

Date Used: _____

Group: _____

MY YOUTH GROUP

Topic: Evaluation of your youth group

Purpose of this Session:

Young people often take their youth group for granted. When it's going great, they enjoy it. When tough times come, they complain. This session gives you and your group the opportunity to assess the status of the group in a positive way. You can also use this TalkSheet with the leaders of the group as a planning tool.

To Introduce the Topic:

There are several approaches appropriate for talking about the health and condition of your youth group. Whichever you choose, keep the theme upbeat and affirmative. Don't let this turn into a "gripe session". Let the students talk about other groups they have visited or of which they have been members. This will illustrate that no group is perfect.

Another lead-in would be to allow the students to imitate adults leading a youth group function. This can be hilarious and you may learn a thing or two about yourself. Another way would be to have the adult leaders share what the group means to them.

The Discussion:

Item #1: This incomplete sentence begins things on a positive note. State that you hope to keep the discussion positive and upbeat. Interrupt the discussion if it becomes too negative or full of put-downs.

Item #2: Ask the students to share the words they circled. Ask if they can think of any additional words to describe the youth group.

Item #3: Allow the students to share their criticisms but in a constructive way. Remind them the purpose of this is to improve the group, not destroy it.

Item #4: Again, keep this exercise as positive as possible. It is imperative this session doesn't disintegrate into a gripe session. Ask volunteers to share their responses of the questions, one at a time, or to make comments.

Item #5: Have the students share ways they feel the group could improve. You may want to collect and peruse the TalkSheets to better find out how they really feel about the group. Tell them in advance not to put their names on the TalkSheets.

To Close the Session:

Close with a positive affirmation of each person in the group. Let them know they are important to the group and that their comments and concerns will be taken seriously. This would be a good time to invite them to take a more active part in the group activities and to get involved. Close with an appropriate prayer for the youth group and its leaders.

Outside Activities:

Have a planning session in which the students help brainstorm ideas for activities and programs for the coming year. A good resource to use for this is *The Youth Group Planning Calendar* by David Lynn (Youth Specialties, 1224 Greenfield Dr., El Cajon, CA 92021.)