

BIRTHDAY BASH

AN EDGE SOCIAL NIGHT

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SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Birthday decorations (hats, noisemakers, streamers, balloons, etc.)
- “Happy Birthday” banner
- Old boxes and wrapping paper to make “gifts”
- Birthday cake
- Limbo stick
- XXL t-shirts
- Pillows
- Piñata
- Candy/small toys for piñata
- Blindfolds
- Cupcakes without frosting
- Cupcake decorating supplies (icing, candy, sprinkles, etc.)
- Four dishwashing tubs filled with water
- Grapes
- Small bowls
- Towels
- Six foot rope
- Ribbon or yarn
- Doughnuts
- Birthday pictures of Core Team as children
- Prizes for game winners
- Music you can easily start and stop

GOAL

The middle school youth will grow in community and have an opportunity to get to know one another better by celebrating their birthdays.

EDGE NIGHT AT A GLANCE

This fun night is an opportunity to take a break from your curriculum and celebrate the best part of Edge – the youth. This night is set up to celebrate everyone’s birthday and to give the Core Team an opportunity for relational ministry throughout the night. This night is prepared so that you can play the games as a large group, have your youth in rotating small groups throughout the night, or both.

BEFORE THE NIGHT

Ask parents to volunteer to help run the games during the Edge Night or prepare the cake and cupcakes for this night. This frees up the Core Team to spend more time with the youth. The Core Team should still come early to help set up. Finally, ask your Core Team for pictures of themselves growing up celebrating their birthdays. This can be used as great environment or even as a game.

ENVIRONMENT

The Environment for this night is so important – the more birthday decorations, the better! Balloons, streamers, and empty boxes wrapped up as gifts should be throughout the space. Create a large “Happy Birthday!” banner and consider writing all the names of the middle school youth on it. Be sure to decorate the entrance to your space as well, so the youth are excited from the moment they arrive.

GATHER

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

(5 min)

As the youth enter the room, have Core Team wish them “Happy Birthday!” and hand out birthday hats, noise makers, etc.

The youth minister should gather all the youth together, welcome them to the Edge Night, and lead an opening prayer. He or she should introduce any youth at Edge for the first time.

SILENT BIRTHDAY

(5 min)

The object of this activity is for the youth to line themselves up according to their birthdays without speaking. The youth minister should designate a starting point and tell the youth to begin with January 1 and end with December 31, lining up in order by month and day without talking. When they have formed a line, the youth minister should have each of the middle school youth say their birthday out loud to see if they are in order. Depending on the size of your group, you may have a line for each grade level. This could also be turned into a competition to see who can line up the quickest.

PROCLAIM/ BREAK

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

(10 min)

Explain that tonight at Edge you are having a giant birthday party and are going to start with the best part of any birthday party – the cake. Have two Core Members hold a birthday cake with candles and sing “Happy Birthday!” to everyone. Have the youth minister blow out the candles, or call forward a few youth at random to blow out the candles. If you decide to hand out pieces of this birthday cake make sure there is enough for everyone, otherwise just put it off to the side.

NOT SO TYPICAL MUSICAL CHAIRS

(10 min)

Tell the middle school youth to pair up. Have each pair designate partner #1 and partner #2. All of the number ones will then form a circle facing out. After the number ones have formed their circle, the number twos should form another circle (an outer circle) by standing in front of their partner about 2 feet away. The outer circle should face in, so that each pair is face to face. When the music begins, both the inner circle and the outer circle should begin moving to their left. When the music stops, the youth will have to rush around to find their partner and link arms. The last pair to

find each other and link arms will be eliminated. Reform the inner and outer circles and repeat until all but one pair is eliminated. Have a simple prize for the winning pair.

ROTATING GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

(35 min)

Super Limbo

For this game you will need a limbo stick (a broomstick or rope work well too), XXL t-shirts and lots of pillows. Have two parents or Core Members hold the limbo stick, and then have everyone else line up single file behind the limbo stick. The Core Members holding the limbo stick should hold the stick roughly three feet from the ground. Everyone in the line must go under the stick by walking forward and bending backward under the stick. If someone touches the stick when walking under, or falls over, that person is out.

