



HOW TO RUN AN EXCELLENT MID-WEEK SESSION: THE BASICS

WELCOME TO YOUTH TEAM!!

What you do is so key in a young person's life and their appreciation of faith and connection to God in their lives. The teenage years are a fundamental time of building their thoughts and convictions around what they believe and Youth plays a massive part of this. We get to do all we can to develop a culture that has joy, acceptance and adventure at its core. Do all you can to make Youth the best moment of a young person's week - a place they will meet friends, have fun, meet God and be inspired to create change in the world around them.

It must be a safe place where they can share and feel supported in what they are going through in life. A place to explore beliefs and try out new things, like praying out loud! The way you welcome and deal with the young people says so much about your faith and how you value the young person. Always remember this in all you do.

HOW TO SET THE CULTURE OF YOUTH

Everything has a culture, whether we are aware of it or not. From the moment a young person enters a room, or sits down in a space they are aware of what the culture is in that place, and are considering if this is a safe space for them. No matter how short or long a time is spent within the group setting, it is important to be aware that the culture of the small group matters.

The fundamentals of a small group culture starts with our understanding of who God is, and what He thinks of us.

We know through scripture that:

- God values community and us meeting together. (Hebrews 10:24-25)
- God values us as individuals. (John 15:12-13)
- God values unity and belonging. (1 Corinthians 12:25)
- God loves us as we are, but does not want to leave us that way. (Proverbs 27:17)

We have to create and honour all of these values in the culture that is built within that small group setting, whether is it only for a short time, or a more continuous rhythm in life within a program. Having these values and treating the young people with this understanding, communicates so much already. One of the key values that a youth worker should have is that we all have value, and that we should *"love others as we love ourselves"* (Luke 10:27). Youth workers need to communicate that to the group with their demeanour, language, and their dealings with the individuals in the group. Young people will learn as much from how a youth worker hosts the time, as much as through the specific questions asked of them. Make sure your young people go away knowing

they are loved and valued, and that Sundays are a safe place for them to explore their faith.

YOUR ROLE

Your role within the night is to make sure everything runs smoothly, set culture, and to communicate the teaching that is to be covered in the session, and always to communicate that the young people and God are awesome!!!! There maybe other specific roles you need to fulfil too.

Set Culture: You set the culture and the behavioural expectations over the night and in your group time.

Create a fun atmosphere for friendship, building faith and discussion: Always try and facilitate discussions around a topic, but when necessary teach around the subject, but not for too long. When teaching, try and communicate clearly and succinctly - teaching the material in an engaging matter, and explaining why it is important to you, young people love hearing personal stories from your life.

Know your group: take time to get to know the young people in your group. Go beyond seeing yourself as filling a slot on the team but really invest in getting to know the young people. It goes such a long way at improving their engagement with the session and you will enjoy it more!

Ask Yourself....

- Have I young people with learning difficulties?
- Have I young people that the topic we are covering may trigger something for the group or an individual?
- Have I young people with behavioural needs?
- What relationship dynamics are there within the group?
- What is this specific young person looking to get out of this group?
- How do I get the best from this group within the time I have?
- What is the win for this session?



HOW TO RUN AN EXCELLENT MID-WEEK SESSION: THE PRACTICALITIES

WHERE:

Youth should be held in a safe, inviting space! The environment matters, so give thought to what atmosphere the space is setting.

Make it as safe as possible - look for risks, assess them and remove if possible.

Make the space as welcoming as possible, show you value them by the space you use.

PRE-SESSION JOBS AND INFORMATION:

- Team are to turn up and meet half an hour before it starts
- Prep the room - check it is ok safety wise and set up any resources you need.
- Go through your material or the plan of the night as a team and pray.
- Check in on team, make sure all team feel valued and welcome.

SAFETY:

- Register them on the Ivy ChurchSuite website.
- Collect information of new young people on the [Online Ivy Youth Registration Form](#)
- Fire - check fire exits are clear, if you hear a fire alarm, grab the register, exit the building and assemble at the Fire Assembly Point. Make sure you know where that is. Register the youth.
- First Aid - there is a first aid kit in the Kitchen.
- Safeguarding - make sure everything is inline with [Ivy's Safeguarding Policy](#). If you have any concerns speak to the Ivy Youth Team Leader.

THE NIGHT:

- Welcome the young people well!
- Have a fun time setting the tone and the scene for the rest of the evening - games, activities etc.
- If you need material for a group session they usually can be found online at www.ivyyouth.org in the team section of the website.
- You do not need to complete all the material, do what is best for your group. Use your initiative to teach it the best way possible to the young people you have got - be relevant.

GROUP TIMES:

- Try and get the youth to get to know each other - do what you need to do to do this - games, questions, craft etc.
- Consider their age, and how many there are - smaller groups are always better, so if you can split them up - put a young person in charge of their small group if necessary - they can use the online material on their phone to go through it.
- Behaviour Management - Be assertive with your behaviour management and take initiative. Try and pre-empt any disruptive behaviour. Give warnings if necessary, and speak to the parents at the end.
- Always send the young people away feeling positive about themselves, the group, and about God!
- If possible end by praying and giving some time to the Holy Spirit to speak to them about what they have learnt in the session.
- Continue to build community during the week - have you a WhatsApp group or something similar that allows the young people to communicate safely throughout the week?

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR ALL YOU DO!

EXAMPLES OF THINGS TO PREP FOR A MID-WEEK SESSION:

Plan the group sessions.

Send the session on Whatsapp to the team

Print out copies for the team to have

Plan the upfront section:

Notices - what are they, and have slides for them.

Game - any prep for that.

Talk to introduce the nights topic.

Is there worship?

Sort the visuals:

people are awesome videos

welcome screen

notices

game slide

talk slides

worship lyrics

Sort PA:

handheld mics on

worship band set up

background music playing

Set up Hang Out part:

Wii Plugged in and playing with chairs around

Xbox Plugged in and playing with chairs around

Tables tennis table with nets, bats and balls

Pool table with cues and balls

Colouring and card games table out

Tuck out

Tuck Cash box out

Any other games or activities to bring a bit of change/
interest

Register Table up

Register Tablet charged and set on sign in page

During:

Monitor the door - make sure people can get in, and that it is kept closed for health and safety.

Monitor behaviour - always have an eye on the whole room and if things need extra attention.

Make sure everyone is engaged - if anyone looks left out, lonely or bored, or has too much unoccupied energy focus on them.

Keep an eye on the time - don't let things run on too long.

Groups Sessions:

Set up room, know what you are doing in the session