



Youth Café

The Guide

Youth Café: The Concept

Higher Cambs

Higher Cambs is the biggest mission to local young people in a generation. From 1-12 October 2018, 4 bands will be visiting 30 local schools, staging 3 gospel concerts and helping young people connect to specially run groups in local churches through the Higher App. It's such an exciting opportunity and we're so glad that you're a part of it.

The Vision

We want to help young people to meet Jesus, and to begin a journey with him that lasts forever. In order to see that happen, we need them to find a home in Christian community; youth groups and churches where they can safely process the gospel message and apply it to their lives. This means that we are not just running groups, we are meeting and getting to know people who will become very important to us.

The Higher Youth Café

A Youth Café is a great place for young people to start to become part of a community, to know and be known by leaders and other young people and to explore more of the message. Using the half term holiday, or the weekends around it, we're encouraging churches to run youth café's on consecutive days to help them build relationships with young people and to help create a platform to run Higher Sessions. We would love people who have already seen the Higher Tour in Schools and attended a gig to be invited to a youth café to taste a bit more of what God is like.

Our approach

We aim to be:

Prayerful. We want to pray as we go, knowing that God can do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine and that apart from him we can do nothing.

Honest. We want to be who we are and explain at the first opportunity that we're from the local churches, love Jesus and want to invite people to think about him.

Relaxed. We want young people to come in, be welcome and have fun. There's no 'hard sell' just a warm invitation to find out more. We're interested in who they are and what they care about not just presenting our ideas.

Expectant. If there is an opportunity to talk openly about Jesus and help people respond to him, we'll take it. We'll invite questions and comments at the youth café and share testimony from the stage.

Venues

Youth Cafes can be held in any suitable venue. It would be ideal if the venue was:

Strategic: If the Youth Café takes place in the normal venue for church youth activities, your guests start to become familiar with and at home in the space. This will make the transition easier into normal youth group meetings.

Conducive: It's important that the venue is conducive to the environment and activities of the Youth Café – if you can't make a bit of a mess on the carpet, that could be a problem.

Visible: It's helpful if the venue is easy to find, visible and known to the community.

Available: It would be a massive bonus if you can set the café up once and leave it all in place until the last day, rather than having to dismantle it every day!

But you can hold your café wherever you can make it work!

Prayer

Why not ask specific people to pray throughout the youth café sessions? You might find some people are reluctant to join the team, but would be willing to pray. It's a great way to engage more of the church family in the project, and God answers prayer!

Team

There are a host of possible roles in a youth café which are outlined below. You will certainly need a good team to make the café run well, and a minimum of 5 people are normally required to make things work. In planning for the youth café, recruiting team is the thing to attend to first. If you have available people, almost anything becomes possible!

Depending on the role you are asking your team members to play, they may well need to apply for an Disclosure from the DBS. This emphasizes the need for early recruitment, so that you can ensure that your team have the necessary clearance, as outlined in your church Safeguarding policy.

Format

We encourage Youth Café's to be set up as a drop-in space, with various activities available for young people to engage in at their discretion. We also encourage 'gathered time' at a stage area, (it doesn't have to be raised) where you encourage the young people to participate in games and challenges, creating a platform for someone to share a testimony or to give an invitation to other events.

Sports In The Park

Another way, either to spread the word about youth café, or to contact young people for the first time is to head to the park with some sports equipment and see who turns up. Especially if its during the day time in school holidays and you can do that predictably for a few days in a row, that might help you to connect with new people. If you have kids, you can do that as a family and invite others to play too. Or get a few young people you already know to meet you there, so that you can create a group that others can join. Take some drinks and biscuits down so you can take a break and chat. And don't forget flyers for any forthcoming events.

What does success look like?

It can be fun to be in a buzzing youth café crammed full of teenagers who are all new to Christian things. But this is not common and is rarely a very effective means of making disciples. It's better to have a few young people you can get to know and who are interested in listening to what you have to say. Youth Café's can be hard work, and are not an end in themselves. They can be used powerfully as a good means to contact new young people, build relationships with them and invite them to consider Jesus and join in with other activities, with leaders, other peers and in venues they have already become familiar with.

Keep the end in mind. What we're trying to do in mission is to give young people an opportunity to hear about the life changing love of Christ and to discover what it means to follow him. We do this with a plan to continue to support them as they grow in faith. If one young person joins the group as a result of what you've done, and stays the course, it is worth all the effort. So don't worry if what your doing doesn't look impressive to outsiders. Focus on the people who are being drawn to Jesus. He has promised to be with you on the way. Matthew 28:19-20

Where can I find help?

