take a look at the Roles that follow to see how dedicated our leaders are and ways in which Adult Support is needed.

Altitude Roles - Leaders

All of the roles listed below are delegated by the Youth Ministry Worker as part of his overall responsibility.

- Cell Group Leaders (CGLs)
- Cell Group Leaders' Supervisor
- Setup/Hang out Zone Coordinator

- Sign-In and Out
- Big Game and Lights Out Coordinator
- Decorator (Atmosphere)
- Resident DJ
- Music Worship Coordinator
- Cell Group Coordinator/Mixer
- Timekeeper
- Clean up Coordinator
- First Aid 'officer'
- Website Updater

Adult Support on the night and behind the scenes

Parents and other adults are more than welcome to assist at events. We have:

- **Canteen** – assist in preparation, serving and clean up. Time – 6.30pm until about 8pm.
- **Border Patrol** – During hang out zone time we have two volunteers who gently redirect those youth (typically Yr 9 up) who try to go for a wander. Physical boundaries will be reinforced by guidelines. The border patrol volunteers may also have a young person sent to them for time out, which involves the misbehaving youth to stay with the border patrol while being banned from games, etc. until they
 - settle sufficiently and are able to agree not to engage in their previous misbehaviour, or, if absolutely necessary,
 - their parents are called for retrieval
- **Adult Support Roster Coordinator** - The roster covers the two positions above. We try not to place people on roster too many times and share the load around!
- **Flyers and Mail Outs** - This adult works closely with the Youth Ministry Worker. Once the program is set in place for the term, a flyer is created for mail out to the Altitudians and Leaders. Once approved they arrange to photocopy the flyer, fold them, label the envelopes, stamp them and post them off! They also send a PDF copy of the flyer onto the parish website team for posting to our website

Volunteers are welcome to hang around and share a cuppa together, or head home and come back at 9.30 for pick up.