

## Using Small Groups for Community

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Carrie Brooks & Scott Nagle

### Summary

This video discusses the importance of using small groups for fostering community in their youth ministries. Scott and Carrie share strategies and tips for effectively implementing and managing small groups. Key points include grouping students by grade and gender, allowing groups to stay together throughout their youth experience, training leaders to facilitate discussions rather than lectures, fostering a family-like environment within the groups, and incorporating group activities and competitions. The overall emphasis is on creating a safe, consistent space for students to build relationships, process their faith, and feel a sense of belonging.

### Main Points

#### Grouping Strategies and Leader Commitment

Scott and Carrie share their approach of grouping students by grade and gender, allowing groups to stay together throughout their youth experience. They discuss the benefits of this approach, such as fostering deeper relationships, trust, and vulnerability within the groups. They also emphasize the importance of having leaders commit to staying with their groups for the long term, often until the students graduate.

#### Facilitating Discussions and Creating a Safe Environment

It is essential to train leaders to facilitate discussions rather than lectures. They encourage leaders to ask follow-up questions and allow students to process and discuss the material. They also discuss setting group standards or guidelines to create a safe and respectful environment where students feel comfortable sharing and being vulnerable.

## **Building Family Within the Family**

Scott and Carrie share strategies for fostering a family-like environment within the small groups. This includes connecting through group chats, attending student events, hosting group-specific activities, and incorporating group elements into more significant youth events like retreats. The goal is to create a strong sense of belonging and community within each small group.

### **Action Items**

- Set up small groups based on the context and size of the ministry, considering factors like grade, gender, and existing relationships.
- Train leaders to facilitate discussions by asking follow-up questions and allowing students to process and discuss the material.
- Establish group standards or guidelines to create a safe and respectful environment for sharing and vulnerability.
- Foster a family-like environment within each small group through group chats, attending events, hosting group activities, and incorporating group elements into more significant youth events.
- Encourage leaders to commit to staying with their groups for the long term, often until the students graduate, to build deeper relationships and trust.
- Incorporate group activities and competitions to promote bonding and belonging within each small group.
- Allocate a budget for small groups to cover expenses for group activities or outings.