

SMALL  GROUP

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Red Flags, Respect, & Relationships / Week 1

BEFORE GROUP

BOTTOM LINE

God cares about what we do with our desires.

SCRIPTURE

Romans 12:1-2 NIV

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students recognize that God has a plan for them when it comes to relationships and sex and to encourage them to trust and honor God's best when it comes to their desires.

THINK ABOUT THIS

Your middle schoolers will come into a conversation about relationships, dating, and sex from all kinds of places. Some may be uninterested or nervous, some may be curious or eager to learn more, and others may have experience with dating and sex already. Whatever their perspective, remember that this conversation is important for this phase specifically. It's planting seeds now, while they're still young and maturing, that will hopefully help them develop healthy habits when it comes to dating and sex as they get older. Make sure you're creating a safe space for students to ask questions or share without fear of judgment from you or the other group members. Opening up is a great first step in a conversation like this one, so make sure your group feels like a place where anyone can do that. Finally, remember that you may have students who have experienced sexual abuse on some level. This conversation could lead them to share with you about that, so be prepared to follow up, support, and point them toward help if and when they do.

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the content as needed, and don't feel like you need to complete everything listed.

DURING GROUP

JUST FOR FUN

What's the silliest relationship red flag you have on your list right now?

DISCUSS THIS

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how comfortable do you feel talking about things like sex and dating?
2. Why do you think it can be helpful to have conversations like this as middle schoolers?
3. How does it feel to know that God created things like desires and attraction?
4. In your own words, how would you define sexual integrity?
5. Why do you think choosing sexual integrity when it comes to your desires matters . . .
 - a. For yourself?
 - b. For others?
 - c. To God?

DO THIS (EXPERIENCE 1)

Hand out the provided journal page and ask students to fill it out during group time. Allow students to complete it privately, and then ask for volunteers to share what they wrote if they feel comfortable.

GOD CARES ABOUT WHAT WE DO WITH OUR DESIRES

USE THIS SHEET TO IDENTIFY RED FLAGS WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR DESIRES, THINK ABOUT HOW YOU CAN RESPECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS, AND CONSIDER HOW TO USE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH TRUSTED ADULTS TO DETERMINE WHO YOU CAN GO TO FOR WISDOM AND GUIDANCE.

RED FLAGS

Start noticing red flags. Think about what you say, think, and do that may not align with God's design for relationships, dating, and sex. Be completely honest with yourself and respond to these questions by circling your answer:

WHEN IT COMES TO MY DESIRES . . .

DO MY WORDS HONOR MYSELF, OTHERS, AND GOD? YES / NO

DO MY ACTIONS HONOR MYSELF, OTHERS, AND GOD? YES / NO

DO MY THOUGHTS HONOR MYSELF, OTHERS, AND GOD? YES / NO

If you answered "No" to any of these questions, identify the words, actions, and thoughts that don't align with God's plan. (You don't need to write these down; just think about them silently to yourself.)

RESPECT

Choose respect and honor. No matter what you've done in the past, God loves you, cares about you, and isn't judging you. You can always choose sexual integrity going forward. You can choose to respond to the sexual things you feel, think, and desire in a way that respects yourself, others, and God.

THIS IS HOW I'LL SET A NEW STANDARD FOR SEXUAL INTEGRITY IN MY LIFE . . .

IN HOW I ACT: _____

IN WHAT I LOOK AT: _____

IN WHAT I THINK: _____

WITH HOW I TALK ABOUT THINGS: _____

RELATIONSHIPS

Talking with wise, trusted adults in your life can help you set healthy boundaries and process struggles or questions you have related to desires, relationships, and sex.

THIS IS A TRUSTED PERSON I CAN TALK TO: _____