

BEST PRACTICES

FROM CCC CHURCH LIFEGROUP LEADERS

ICEBREAKERS

- Open every meeting with an icebreaker.
- Use a question of the week (What was your worst Christmas present ever?).
- Two Truths and a Lie: have the group members share two things true about themselves and then one thing that is not true. The other members have to guess which one is the “lie.”
- The M&M game: dump a handful of M&Ms in a paper bag. The group members reach in and grab one M&M; each color has its own question that the member has to share. (Examples: How old were you when you had your first kiss? Tell the group about your first car. What is the greatest Christmas gift you got as a child?)
- Purchase inexpensive conversation starters cards and have each group member draw a card and answer the question on the card. Each person would have a different question. Cards can be purchased from dollar stores or Restoration Hardware.

FOOD

- Make food a part of every community group meeting- could be heavy appetizers or a full meal.
- If doing a full meal, use theme nights to guide your planning (Mexican, Italian, Soup and Salad, etc.).

BUILDING COMMUNITY

- Early in the group, assign roles for the group (Social Coordinator, Babysitting Coordinator, Meal Planner, Community Outreach Coordinator, etc.)
- For couples groups, have each couple bring their wedding album one night to share with the group.
- Have regular game nights (could be board games, video games, etc.)

- Have regular celebration nights where leaders focus on how each person has grown in their faith over the course of the group. Celebrate growth with small gifts that symbolize their growth, books or just handwritten notes.
- As a leader, it's your job to foster community with the people in your group. Do something social with every person in your group outside of normal group time.
- As a leader, when you are talking to a group member about something that you know another group member could relate to, invite the other group member to join the discussion and then excuse yourself so the group members are primed to have a conversation separate from you.
- Take an interest in the lives of your group members. Attend their school or hobby activities to support them.
- Get away together. Trips could include snow-skiing, the beach, a lake, or a marriage retreat.
- Make sure discussion time is cell phone/blackberry free.
- Host bridal/baby showers for group members. Assist new parents by taking meals and make hospital visits when necessary.

DISCUSSION

- Use a whiteboard for discussion. A whiteboard can act as a visual aid for the discussion. Something happens when people see answers to a question on the board; they tend to think more through the list and apply things to their life, and then articulate them.
- Make worship a part of your discussion. Use DVDs, CDs or a group member who is musically talented.
- Sometimes it's okay to let tangents roll. Many times the discussion will naturally come back to pertinent topics.
- Always sacrifice the discussion if a group member has a pertinent need. Take the time to focus on that group member through prayer and encouragement.
- For a particularly difficult topic, talk to a group member ahead of time about having an answer to a certain question already prepared.

- Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit, and feel freedom to stray from the discussion questions if the Spirit is moving within your group.
- Always be thinking about multiplication. Always have a mindset of wanting all CCCers to experience community through groups.

PRAYER

- Make a commitment to pray regularly for your group members. You could even assign each group member a certain day of the week where you are specifically interceding for them.
- Be creative during prayer time - have everyone pray for the person/couple to their left.
- Break off into men and women to pray separately- it fosters increased vulnerability.
- Lay hands on a group member who is struggling and pray over them.
- Have a prayer and praise book where group members can record their prayer needs.
- Email prayer and praise details to the group members after meeting.
- Prayer time should be about close friends and family, not just acquaintances.
- Share prayer requests on index cards to send home to pray for members throughout the week.