

10 Things A Great Small Group Leader Does

by Doug Fields

If you have read any of my youth ministry books you know that I'm a believer in small groups. For 25 years I have used small groups in my youth ministry. Over the last 5 years I have moved from "believer" in small groups to "advocate" of small groups. Why? One defining factor—my own children.

Two of my three children are in their teenage years and they have experienced the power of having a wonderful small group leader. Torie and Cody would tell you that their small group leader is probably the most influential person in their life. As someone who has invested years into teenagers I am so thankful that God has blessed Cathy and I with incredible small group leaders for my own children. God has been so faithful.

Forget about all my years as a youth ministry veteran, here's what I've experienced as a parent of teenagers.

Ten things a great small group leader does for kids...

1. Another caring adult is cheering them on.
2. Encouragement to grow spiritually on their own.
3. Support during difficult times in their life.
4. Presence at their sporting events.
5. Someone who is excited to see them at church.
6. Someone they are excited to see when they arrive at church.
7. Someone who leaves them voice messages "just because I was thinking of you."
8. A caring adult who doesn't freak-out over bad grades--they're capable of being neutral.
9. Someone who is a "safe" person to talk to.
10. A person who is tender, yet truthful when my kids need a little correcting.

There's your job description for a small group leader! Pass it on. Give it to your small group leaders and tell them it's not from a fancy book. Let them know they don't need to have all the philosophical training that goes with Purpose Driven Youth Ministry and they don't need to attend a youth ministry seminar to get it. You don't even need to tell them you got it from a youth ministry veteran...instead, tell your small group leaders that you got this list from a dad. A dad who really loves his children a lot and one who is thankful for people like them who can do something a dad can't do...even a dad with a lot of youth ministry experience. Thanks for loving teenagers!