

Helpful Hints & Tips

to help you make the most out of leading a group:

1. Each group member should feel free to elaborate on his or her responses
2. The leader might begin with instructions about time, such as "We have enough time for each person to talk about their answers for three minutes."
3. Feel free to "pass" at any time if you do not want to talk.
4. You might need to adapt or change an activity to fit the specific needs of your group. Be creative!
5. Feel free to use the same activity more than once. Sometimes answers will change in interesting ways!
6. You might want to use several activities of a similar topic for an entire meeting
7. Use a variety of activities. This will help the kids express different feelings, memories, dreams and ideas.
8. Sometimes the group leader will need to be the "guinea pig." You should be the first one to respond
9. Include discussion questions which gradually allow for more and more personal disclosure. Avoid discussion questions which require only "right or wrong" answers. Ask open-ended questions which give people the freedom to answer from their personal experience.
10. For a new group and during the beginning of the discussion time, ask questions with multiple-choice options so everyone, no matter how much they know, can answer without being embarrassed.
11. If time is a problem or if the group seems a little "shy," divide into foursomes so your group members can talk openly without being intimidated by talking in front of the entire group.
12. Strive for a balanced group, which includes faith & prayer, group building, outreach and some kind of ministry project.
13. Use a group covenant
14. Encourage your group members to avoid judging, & advice giving, and problem solving that are not requested. Though offered with the best of intentions, this kind of behavior can kill a group.