The team at Cambridge & District Youth for Christ can be a useful source of support and advice for setting up a youth café. Contact us mail@cambridgeyfc.uk and we'll do our best to help.

Youth Café: Resources

Example Running Order

6.30	Doors Open
6.35	Welcome Who are we, whats happening, why we do it, category game, text in, sign up.
6.50	Stage Time 1 Messy game Celeb 2 Word Tango Live Text Messy Game 2 'Hot Seat' Interview Messy Game 3
7.10	Free Time
7.30	Stage Time 2 Messy Game 1 Gargle Live Text Messy Game 2 3 minute life Messy Game 3
7.50	Free Time
8.00	Close

Drop In Activities

Popular activities from the drop in space include:

- Table Tennis
- Pool/Snooker
- Table Football
- Games Consoles
- Air Hockey
- Craft Table
- Chill Out Space (cushions/beanbags)
- 'Graffiti Wall'
- Board Game

Youth Café Team Roles

Kitchen

Operate a tuck shop and consider serving extra items like pancakes or toast and butter. Sell items at cost and produce a price list. Serving in the tuck shop is often one of the best ways to start a conversation with young people, when you're not too busy. Ask people their name and what they think about the youth cafe. Ask them what school they go to and what they love doing more than anything else.

Sign In

Giving people a warm welcome is important. The first words we say should be positive. Ask everyone to fill in a simple registration form when they first come, so that we have an emergency contact number for them. **The welcome desk should be manned throughout.** Even if no-one walks through

the door for half of it, it is still worth having someone sitting on the door as a good point of reference for people who are already inside who have questions. It is also good if parents are coming to collect at the end that they have someone to acknowledge their arrival. And especially to begin with, people may drift in for a quick look, trying to find out if its worth coming to. It's much better if they get a personal welcome as soon as they arrive, rather than floating around trying to work out who is in charge.

Sign Up

We'll have a box into which people can put their names if they want to volunteer for something on the stage. We'll pull names out at random and invite them up to get involved. Initially people will be reluctant but as the week progresses, most of them will be keen to sign up. No-one is pressured to get involved and if we need to use team members to volunteer to show people how it's done, we will. They can only volunteer themselves and not someone else!

Stage

Two people will run the café from the stage each night, welcoming people on the microphone and leading the games. In each segment we want to remind people that everyone running the café believes in Jesus and thinks he's too good to keep it to themselves.

AV

Each game will have a powerpoint slide associated with it. Every game that has a time limit will need upbeat backing music and soon as the time is up, the music should cut out completely. During the rest of the evening, music will be on in the background and a good volume to create atmosphere but not so loud as to kill conversation. Get someone with a good knowledge of current music to create a play list for you on an mp3 player.

Consoles

Games consoles are a good opportunity to get alongside young people. Leaders can join in. Otherwise just keep order with cables and keeping the game discs tidy.

Games Tables

Again where people are looking a bit left out, challenge them to a game of something. Make sure the equipment is being used appropriately. Join in while a game is being played for a few minutes. Just interact with people in a relaxed way.

Craft

Craft is a great opportunity to have conversation with young people, without them feeling under scrutiny. Whilst they need to know what they are supposed to be doing, try not to focus too much on creating the ultimate art, and more on getting to know them.

Mingle

It is valuable to have people in the building, to ensure the safety of all concerned. It is good for these people to have their eyes open, to see the whole room and monitor behavior. But as and when you might share an activity with a young person, or have a chat to them. Believe it or not, when they are asked to help out at a youth club, some people bring a book to read and sit in the corner. This is not the right approach. You need to be (a) observant to see how everyone is getting on and (b) open looking for a moment to be friendly and to join in with conversations/activities.

Registration Form

Create a simple registration form for everyone who attend the youth café, gathering the following data.

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Name of parent/guardian
- Emergency contact number
- Any medical conditions or allergies

Stage Game Ideas

Cracker Ping Pong: For this game, you need a table with a line of masking tape down the centre of the table dividing the table into two (like a table tennis table without a net).

Ask for two volunteers - one at either end. The volunteers must kneel down and put their hands behind their back.

The object of the game is to blow the table tennis ball past their opponent at the other end of the table. They are allowed to use their chest to block the ball.

