

FIFTH/SIXTH GRADE LEADERS

focus on fun

BE PRESENT: *CONNECT THEIR FAITH TO A COMMUNITY.*

- **Show up predictably** - Be at Life Group every week.
- **Show up mentally** - Know their names, schools, sports and interests.
- **Show up randomly** - Go to games, plays, activities or even just out to ice cream.

CREATE A SAFE PLACE: *CLARIFY THEIR FAITH AS THEY GROW.*

- **Lead the group** - Set expectations, facilitate conversation and show them value.
- **Respect the process** - Respond with truth and love. Explore questions together.
- **Guard the heart** - Know the policies. Ask for help when you need it.

PARTNER WITH PARENTS: *NURTURE AN EVERYDAY FAITH.*

- **Cue the parent** - Introduce yourself. Communicate about their kids. Reach out monthly.
- **Honor the parent** - Listen. Ask questions. Build bridges between kids and parents.
- **Reinforce the family** - Include parents in conversations like salvation and baptism.

MAKE IT PERSONAL: *INSPIRE THEIR FAITH BY YOUR EXAMPLE.*

- **Live in community** - Get into your own Life Group for your own personal development.
- **Set priorities** - Prioritize your faith. Prioritize your relationships.
- **Be real** - Authenticity matters, because they'll know if you're fake.

MOVE THEM OUT: *ENGAGE THEIR FAITH IN A BIGGER STORY.*

- **To someone else** - Find at least one other person to help lead your students.
- **To be the church** - Serve together as a group at least once during the year.
- **To what is next** - Ask for updates at home or school and guide their transition.

FIFTH GRADE

When friends are best friends, games are for competition and your confident kid will insist,

"I've got this."

FIFTH GRADERS ARE
INFLUENCED BY OTHERS.

THEY
CAN

- empathize with others
- see different points of view
- negotiate like a champ

THEIR INFLUENCES
ARE CHANGING.

Every fifth grader needs **POSITIVE EXPERIENCES** through their parents, mentors and peers as they navigate the preteen years.

EVERY FIFTH GRADER
WANTS TO KNOW

"DO I HAVE FRIENDS?"

So your role is to **ENGAGE** their interests.

There are 416 weeks until graduation — don't miss it!



SIXTH

GRADE

The phase when there's never enough
pizza, too many hormones and a
dramatic kid who wants to know,

"Who cares?"

MIDDLE SCHOOL IS
A CRISIS.

NO LONGER A CHILD,
sixth graders arrive

in a

NEW SOCIAL CONTEXT
just in time for

hormones to KICK in,

their bodies to OUTGROW their coordination

and for their brains to become
a TANGLE of new synapses.

EVERY SIXTH GRADER
WANTS TO KNOW,

"WHO DO I LIKE?"

So your role is to

AFFIRM

their personal journey.

There are 364 weeks until graduation — don't miss it!



NOTES/JOURNAL

Use this space to keep track of the things you
experience during your time as a Life Group
leader that you don't want to forget.

7TH/8TH GRADE LEADERS

Focus on Value

BE PRESENT: *CONNECT THEIR FAITH TO A COMMUNITY.*

- **Show up predictably** - Be at all scheduled Life Group events. Try not to cancel.
- **Show up mentally** - Know their names, schools, sports and interests.
- **Show up randomly** - Go to games, plays, activities or even just out to ice cream.

CREATE A SAFE PLACE: *CLARIFY THEIR FAITH AS THEY GROW.*

- **Lead the group** - Set expectations, facilitate conversation and show them value.
- **Respect the process** - Respond with truth and love. Explore questions together.
- **Guard the heart** - Know the policies. Ask for help when you need it.

PARTNER WITH PARENTS: *NURTURE AN EVERYDAY FAITH.*

- **Cue the parent** - Introduce yourself. Communicate about their kids. Reach out monthly.
- **Honor the parent** - Listen. Ask questions. Build bridges between kids and parents.
- **Reinforce the family** - Include parents in big moments. Respect the family calendar.

MAKE IT PERSONAL: *INSPIRE THEIR FAITH BY YOUR EXAMPLE.*

- **Live in community** - Get into your own Life Group for your own personal development.
- **Set priorities** - Prioritize your faith. Prioritize your relationships. Explain those priorities.
- **Be real** - Authenticity matters, because they'll know if you're fake.

MOVE THEM OUT: *ENGAGE THEIR FAITH IN A BIGGER STORY.*

- **To someone else** - Find at least one other person to help lead your students.
- **To be the church** - Serve together as a group at least once during the year.
- **To what is next** - Help navigate new and changing friendships.

