

CLIQUE AND LONERS

This idea gets students talking about the effects of cliques on a youth group. Ahead of time, arrange the chairs of the youth group and let kids know as they come in that the chairs are not to be moved. Here is how the chairs should be set up, and the people they represent:

- A group of chairs in a circle all hooked together: the group of regular teens who attend the youth group.
- A chair in the middle of the circle: the person who wants to be the center of attention.
- A few chairs outside the group: visitors to the youth group who can't seem to break through and be a part of the group in the circle.
- A chair next to the door: a brand new person who has just entered the group.
- A chair outside the door, looking in: someone waiting to enter the youth group who is afraid to come in.
- A chair up on top of the table: a person who criticizes and looks down on everyone else.
- A broken chair or a chair that's different from all the others: a person in the group who may be a little bit different from the rest because of a handicap, a foreign accent, etc.
- A small cluster of three to four chairs off from the large circle: that group of people who stick together and won't let anyone into their group.

You can probably think of some other ways to represent various groupings within a group, and you should try to arrange it so that everyone has a chair, and there are no chairs left over. As the group arrives, give each person a number at random and instruct them to sit in the chair that has the same number. Then during the meeting you can have a discussion

on cliques using the questions below. Everyone must stay in the seats that they have been assigned during the entire meeting.

During the meeting you could interview (in front of the group) certain students who are part of the established cliques, and also interview someone who is considered to be a loner. You'll need to be sensitive here. But you could compare the experiences of the youths and try to examine what the problems are, and how they can be solved without destroying relationships or forcing people to do something they cannot do. Here are a few discussion questions that could be tossed out to the group:

- What is a clique?
- What are the advantages or disadvantages of being in a clique?
- What are the advantages or disadvantages of being a loner?
- What would be the ideal situation in a youth group such as ours?
- If Christ were in our group, where would he sit? Would he be in a clique? Or would he be a loner?
- Discuss the ways we as Christians can reach out to loners, or how we can develop positive groupings within our youth group.