

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Awkward / Week 1

BEFORE GROUP

BOTTOM LINE

What we do with our desires matters.

SCRIPTURE

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will (Romans 12:1-2 NIV).

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students recognize that God has a plan for them when it comes to sex and sexual desires and to encourage them to choose to honor Him with their choices in those areas of their lives.

THINK ABOUT THIS

Leading a conversation about sex and dating with your middle schoolers can be challenging, and that's not just because it's awkward. Your middle schoolers will come to this conversation from all kinds of places. Some will be completely embarrassed or grossed out. Some will be uninterested or unsure why they'd be asked to talk about it at all. Some may be curious and eager to learn more. And others may have experience or are beginning to have experiences with sex and dating. Whatever their perspective, remember that this conversation is important. It's planting seeds that will hopefully help them develop healthy habits when it comes to sex and dating. So, make sure you are creating a safe space for students to share without fear of judgment. Finally, remember that you may have students who have experienced sexual abuse on some level. This conversation could lead them to eventually open up to 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 questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here.

DURING GROUP

ICE BREAKER

What's the funniest or most awkward moment you've seen or experienced?

DISCUSS THIS

1. What's one word, action, or GIF to describe how it feels when something awkward happens?
2. On a scale of 1-10, how awkward do you feel talking about desires and attraction?
3. What's one reason talking about this kind of stuff might be awkward for a middle schooler?
4. What's one reason it might be helpful for a middle schooler to talk about this stuff?
5. How does it make you feel to know that God created things like desires and attraction?
6. What does it look like when somebody has integrity?
7. Why does sexual integrity matter?
8. Besides me, who is another adult in your life you trust who you can talk to about this?

DO THIS (EXPERIENCE)

It's anonymous question box time! Hand each student a few pieces of paper and ask them to anonymously write down any questions they may have when it comes to sex or dating. Remind them that it's completely normal to have questions about this kind of stuff, and this group is a safe space to ask those questions. Explain that the questions will be given to the student pastor who will do their best to answer them in the coming weeks during large group.

If students say they have nothing to ask, encourage them to write, "I don't have a question," so that those who do have questions feel comfortable writing them. Once all the questions have been written down, have students place them into an empty tissue box.