SEVENTH GRADE

The phase when nothing is cool, your feelings right now matter most and the one suddenly social kid always wants to know,

"Who's going?"

SEVENTH GRADERS ARE IN A SEASON OF

PERSONAL DISCOVERY.

● — Interests and abilities **CHANGE.** — ●

NOT EVERYONE
MAKES THE TEAM.

Long-accepted values can come into question.

ON TOP OF ALL THAT,
this phase is a time of

**HEIGHTENED
SELF-AWARENESS.**

EVERY SEVENTH GRADER
WANTS TO KNOW,

"WHO AM I?"

So your role is to

AFFIRM

their personal journey.

... There are 312 weeks until graduation — don't miss it!



EIGHTH

G R A D E

The phase when it's cool to have choices, it's not cool to answer questions, and one smart kid will remind you,

"Yeah...I know."

EIGHTH GRADERS HAVE AN emerging sense of **CONTROL**.

They are increasingly able to self-regulate thier

ACTIONS, EMOTIONS & ACTIVITIES.

This often creates a new
TENSION

for teenagers to
RESOLVE.

EVERY EIGHTH GRADER
WANTS TO KNOW,

**"WHAT DO I
WANT TO BE?"**

So your role is to

AFFIRM

their personal journey.

NOTES/JOURNAL



Use this space to keep track of the things you experience during your time as a Life Group leader that you don't want to forget.

There are 260 weeks until graduation — don't miss it!



TENTH

GRADE

The phase when, “Everyone else can ...”,
“Nobody else has to ...”, and one resolute
teen will push you to answer,

“Why not?”

TENTH GRADERS ARE
EXPANDING THEIR LIFE EXPERIENCES.

You’re hoping to get through this phase with as
FEW CRISES AS POSSIBLE.

But, they will push the limits.

They will question you.

They might even rebel a little — even though you never did.

EVERY TENTH GRADER
WANTS TO KNOW,

**“WHY SHOULD I
BELIEVE?”**

So, your role is to **MOBILIZE** their potential.



ELEVENTH

GRADE

The phase when there’s less drama, more
stress and your very busy teenager answers
all your questions with,

“Just trust me.”

JUNIORS WANT
TO MATTER NOW.

They want to live the life they feel they were **born to live** —
and they don’t want to wait to get started.

THIS YEAR,

look for ways to create an adventure, **>** let them lead and **>** give them something significant to do.

EVERY ELEVENTH GRADER
WANTS TO KNOW,

“HOW CAN I MATTER?”

So your role is to **MOBILIZE** their potential.

There are 156 weeks until graduation — don’t miss it!

There are 104 weeks until graduation — don’t miss it!

HIGH SCHOOL LEADERS:

focus on growth

BE PRESENT: CONNECT THEIR FAITH TO A COMMUNITY.

- **Show up predictably** - Be at all scheduled Life Group events. Try not to cancel.
- **Show up mentally** - Know their names, interests, friends, strengths and struggles.
- **Show up randomly** - Go to their activities, out to something fun, or just for ice cream.

CREATE A SAFE PLACE: CLARIFY THEIR FAITH AS THEY GROW.

- **Lead the group** - Set expectations, facilitate conversation and show them value.
- **Respect the process** - Respond with truth and love. Explore questions together.
- **Guard the heart** - Know the policies. Ask for help when you need it.

PARTNER WITH PARENTS: NURTURE AN EVERYDAY FAITH.

- **Cue the parent** - Introduce yourself. Communicate about their kids. Reach out monthly.
- **Honor the parent** - Listen. Ask questions. Build bridges between kids and parents.
- **Reinforce the family** - Include parents in big moments. Respect the family calendar.

MAKE IT PERSONAL: INSPIRE THEIR FAITH BY YOUR EXAMPLE.

- **Live in community** - Let students see your commitment to your own spiritual growth.
- **Set priorities** - Prioritize your faith. Prioritize your relationships. Discuss those priorities.
- **Be real** - Authenticity matters, because they'll know if you're fake.

MOVE THEM OUT: ENGAGE THEIR FAITH IN A BIGGER STORY.

- **To someone else** - Find at least one other person to help lead your students.
- **To be the church** - Find a way for your students to serve regularly.
- **To what is next** - Focus on spiritual disciplines and how to share their faith.

NINTH

G R A D E

The phase when friendships shift, grades count and interests change so often your teenager has to explain,

"This is me now."