Once everyone has gone under, rather than lowering the stick, give each middle school youth a large pillow and one of the big t-shirts. Instruct the youth to place the pillows securely under their large t-shirts. Once everyone has their pillow in place, they get to attempt to limbo again. Any one who touches the stick or the ground with their body or the pillow attached to them is out. After each completed round, the middle school youth should receive an additional pillow to stuff under their large t-shirt until a winner is declared.

Piñata

Fill a piñata with candy and small toys. Consider buying a few smaller items from the Life Teen store to include in your piñata. Before the night starts, hang the piñata in a place that will keep everyone safe once this activity begins.

One at a time, blindfold the youth, spin them around, and give them three swings with a stick to break open the piñata. It is important to make sure the parents and Core Team are keeping the youth at a safe distance. As soon as the piñata is completely broken open, give the youth an opportunity to collect the candy! If you have a large group, you may need more than one piñata. If space and resources allow, consider having multiple piñatas going on at the same time!

Decoration Station

Have cupcakes, without frosting, available for the youth to decorate. Be sure to have plenty of utensils, icing, and candy/sprinkles. Allow the youth to take a few minutes to decorate their own cupcake, and then have a parent volunteer or Core Member take photos of the completed cupcakes. After the pictures are taken, allow the youth to eat the cupcake – after all, what is a birthday party without some cake? Using the photos taken of the completed cupcakes, award the best decorated cupcake a prize at the end of the night.

Bobbing for Grapes

Fill three to four small dishwashing tubs with water. Put roughly 40-50 grapes in each of the tubs. Set each tub on the ground in front of a chair and set a small bowl next to each tub. If you are playing inside, be sure to place a large plastic tarp beneath the tub and chair area. Have the youth sit in a chair and remove their shoes and socks. The goal of this game is to get as many grapes from the tub to the bowl in 60 seconds using only one's feet. Grapes that do not make it into the bowl do not count. After each round, give the youth towels to dry off his or her feet.

Nuts for Doughnuts

Have two parents or Core Members hold a rope approximately six feet long. Tie pieces of ribbon or yarn to doughnuts (one per youth participating) and then attach the string to the rope so the doughnuts hang down. The rope should be held high enough so that the doughnuts are about mouth level for the youth if they are standing. Have different length ribbon or yarn so that shorter or taller youth can easily reach a doughnut. The youth must attempt to eat the entire doughnut without using their hands and without letting it fall off the ribbon. The first youth to finish wins. Depending on your group size you may need to do a few round of this and reattach new donuts and ribbon each time.

SEND

GAME TIME WRAP UP

(5min)

Wrap up the night by awarding any final prizes to groups or individuals. Be sure to award the best decorated cupcake from the Decoration Station.

CLOSING PRAYER

(5 min)

Gather the youth together in a circle for closing prayer. Begin with a prayer of thanksgiving for the Edge Night. Be sure to pray for the gift of life and for the parents of all the middle school youth. Ask God to continue to aid the Church as she upholds the sanctity of life. Close by asking for Mary's intercession by praying a Hail Mary.

TO THE PARENTS OF

Tonight at Edge we had a giant birthday party to celebrate the life of your child. This was a great opportunity for us to build community at Edge and have fun. We are so thankful for you and your continued support in your child's faith journey.

ADAPTATION IDEAS

- Make a poster board with the childhood birthday pictures you collected from your Core Team. Number them, but do not put the name of the Core Member on them. Throughout the night, allow teens to write down their guesses on an index card and award the youth who were able to guess all correctly.

- Use the "Silent Birthday" game as a way to randomly divide the youth into small groups by their birthday month for the night. This will give them an opportunity to get to know new people at Edge.

- If you are able to set up outside, have lawn games like bean bag toss available for the youth to play as well.

Notes

EDGE NIGHT EVALUATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the following questions to discuss and evaluate your Edge Night.

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well did this Edge Night accomplish the goal we set? Explain.

2. What was the strongest aspect of this Edge Night?

3. What kind of follow-up do we need to do after this Edge Night?

4. What can we improve for future Edge Nights? How can we accomplish this?

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Notes

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