

The PLUNGE Small Group Leader's JOB...

As a small group leader, you have a vital "place" in our ministry...

Love

We want you to be filled with love for God and love for these teens. Let's be frank, if you don't love teens, you do NOT need to be doing small groups. You'll hate it and will be very unfulfilled in ministry. But if you LOVE teens, you are going to totally dig being a PLUNGE leader. Small groups is a place where you get to roll up your sleeves and dig into the lives of teens in a meaningful and sometimes messy way. We want our small group leaders to have a dire love for students. But we also know that this is born out of a love for God. In order for you to be successful as an SGL, you must have a heart that is in love with God. It is so easy to get so busy FOR God that you don't have time to hang out with and keep the flames of love kindled for God. Make this part of your job as well. Keep fanning the flames of love for God and teens!

Arrive

Now this sounds simple enough, but if you don't show up, PLUNGE doesn't happen. Small groups will take place from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. each Wednesday night (till 8:30 p.m. for middle school). It would be an awesome idea to arrive at your host home at 6:30 p.m., because some teens will arrive around 6:45 or 6:50. We want our leaders to get to the home before the students. Once you are there, be ready to LOVE on teens, connecting with them by hanging out. Then when the time comes to get things started, put all your preparation into action with full confidence and faith that God is about use your love for Him and them, coupled with your prayer and preparation, to do something AWESOME in the lives of your teens.

Connect

In other words, just build a relationship with each of the teens in your small group. Most of your connecting will take place naturally as part of your time together after large group each Wednesday. But some of it will take place just by hanging out at the host home, seeing your teens at church or in the community. We encourage you to actually make an individual contact with each of your teens at least once a quarter. In a school year, that's about once every 2 months. This can be a note of encouragement, a quick text message, a face-to-face meeting at Starbuck's, you coming to a ballgame to see one of your teens in action. I know this can be hard. We are not asking you to put an additional 2 hours again each week to stalk your teens. But we want you to be AVAILABLE. You are your teens' youth minister to them. As much as possible, keep in touch with them and continue to make connections beyond the host home. But this idea of connect goes beyond you connecting with your teens. You will need to have a good connection with the host of your home. Your HOST has a very simple job: Have a heart for teens, Open up your home, Serve some refreshments, and Turn on the DVD player. You will need to be connected to your host in order to help enforce schedule, rules of the home, etc. There are also a couple of other vital connections. Do your best to facilitate connection of your teens with one another, and especially seek to connect them with God, which will very naturally happen through the curriculum. Small groups is all about connection. And you are the one with your hand on the plug. Help your teens take the PLUNGE!

Expect

Expect your teens to take faith steps as you go through your journey together. Expect God to do awesome things in your group and in YOU. Expect your youth pastor and other leaders to give you all the support and equipment you need to be a successful SGL. Expect great things! And they will most likely happen!

To sum it up...

Your job can be described simply as being the youth minister for a small group of teenagers. You will seek to connect them with one another, with you, and with Christ, impacting teens lives in a powerful way!

The HOSTs Job!

Our HOSTs are a vital part of this Plunge ministry, even though their job is very simple:

Have a heart for people
Open up your home
Serve a snack
Turn on the DVD player

We are so grateful to all our families who have opened up their homes for our Plunge ministry this year. Our hosts have a very simple but important job, and what makes this all work well is some VITAL COMMUNICATION between small group leader and host. As a small group leader, your job is to run the show at that home. But if that is happening in someone else's home, you may feel some tension about being in charge in someone else's house. Here are some tips for all small group leaders to follow when it comes to communicating and working with the HOST:

1. **HOUSE RULES!** Ask HOST to inform you of all the do's and don't's of the house and to help you communicate these to the youth.
2. **ENFORCE!** Remember that you, the small group leader, are the enforcer of the house rules.
3. **APPRECIATE!** Continuously encourage the youth to outwardly show appreciation and respect to the HOSTs for opening up their home.
4. **PRIVACY!** Be respectful of the HOSTs' need for privacy during your meeting. Yet let them know that they are invited to sit in on meetings when appropriate. Some hosts will like to have the snack ready, turn on the DVD player and then be invisible during your meeting. Respect that space.
5. **LEAVE ON TIME!** Get teens out of the home promptly at the end time. Hosts who have a heart for people will have a tough time making people leave on time, so you help with this.
6. **ASK!** It never hurts to ask HOSTS lots of questions, especially in regard to house rules and appropriate use of space. Just ask away.
7. **RESPECT** the property. Let's take care of these folks homes and yards like it was Jesus' house and property.

I hope this info helps in preparing us for a GREAT relationship between small group leader and host during the year. Following these tips will go a very long way in avoiding any kind of conflict that can hurt the atmosphere of small groups in a home. However, if there are ever any conflicts or issues in any home, let's make sure to work it out in a loving, biblical way. And Jon can help with this at any time necessary. In short, let's get ready for some great hospitality thanks to our amazing hosts this year! Let's enjoy these homes in a very respectful and appreciative way!

