

4 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRY

Middle school is a weird and wonderful phase of life. Middle schoolers are fun, awkward, and, most importantly, they've each been uniquely created by God. As youth ministry leaders, how can we honor this life stage while ministering to young people? Here are four things to remember about middle school ministry.

1 *IT'S AN AGE OF DISCOVERY*

Middle schoolers are wired to explore ideas and discover, not come to conclusions. Your role is to be a tour guide, not an answer man! So use your teaching time to spark discussions, and ask questions that push middle schoolers to think out loud and explore ideas.

2 *DON'T RUN FROM DOUBT*

Doubt is an essential part of faith development, so help young people recognize, voice, and process their doubts. Be authentic about how doubt has shown up in your life and shaped your faith, and be humble in admitting you don't have all the answers. It also helps to work on your poker face! When a middle schooler expresses doubt, try to avoid showing shock or concern on your face.

3 *PRIORITIZE FUN*

God is the author of fun! Fun breaks down barriers and convinces young people that you like them. Think strategically about how you can engage middle schoolers in fun in all aspects of your ministry.

4 *LET THEM KNOW YOU LIKE THEM*

Middle schoolers need to be affirmed by your words and actions that you actually like them. Use affirming words, show up to support them outside of church, and always greet them with joy. Go out of your way to see the difficult kids as lovable! remember that our role is not to fix kids, but to love them and help them continue to develop spiritually.

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