HIGH SCHOOL MEANS
HIGHER MISTAKES.

Many freshmen spend this year

REDEFINING

who they
thought they were

OR

what they thought
their future would be.

Some may feel stuck if they don't find
ACCEPTANCE in this significant year.

EVERY NINTH GRADER
WANTS TO KNOW,

"WHERE DO I BELONG?"

So your role is to

MOBILIZE

their potential.

There are 208 weeks until graduation — don't miss it!



TWELFTH

GRADE



NOTES/JOURNAL

Use this space to keep track of the things you experience during your time as a Life Group leader that you don't want to forget.



The phase when your emerging adult pulls away, gets closer, does things for the last time and you both start asking,

"What's next?"

GRADUATION IS A CRISIS—
AND NOT JUST FOR SENIORS.

Something is about to **CHANGE**

and there's a good chance that you aren't convinced they're ready.

And whether they seem to show it or not, your senior is probably **JUST AS CONCERNED** about it as you are.

EVERY TWELFTH GRADER
WANTS TO KNOW,

"WHAT WILL I DO?"

So, your role is to **MOBILIZE** their potential.

There are 52 weeks until graduation — don't miss it!



BE PRESENT: CONNECT THEIR FAITH TO A COMMUNITY.

- **Show up predictably** - Engage through text, phone and social media regularly.
- **Show up mentally** - Send encouraging notes or packages throughout the year.
- **Show up randomly** - Meet one-on-one with them when they're around.

CREATE A SAFE PLACE: CLARIFY THEIR FAITH AS THEY GROW.

- **Lead the group** - Ask them tough questions and have spiritual conversations.
- **Respect the process** - Remain a safe place when they make mistakes.
- **Guard the heart** - Remind them of their identity and value.

PARTNER WITH PARENTS: NURTURE AN EVERYDAY FAITH.

- **Cue the parent** - Continue relationships with parents and reach out monthly.
- **Honor the parent** - Remind them to maintain healthy relationships at home.
- **Reinforce the family** - Include parents in big moments. Respect the family calendar.

MAKE IT PERSONAL: INSPIRE THEIR FAITH BY YOUR EXAMPLE.

- **Live in community** - Let students see your commitment to your own spiritual growth.
- **Set priorities** - Remind them to maintain healthy relationships at home.
- **Be real** - share in their struggles. You became an adult once, too.

MOVE THEM OUT: ENGAGE THEIR FAITH IN A BIGGER STORY.

- **To someone else** - Challenge and help them to land in a new faith community.
- **To be the church** - Encourage them to start serving in a local church or take on a bigger role.
- **To what is next** - Help them answer the question, "What do I want out of life?"

GRADUATES

The phase when everything is about freedom yet more responsibility, developing their own habits, important lifestyle questions and very real consequences make everyone think,

"The struggle is real."

HIGH SCHOOL GRADS ARE
TAKING ALL OF THEIR QUESTIONS TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

Who am I? **WHY** am I the way that I am?

Who do I want to be? **HOW** do I become that person?

Where do I belong? **CAN** I belong somewhere else, too?

What do I believe? **WHY** do I believe this?

EVERYTHING is changing
and exposure is the name of the game.

EVERY GRADUATE
WANTS TO KNOW,

**"What do I want
out of life?"**

So your role is to **GUIDE** their exploration.



NOTES/JOURNAL

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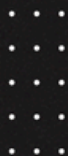


NOTES/JOURNAL

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LEAD TO WIN

A GUIDE TO THE PHASES



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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE ||>

It's just a phase, right?! That student's behavior, struggle or anxiety — It's all a part of the phase they are in, and the way you lead students through each phase is incredibly important.

That's why we have combined two amazing resources, Lead Small and The Phase Project, with a little of our own experience, into one simple guide. This guide will help you as a leader, influence the students in your circle as effectively as possible.

As you flip through the pages, you'll find a "Phase Card" for students in each grade level from 5th-12th grade, and we have even included one for all of you with students graduating from high school and moving on to their next phase in life. These Phases are broken down into four sections: 5th/6th grade, 7th/8th grade, 9-12th grade and graduates. At the beginning of each section, you will find a "guide" through the principles of Lead Small that will give you both big ideas and practical advice on leading your group in their specific phase.

The end goal is that you can pair your students' Phase Card with the guide for their phase to better understand and more effectively lead your students and their parents.

"When we lead small, we simply make a choice to invest strategically in the lives of a few over time so we can help them build an authentic faith."

-Reggie Joiner, Author of Lead Small