The Structure of our PLUNGE Small Group Ministry

PLUNGE program and curriculum

The typical Wednesday night at a high school PLUNGE meeting will look like this:

Time	Action	Lasts for
6:30	Leaders arrive at host home	-
7:00	Teens arrive, hang out, enjoy refreshments	15 minutes
7:15	Play games, have some fun!	30 minutes
7:45	Small Group time: Curriculum, sharing, prayer	45 minutes
8:30	Hang out time; finish off refreshments; clean-up	30 minutes
9:00	Kick out teens, whether they have a ride or not	-

The typical Wednesday night at a middle school PLUNGE meeting will look like this:

Time	Action	Lasts for
6:30	Leaders arrive at host home	-
7:00	Teens arrive, hang out, enjoy refreshments	15 minutes
7:15	Play a game, have some fun!	15 minutes
7:35	Small Group time: Curriculum, sharing, prayer	40 minutes
8:15	Hang out time; finish off refreshments; clean-up	30 minutes
8:30	Kick out teens, whether they have a ride or not	-

This is a typical schedule of how things will go each Wednesday! As you know, this is a very fluid thing, based on the need for perhaps some more icebreakers early in the year for people to get to know each other. But we need to be very serious about ENDING small groups on time every week. It's vital that we don't take advantage of the hospitality of our wonderful host homes.

Here are some key dates that you'll want to mark in your calendars...

Date	Description	Details
Aug. 24, 2011	PLUNGE Pool Party Kickoff!	5:30 – 8:00: MS at Steagers'; HS at Grubbs'
Aug. 31, 2011	First day of PLUNGE in homes!	Registration, covenant, and connect time.
Sept. 7, 2011	Begin "Flood" Curriculum	DVD driven study with downloadable discussion guide online
Oct. 26, 2011	SPLASH project	Trunk or Treats Halloween outreach.
Nov. 23, 2011	PLUNGE cancelled	It's the eve of Thanksgiving!
Dec. 14, 2011	SPLASH project	"A Night in Bethlehem" Christmas program
Dec. 21, 2011	PLUNGE cancelled	Christmas Break!
Dec. 28, 2011	PLUNGE cancelled	Xtreme Winter & almost New Year's Eve!
Jan. 4, 2012	PLUNGE RE:START Worship	A Wednesday night worship service in the Deep to kickoff of the New Year and the 2 nd round of Plunge groups in 2 nd semester!
Apr. 4, 2012	PLUNGE cancelled	Spring break for Kenton Co.
May 16, 2012	Last PLUNGE meeting in homes for the school year!	We have to stop some time! You guys need a break!
May 23, 2012	PLUNGE FINALE	All small groups will come to the church and we'll have a grand ol' time!

As far as curriculum goes, for this 2011-12 school year, we are kicking off the 1st semester with a curriculum called “Flood: Real Life-Real Issues.” We will begin the 2nd semester with a curriculum called “24/7 Experience.”

Dates	Curriculum	Description
Sept.7 – Oct. 12, 2011	FLOOD: Real Life-Real Issues	A DVD Driven Curriculum covering a variety of topics relevant to students' lives, relationships, daily pressures, etc.
Oct. 19 – Dec. 14, 2011	TBA	---
Jan. 11 – Feb. 22, 2012	The 24/7 Experience	A DVD Driven Curriculum about following Christ every day and being a servant.
Feb. 29 – May 16, 2012	TBA	---
*To Be Announced... based on YOUR input and YOUR groups needs!		

And here's WHERE we'll be meeting this year...

GROUPS	LEADERS	LOCATIONS
Middle School Girls	Crystal Caudill	Travis & Crystal Caudill
Middle School Boys	Travis Caudill, Rusty Cox, Steve Harris	Rusty & Stephanie Cox's Home 3075 Saddlebred Ct., Independence, KY 41051
High School Girls	Julie Cook & Emily Brown	Allen & Julie Cook
High School Boys	Jon Burdette & Steve McDaniel	Steve & Sally McDaniel's Home 6476 Sugartree Lane, Independence, KY 41051

New to 2011-12 PLUNGE Year:

- Highlight each group with “PLUNGE Group of the week” during Thirst worship. Each group gets to video their own “commercial.” Have some fun and get the message across!
- T.E.A.M. Approach. Teams hold each other accountable. There are 4 areas of emphasis we want to focus on one of the following areas (one per week):

T – Time Alone With God (How is your quiet time?)

E – Evangelism: Sharing Christ with others. (How is your “Won by One” Evangelism going?)

A – Accountability RPMS: *How are you doing: Relationally? Physically? Mentally? Spiritually?*

M – Ministry (Are you serving Christ in the church through a personal ministry or ministry team? If so, How is it going? How is your commitment to service?)