

Fill Up First

Jesus must be at the center of everything we do. If that is the case, we need to prioritize our personal relationship with Jesus over anything and everything. If you aren't growing in your faith relationship, it isn't likely that you'll be ready or equipped to lead others in this way.

Time on Their Turf

Meet your students where they are. Be the person who truly knows the heart and the story of the students in your group. It's good to know what school they go to, who their parents are, where they are from, and even more, know their struggles and successes, but take the next step. Show up on their turf, or in other words –any environment personal to a student. One personal connection on their turf = 10 nights of small group.

Get in the Game

Be ready to show up for your students. You may be the only consistent adult or leader in some students' lives, and it helps them to know they will see you on a regular basis. Showing up predictably each week, creates trust, accelerates community, and builds common ground between you and your group. In addition to showing up weekly at small group, it can speak volumes when you randomly, unexpectedly show up with a personal connection for a student. This could be at a sporting event, concert, or during a crisis in their lives.



Enjoy the Journey

Your group is not a list of problems to be solved, but people to be loved. When it comes to relationships, expect messiness and understand it takes time. Journeys are never easy, straight-forward, or without challenges, so understand you will need to be flexible. You are not expected to change these students. We can leave the transformation up to God, as we walk along this journey. As you build relationships with your group and see transformation, don't forget to take time to celebrate and have a ton of fun!

Be Authentic

Authenticity always trumps cool. It's going to be awkward and intimidating at times, but simply being who you are is important to your group's success. You don't have to be cool or even know all the answers as "the leader." Saying, "I don't know," is not a sign of failure, but of honesty and vulnerability. If we are asking them to share their struggles and successes, then be willing to share your own. You have your own unique story. Share it. When students see you being open in this way, they are more than likely to do the same. Be who you are, so your students can be who they are!