

HIGH SCHOOL HACKS

REVISE

To make this series more accessible for high schoolers, here's what to adjust . . .

Let teenagers lead the "Human Roller Coaster" activity (Week 1) instead of adults. Rather than having an adult lead the group in activity, recruit a few high school students to lead the rest of the group. This will help the rest of your group stay engaged and help you avoid any accusations of cheesiness from your older teenagers.

In Week 3, lead a more pointed conversation about what it looks like to right wrongs in your community. If you feel prepared and equipped to have this conversation, try focusing on one specific subject where your high schoolers might already be aware of a wrong happening in the world and think of some way they can make a difference.

During the Week 4 "Yoked Together" object lesson, consider adding a little levity with some homemade animal ears or horns. Since this series is about dealing with hurt and pain, try to add a little fun in as many places as appropriate.

During the "Prayer Labyrinth" module every week, keep in mind your students may struggle to express or describe what it feels like to be hurt, worried, afraid, or wronged. So you can adjust the prayer labyrinth module as necessary. Make it longer to give them more time to think that through, or add more stops to journal or pray. Help teenagers put words around their experience.

REPLACE

And here are the Building Blocks you may want to swap for something else . . .

In the Week 2 "FastPassing My Pain" module, replace your story with a story from a student. Consider allowing a student to share how God gave them hope amid the hurt. Helping teenagers see that God is working in their peers' lives can challenge them to see how God can do the same in their own lives. Choose a student with adequate time to heal and ensure that sharing their story won't re-trigger the feelings from the experience.

REMEMBER

Remember, the topic of fear, hurt, and worry can be difficult for some of your high school students. As you prepare for this series, consider the specific scenarios you're aware of where you know teenagers in your group are experiencing these feelings and find ways to empathize with what they are going through. Make it a point to show your teenagers who are hurting that you're with them and want to support them as they go through what they're experiencing. Invite them to ask questions. Keep in mind that these topics are going to evoke a ton of great questions. Give them space to ask questions in a safe environment. As needs arise, remember to connect with parents and ask how you can help support their teenagers through challenging moments. Before this series starts, pull together the contact information of a few local mental health professionals you trust so you can refer teenagers who need that support.