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Regards,

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Oldest Sibling Dinner

written by
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This is a dinner for the oldest siblings in your youth group. The goal of the night is to encourage and equip the older brothers and sisters in your youth group to be a godly example to their younger siblings.

Oldest Sibling Dinner

Why have an older sibling dinner?

I began to observe in my youth group that many of the older brothers and sisters were either mean to their younger siblings or were aloof and detached. I could see the hurt in the younger brother's/sister's faces as they looked up to them and wanted their support. We decided to run an event to address this issue and help the older siblings to model Christ to their younger brothers/sisters.

The goal of this event

There are two goals:

1. To encourage the older siblings to see that they have a responsibility to set a godly example to their younger brothers/sisters.
2. To encourage them to love and take a real interest in their younger siblings and care for them in a God-honoring way. This will help the younger siblings to mature as strong Christians.

The program consists of some fun events (sharing about being an older sibling etc.), a meal together, and words of wisdom and testimonies from other older siblings. In addition, there will be a short Bible study encouraging them to be godly examples. The night will finish with prayer (that the older siblings will be wise and godly and for the younger siblings-that they will grow in their faith in Christ).

Please note: This is for the oldest sibling in the family OR the oldest sibling living at home. The younger siblings do not attend.

Preparation: you will need.

Cooks / Food for dinner (and snacks) / Tables set up for a meal / Small slips of paper and pencils / Large bowls for the paper.

The tables should be set up in a way that allows a group to talk. Each table must also not be too far away from each other.

The program

Below is a program in full form with an explanation of all the activities.

[Before the dinner begins you may want to give the youth a few minutes to mill around and catch up. You may want to have some chips and other munchies for them to snack on as they arrive.]

Welcome

Give a brief welcome. If they are standing around, have them sit at the dining tables.

Dinner (seated @ tables)

1. **Prayer.** Say "thanks" for the food and ask God for his blessing on the night.
2. **Icebreaker 1: Stand Up.** Read a number of statements. If a person answers "yes" to the statement they simply stand up. This is a fun way to break the ice and begin the night. (There is a list of Stand Up statements below)
3. **Icebreaker 2: Two Fun sharing questions.** Give the group a few minutes to answer the following questions. [See sheets at the end of this document as well for a ready-made question to photocopy]

Sharing Questions:

- Color A: *It really bugs me when my little brother/sister....*
- Color B: *One thing I really like about my little brother/sister is...*

Have two large bowls on each table for them to place their answer in. It would help if you have two different colors of paper with one question printed on one color, the other printed on another color. Ask each person to place one color in one bowl and the other colored sharing question in another bowl. (If you are really organized you can have the bowls match the colored paper.)

4. **Questions for Q & A.** On separate slips of paper ask people to write down any question/s they may have about being an older sibling. These questions run along the lines of "What do I do when my little brother/sister...?" [See end of document for question sheets.] Provide a bowl on each table to place the questions in. Give the group plenty of time to complete the statements from Icebreaker 2 and write down any question/s they may have.
5. **Dinner.** Serve dinner. During the latter part of dinner, or when everyone is finished, read out the various statements from Icebreaker 2 (point 3 above). This should be a lot of fun.
6. **Dessert and "Sibling Quiz".** Serve dessert. During dessert run the "Sibling Quiz." Make sure each table (or pairs/triplets) has a blank slip of paper to answer the questions. The quiz questions are below.
7. **Move to a more serious time.** After you have finished eating, move to a more comfortable area. It is here you want to focus on a more serious time of teaching, testimonies and encouragement.

