



BIG SEND OFF SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDELINES

Thank you so much for volunteering to be a small group leader for our Big Send Off party. Please **wear your SSS t-shirt!** If you don't have one, call me.

Date:	Elementary School:
Event Time: Small Group Time:	Location:
What we will feed you: Time you should be there:	Your Contact Person: Contact Phone #:

WHAT TO EXPECT

As a small group leader you will be viewed as a Christian role model. Please make sure your heart is right with the Lord before you come. Be prepared to talk openly about what it means to stand firm in your faith and how your faith allows you to resist temptation towards the moral and social pressures of middle school.

During small group discussion, the groups will break out in different places, dividing the boys up from the girls. The 5th graders will be invited to voice any concerns they may have about middle school and questions concerning their faith. If possible, be prepared to share a personal fear or difficult situation you encountered at middle school, but then explain how you were able to overcome the situation. Also, if your small group is very quiet and shy, you may initiate discussion by asking them specific questions. **Examples** might be, **“Do you all know how to open a combination lock?”** **“What elective did you decide to take?”** **“Raise your hand if you have an older sibling that has already attended middle school.”** **“What do you think will be the biggest difference between your elementary school and your middle school?”** **“What do you fear the most about Middle School?”** **“What makes you most excited about going to middle school?”**

HOW YOU CAN PREPARE

1. Ask the Lord in prayer to show you areas in your life from which you need to repent.
2. Ask Him to lead you as you prepare to share with these younger students.
3. Seek specific Bible verses to share with them that are meaningful to you and/or have helped you during difficult times. **You may also come equipped with scripture that reminds us that we must:**
 - Honor God
 - Respect and obey our parents (that is one way God protects us!)
 - Trust the Lord when we are lonely, afraid, or feeling left out or friendless
 - Respect your body as the Lord's temple (alcohol, smoking, drugs, dressing modestly, healthy girl/boy relationships)
 - Stick together and hold each other accountable

DO's and DON'Ts

DO

- Be Honest.
- Be Encouraging and Comforting.
- Be Fun. Smile!
- Talk about how you or a friend may have avoided temptation to drink, smoke, or use drugs. Remind them of the dangers of all three.
- Talk about the use of profanity. Talk about how it may seem “cool” to use cuss words, but as Christians, we are held to much higher standards.
- Talk about “sticking together” as fellow believers and holding each other accountable.
- Talk about “setting the standard.” Having respect for our bodies shows respect for God. How we dress sends a message. Our body is the Lord’s temple. **(1 Corinthians 6:19-20 *Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.*)**
- Talk about feeling lonely, feeling they don’t have a good friend to lean on. Encourage them to truly pray and ask God to help them trust Him to bring just the right friend(s) in their life. Maybe **they** need to be “that friend” in someone else’s life. Encourage them to seek to be a friend to the lonely and friendless.
- Pray that the kids in your group will deepen their experience with the Lord in order to live for Him.
- Explain how to become a Christian (see handout).

DON'T

- Talk about different denominations of churches.
- Talk about sexual temptation and sexual issues. (Focus on how girl/boy relationships should be based on FRIENDSHIP during the middle school years.)

WRAPPING IT UP

Finally, feel free to wrap your small group up with prayer.

Ideas to pray over your group are:

- Pray that God would give them wisdom to stand up for what they know is right, what they know would honor God.
- Pray that they will stand strong in their Christian belief.
- Pray that they would hold each other accountable.
- Pray for a successful middle school year.
- Pray for confidence.
- Pray for good friends.
- Pray that they can “set the standard” and be an example of Christ!

If you are comfortable with it, you may want to have your small group write down your name and telephone number and encourage them to call you if they have other questions or concerns.

Please end your group time by

***Stand firm. Don't let anything move you.
Always give yourself completely to the work of the Lord.
I Corinthians 15:58***