The catch is, before starting, each contestant is given a dry cracker to quickly chew before blowing. The end result is cracker crumbs will come flying out of their mouths during the game - very funny :)

Gargle a tune: Bring three or four people up the front. Announce the name of a well known tune. (National Anthem, Happy Birthday, Twinkle Twinkle little star). Challenge each contestant to gargle the tune. Award a prize to the best rendition. If it's close put it to the vote.

Nose jam: Two contestants. Bowls of jam and balls of cotton wool are placed at one end of the stage and empty bowls at the other end. Each contestant dips their nose in the bowl of jam and then picks up a cotton wool ball. Then they run with the cotton wool ball on their nose and deposit it in the bowl at the other end of the stage. Then they repeat. The contestant with the most cotton wool in the bowl at the end of the game wins.

After eight game: Each person is given an after 8 chocolate and it's the first person to maneuver their chocolate down to the mouth and eat it starting at the top of their forehead.

Lace Race: Each person given a strawberry lace to hold in their mouth with a string hanging down and the first person to eat the lace without using their fingers is the winner.

Bean takeaway: 2 players. Give each player a pair of chop sticks. Place on a table in front of each player a cup full of jelly beans and an empty cup. The aim of game is to move the jelly beans from one cup to the other over a small distance. The player who moves the most within the time wins.

Tights Potato Bottle: Each player wears a pair of tights on their head with a potato in each foot. Just maneuvering their head and not using their hands they need to knock over a plastic bottle in front of them, by hitting it with their potato. The first player to knock over the bottle wins.

Ginger nut challenge: Turn a gingernut in your mouth. As many times as you can in 30 seconds. Get a leader to count each contestant.

Y front challenge: Each contestant has a pair of oversized yfronts. They put them on over their trousers. How many times can they get their feet in and pull them up to the waist in 30 seconds. Most repetitions wins.

Cheerio face: Give each contestant a bowl of cheerios. They lick each cheerio and then try to stick as many as they can on their partners face in 30 seconds.

Pimple face: Stand someone at the back of the stage and put squirty cream on their face. Their partner stands a distance way and throws mini marshmallows, trying to get them to stick on the face. The person with the most stuck marshmallows at the end of 30 seconds wins.

Celebrity Two Word Tango: Download the audio track from the website.

<https://chrismoyles.net/soundvault/soundvault.php?fileid=1233>

Select two contestants for the game. Start the track and in the gaps in the music, players must take it in turns to insert a famous name. Each famous name can only be used once. The first player to fail to think of a name in time loses the round. Play the 'best of 3' to decide the champion.

Gospel Content Ideas

Hot Seat Interview: One way of easily dropping a bit of gospel content into a youth café is to interview one of the team by putting them on the hot seat. Play some dramatic entry music to add to the tension and then ask them a series of quickfire questions, with one or two more in depth ones.

Eg

- Mcdonalds or Burger King?
- PC or Mac?
- Beach holiday or Extreme Sports?
- Marmite Love or Hate?
- BBC or ITV?
- Dog or Cat?
- Chocolate or Ice Cream?
- Who would you most like to meet?
- Why are you a Christian?
- If you had 15 seconds to speak to the people of the earth before it was demolished to make way for a hyperspace bypass, what would you use those 15 seconds to say?

3 minute life: Invite someone to give a carefully prepared testimony in 3 minutes. Project a video of a countdown timer onto a screen so that everyone can see that it won't go overtime. Encourage them to include

- something about their background that young people would identify with.
- Why they didn't used to believe in God.
- What happened to change it.
- What Jesus means to them now
- In what way things haven't changed.
- In what way things are radically different.

Text In: Give out a mobile number for everyone to use. (Buy a cheap sim to put in an unlocked phone, rather than give away the number of a leader.) Invite people to text in their questions and comments to be answered by the hosts. One or more times in each evening, read out some

carefully selected comments and questions, and doing your best to answer them. You could invite a special guest to give the answers. Pepper the serious ones with some fun ones to keep them light. Specify that you'd love questions about God, church and the meaning of life, but that you're open to anything! You can always ask the leaders to text in questions that you would like them to answer – no-one will know!

Movie Clips: Showing a clip from a well know movie and making a brief comment about it, linking it to a gospel theme can be a good way of focusing peoples attention in the café environment and creating a platform to say something about Jesus.

In summary: You don't have to preach the whole of the gospel at every youth café, but you do need to make it clear that this is a venue run by Christians because you think God's love is worth sharing. Then you are creating the platform to invite people to explore more if they wish.