Serious time

1. **Have some university students/young workers share reflections on what it meant for them to be a Christian older brother/sister.** This will include where they failed, what they did well, and exhortations from Scripture. These reflections should not go more than five to ten minutes each. (If you do not have any university students or young workers, find a mature Christian adult in your congregation.)
2. **Have some university students/young workers share reflections on how their older Christian brother/sister helped them.** This is a time where an older Christian talks about how they were blessed by their older brother/sister. (Again, if you don't have any university students or young workers, find a mature Christian adult in your congregation.)
3. **Have an adult (or two) share about their observations on being a Christian older sibling.** Have a mature Christian adult give a short reflection on what it means to be an older sibling who encourages and models Christ to their brothers/sisters.
4. **Bible study.** End this part with a short Bible study. There are a number of excellent Bible passages you could choose: Ephesians 5:1-2 ("Imitate God... be loving."), Romans 12:16-21 ("Live in harmony... don't repay evil with evil."), 1 John 3:11-20 ("Love your brother...do not be like Cain.")
5. **Q & A.** If there are questions from the question bowl, read them out and have the older Christians try to answer them. You could also throw it out to the group for group wisdom.
6. **Prayer.** Close the night by praying for strength to be a godly older brother/sister. Pray also for all the younger brothers/sisters.

Icebreaker 1: Stand up.

Stand Up if...

1. you have a younger sister.
2. you have two younger sisters.
3. (you have more than two younger sisters).
4. you have a younger brother.
5. you have two young brothers.
6. (you have more than two younger brothers).
7. you have a younger brother and a sister.
8. you have a combination not yet mentioned.
9. you made one of them cry this week.
10. you got into trouble for making them cry.
11. you had to have conflict resolution with your parents over making them cry.
12. you have ever broken one of their bones.
13. you laughed when they broke a bone.
14. a younger brother or sister ever takes your stuff without asking you.
15. a younger brother or sister ever wears your clothes.
16. your little brother or sister knows just how to annoy you.
17. your little brother or sister lied to your parents this week.
18. you share a room with a younger brother or sister.
19. you hate it when they try to hang out with you and your friends.

Quiz questions (for during or after dessert)

1. Who was the first older brother in the bible and was he a good older brother or a bad older brother? (CAIN, BAD)
2. What was the 10th plague of Egypt? (KILLING OF FIRSTBORN)
3. Who was Jesus' brother? (JAMES)
4. Who was Joseph's oldest brother? (REUBEN)
5. What parable of Jesus includes an older and younger brother? (PRODIGAL SON, LUKE 15)
6. Which oldest son sold his inheritance rights to the youngest? (ESAU)
7. What was the name of Rachel's older sister? (LEAH)
8. Which two sisters were friends of Jesus? (MARY AND MARTHA)
9. What was the name of the brother of these two sisters? (LAZARUS)
10. Whose kids were eating and drinking at the oldest brother's house when the house was blown down and they all died? (JOB)
11. What younger brother drove his brothers crazy because he was his dad's favorite? (JOSEPH)
12. Bonus Question: Why was Rachel and her older sister jealous of each other? (LEAH WAS HAVING CHILDREN, RACHEL WASN'T and RACHEL WAS LOVED AND LEAH WAS NOT.)

Here is some other helpful information you can use during the serious time (general “older sibling advice”). Much of this was gleaned from the night we ran.

- Be careful – you can hurt them.
- One day they may be bigger than you are!
- Your younger siblings like to be with you, expect this.
- Don't be smug about being older/privileged.
- Try to take an interest in them, they want and need your attention.
- Be patient – even when they can be pests!
- Sometimes let them be around you and your friends
- Be the example/be responsible. (Don't encourage them to do the wrong thing.)
- Share your possessions with them (generosity is a Christian trait).

ICEBREAKER 2 (COLOR A): It really bugs me when my little brother/sister...

Photocopy this sheet on a different color paper to 'Color B' and then cut out the segments. Do several copies.



It really bugs me when my little brother/sister...



It really bugs me when my little brother/sister...



It really bugs me when my little brother/sister...



ICEBREAKER 2 (COLOR B): One thing I really like about my little brother/sister...

Photocopy this sheet on a different color paper to 'Color A' and then cut out the segments. Do several copies.



One thing I really like about my little brother/sister is...



One thing I really like about my little brother/sister is...



One thing I really like about my little brother/sister is...



Sheet to write question for Q & A.

Photocopy this sheet on a different color paper to Icebreaker 2 sheets and then cut out the segments. Do several copies.



“What do I do when my little brother/sister...?”



“What do I do when my little brother/sister...?”



“What do I do when my little brother/sister...?”

