

## **MINISTRY TO GENERATION X STUDENTS AT TEEN CHALLENGE INTERNATIONAL OF MID-AMERICA**

*Jack Smart*

This project sought to discover ways Teen Challenge International of Mid-America (TCIMA), a Christian discipleship ministry that works with adult men with drug, alcohol, and other addictions, could increase its effectiveness in ministry to its Generation X students. For several years prior to the development of this project, veteran staff members had noticed greater difficulty communicating with TCIMA students and a decrease in their success after the program. As Executive Director of TCIMA, I based this project on the realization that the majority of students at TCIMA were Gen Xers and that past ministry styles had met their needs with decreasing effectiveness.

I instructed staff members about the nature and characteristics of Generation X then divided them into teams to consider changes that would make TCIMA more effective in ministering to Gen X students. A student questionnaire was administered and student interviews and a student focus group were conducted prior to instituting programmatic changes suggested by the staff teams.

The changes suggested by staff were implemented, and after two months the evaluation tools were administered again. Analysis of the results followed, to determine if the changes had made a positive impact on the attitudes of Gen X students. Both the quantitative and qualitative results failed to show the significant changes in the attitudes of the students desired by the staff.

However, this project brought to light the need for TCIMA and other Teen Challenge centers to understand the mindset and worldview of Generation X students and to find ways to more effectively minister to them, thus allowing these historically effective ministries to continue to successfully fulfill their mission.