

HACKS

Every ministry is different. Whether you're teaching middle schoolers, high schoolers, teenagers with disabilities, or all three, here's how to hack this series to fit your unique and diverse audience.

MIDDLE SCHOOL HACKS

REVISE

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

In the Week 1 Esther 7:1–6 Scripture module, give more examples of how they can have courage. The things Esther went through can seem pretty disconnected from a teenager's reality. Help them connect it by providing some extra examples.

During the Week 2 "Fireworks" image module, invite students to share ways to connect the application points to their lives with the group. Helping them make these connections will show them that normalizing hope is difficult to do amid hurt, but there are ways God is helping us work through it.

During the Week 3 "God Has Made Me To Help" reflection, help your middle schoolers differentiate between being hurt and wrongs people experience. Developmentally, these two abstract ideas may make it difficult for them to see the difference between them. Before they reflect, help them see hurt is what they experience and wrongs are what they see other people experience.

In Week 4, don't skip the application points in the "World's Best Roller Coaster" image module. Keep in mind middle schoolers are concrete thinkers and sometimes struggle to understand abstract ideas like trusting an unseen God. These application points create tangible ways to turn their worry into trust.

Spend extra time helping middle schoolers learn how to participate during the "Prayer Labyrinth" prayer module. Remind your volunteers to be patient and make adjustments for the experience as they see fit. You may even consider having them do the experience as a group.

REPLACE

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

In Week 4, replace the "What Worries You?" poll with a few more rounds of "Water Challenge on a Roller Coaster" or another game like [Follow the Rules](#). The poll tries to help them get in touch with their worries, but some early adolescents may not be able to identify those feelings yet. Play a game that may help them experience those feelings in a safe environment instead.

REMEMBER

Remember that middle schoolers know what feeling wronged, worried, afraid, and hurt is like. Compounding this with the reality that your teenagers are going through significant social, emotional, and physiological changes could lead to intense moments. Preparing your volunteers for some challenging conversations would be a good idea. Remember that any discussion dealing with hurt and pain could spark a huge range of feelings, so keep your eye out for any teenager who looks to be processing big feelings. Your middle schoolers may have never been told what to do when they feel these things, so make sure volunteers can clarify when they need to reach out, who to go to, and how they can get help. 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.