



# SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Trending: Bullying / Week 1

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

## LEADER PREP

### BOTTOM LINE

God created us as His masterpiece.

### SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 2:10 NLT; Ephesians 4:29 NLT

### GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students recognize the way God sees them and others, and to motivate them to make a positive change when it comes to bullying.

### THINK ABOUT THIS

If you've seen the news headlines in the last few years, you've probably noticed the dramatic increase in middle school suicides. If you've read further into these stories, there's almost always a link to some sort of bullying. That's why this topic, although sensitive, is extremely important to talk about with your middle schoolers. Students may not be able to articulate exactly what's going on in their lives regarding bullying, but it's important that they know their Small Group is a safe place to begin to process their feelings and experiences with the topic.

## CONVERSATION GUIDE

**This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here.**

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**I know we covered a lot of important things about a heavy topic today. So let's jump in and start talking about bullying and the way it might impact our lives.**

1. On a scale of 1-10, how often do you see bullying happen? (1-never, 10-every day)
2. What's one thing middle schoolers get bullied for?
3. Do you think bullying is a big deal? Why or why not?
4. How might your school look different if bullying wasn't a problem?
5. How do you think God views bullying?
6. How does it make you feel when you hear that you are God's masterpiece?
7. How might believing that everybody is God's masterpiece influence the way you treat others?
8. How might believing that you are God's masterpiece influence the way you let others treat you?
9. If you're being bullied, you're bullying someone, or you're the bystander of bullying, what's one thing you can do this week to help put an end to it?

### XP (EXPERIENCE)

Read the provided scenario aloud to your students. Lead your group in a discussion by first identifying the main people in the bullying scenario (the bully, bullied, bystander, and adult) and then talk about what each person did well and areas in which they could improve.

# BULLYING SCENARIO

Maria is the captain of her school's basketball team, and she's invited just about all of her teammates to her birthday party this weekend. They're all talking about how much fun it will be, what they're going to wear, and what gifts they're going to get Maria for her birthday. It's the hottest conversation topic in the locker room this week!

For everyone but Tasha, that is.

Tasha is one of the girls who typically sits on the bench during basketball games. She isn't exactly a star player on the team, and she doesn't always fit in with the other girls. The more she hears about Maria's upcoming party, the more she wants to go, too! So, Tasha makes the choice to ask Maria if she can come to her party with the rest of the team.

Well, the bad news is Maria wasn't planning on inviting Tasha. So when Tasha asks if she can join, Maria just laughs and replies, "Players who sit on the bench weren't invited."

Jayla, another teammate, overhears this exchange and chimes in, "Yeah, why would we want you to come?"

Embarrassed, Tasha walks quietly back to her corner of the locker room and sits defeated on the bench.

After seeing Tasha's disappointment, Maria starts to feel bad about the way she spoke to her. She didn't mean to hurt anyone's feelings! So, despite what she said at first, Maria goes over and extends an invite to Tasha after all. Their coach, Coach Thompson, finally ends the chatter and asks everyone to hit the gym and start running laps.

Excited to have been included in the party, Tasha posts an image of her new shoes on Instagram that night with the caption, "Can't wait to wear these to Maria's party on Saturday!"

Within minutes, she gets replies . . .

Jayla says, "Seriously? You are so basic." Then a flood of "likes" accompanies the post.

Brianna, another teammate, speaks up. "I like them! Can't wait to see you on Saturday!"

But then Maria writes, "Um, yeah . . . there's no way you can come to my party wearing that." More "likes" come in to echo Maria's comment.

Then Chad adds one word: "Gross."

Feeling pretty down about herself, Tasha walks into first period at school the next day. When Maria comes into class, she approaches Tasha and immediately teases her saying, "You have no style at all. I can't believe I invited you to my party. I only did that because you have no friends, and I felt bad for you. But I never should've invited you in the first place." Jayla and Chad overhear and laugh. And though Brianna is sitting right next to Tasha, she remains quiet, acting like she doesn't know what's going on. She decides to look at her book and not get involved.

As Tasha holds back tears, Mr. Rodriguez orders everyone to their seats for class to begin.