

Prepare

Thank you so much for accepting the role of leader or facilitator of your group. Whatever experience or training you might have had to do this, it is so good to have you take this on. The leadership you give will add so much. Just allow yourself to keep learning and growing in how you interact with the group. Enjoy the opportunity and the people there with you. Some mistakes will be made. We can learn from these too. Probably one of the reasons parents hesitate to get involved in group discussions is because parenting is often messy. There is no perfect guidebook to follow. New situations keep coming up, many we are not ready for. So, we want to learn to have compassion for ourselves and others. It is an important point for every family leader to embrace.

Ways to Prepare:

Here are ways a facilitator of this class can prepare:

Go to the adultssavingkids.org website. Click on Curriculum, then Course Two, and you will find all the materials needed for each session.

1. Read the Leader's Guide. Make sure you have a good grasp of what the lesson is about. Look over the quotes including the Biblical notes on Preparation. Make sure you are clear on the distinction between seeing salvation as God's gift to us in Ephesians 2:8, 9 and then what God has prepared for us to do in verse 10.
2. Review the PowerPoint that you will be going through with the class. Write down any examples from your own life that touch on what this session is about.
3. Read through the Written Material for Session One.
4. Scan the Supplemental page.
5. Print off the Questionnaire leading to Session Two and make enough copies for the class. This is their homework. It will get them thinking their way into the next session and will add to more fruitful discussions.
6. Pray for each person in the course to be open to what the Holy Spirit is saying to them.

It would be good to reflect on what the message of this initial class says to you personally. Can you think of times when you said something or did something that helped avoid a negative outcome? Can you think of times when you made a quick decision, and it got you into a problem?

Here are a couple of Bible stories that tell of people who were unprepared for what happened next. See Joshua 9 where Joshua and the Israelite leaders were not prepared to deal with deception. See II Samuel 13 where Tamar was not prepared for the trap that had been set up for her.



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At the first session, make sure you:

1. Welcome everyone warmly.
2. Have each person introduce themselves, and name their children and/or grandchildren if they have any.
3. Set some key ground rules before the meeting starts: start on time, end on time, only one person talking at a time, take scheduled breaks depending on length of the session, phones silenced, no side conversation, seek to understand before being understood, don't dominate the conversation, confidentiality builds trust, and respect each participant and their viewpoint.
4. Explain that confidentiality is terribly important. What is said in the discussions is not to leave the room when it involves personal sharing.
5. Hand out the Questionnaire leading to Session Two before the class leaves. It is to be filled out at home and brought back to the next session.

Remember, if you have questions or concerns you can always call 612-708-1875 to discuss those.

Considering Class Members:

First of all, being in a class like this is new for most participants. It may be seen as scary and intensive. That means it can be an uncomfortable situation for many. Their presence in the class is a real indication that they are taking their parenting or grandparenting calling seriously. This course is designed to honor them. Let's face it. Many of us are wondering why our offspring respond the way they do. We might even be embarrassed if others knew what is actually going on. Is it any wonder that parents do not want to disclose what they are experiencing? This is where it takes great empathy on the part of the leader to take people where they are. This course is not trying to tell parents they are a failure or should do better. Instead, it seeks to expose class members to some ideas, tools, and wisdom available to them that will help guide them through the challenges coming their way. This is a great gift and one worth preparing for.

Starting a Class Period:

Starting the class period with an icebreaker, some humor, jokes, or small talk can help people relax and be themselves. Also, be ready with some story or quote that can flesh out more of what the session is focused on. There is much to be found on the Internet like jokes, statistics, videos, quotes, and topics that can help fortify you for the discussions. Encourage an attitude of acceptance, of being nonjudgmental, of hearing people without being critical. If someone gives a questionable response, don't make a lot of it. Get in the habit of moving on. If nobody knows the answer to something, there might be a very good reason for it. For example, many people have not done a lot of Bible study so may have trouble thinking of anything the Bible says or where to find a book or passage in the Bible. No big deal! We can only start from where we are at.



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Discussion Time:

There is much to consider here, so it might be that you will need to continue with this material into another class time. It all depends on the conversations that take place during the session. If you sense the conversation addressing a certain question is not helpful, feel free to move on. If people are having a meaningful conversation, don't stop it because of time. We want to keep flexible to the point of allowing a lesson to continue into the next session.