

Hosting an Introduction Night

Hosting an introduction night is one of the best ways to gather support for your Circle of Change. If it sounds intimidating, don't worry. It's just about inviting your friends and family to share your inspiration to create the community of your dreams. You can think of it as a party with a purpose.

The party doesn't need to be elaborate or expensive – the idea is to bring together people you respect, share your vision with them, and invite them to join you in making your vision a reality.

Here's everything you'll need for the gathering:

- ✓ A copy of the video documentary *Teen Files: Surviving High School*. You can order copies by contacting our office.
- ✓ A room large enough to comfortably seat your guests
- ✓ A TV large enough for your guests to view the documentary
- ✓ A DVD player
- ✓ A box of tissues
- ✓ A timer or stop-watch that beeps

What's a party without food? You may want to invite your guest to bring a dish or you may want to provide refreshments yourself. Either way, having food will create an environment of warmth and sharing before you even start. Set a specific time to start the "official" gathering so that everyone can stay for the presentation.

Introductions

When it's time to start the gathering, invite your guests to find a comfortable seat around the TV. Once everyone is settled, take a couple minutes to welcome them and share your reasons for bringing them together. Speak from your heart, and share how Challenge Day touched you, and why you have invited this specific group of people to join you. It might sound something like this:

"I want to take a moment to thank you for coming. I know you've heard me talking about Challenge Day and you're probably curious about what has me so excited. In a few

minutes I'm going to play a 15-minute documentary that will show you what Challenge Day does, so you can see for yourself, but first I want to tell you why I have chosen to invite this group of people here tonight. I have a lot of respect for every person in this room. Challenge Day has groups called Circles of Change. They are groups of friends like us who decide to purposefully work together to create a positive change in our community. I'm excited about what *this* group of people can create if we combine our efforts."

After you have given your personal welcome, take a couple minutes to quickly go around the room and have everyone introduce themselves. Let your guests know that after you view the documentary you will take time for each person to share a little about themselves with the group.

Share the 15-minute Challenge Day documentary, *Teen Files: Surviving High School*. You may want to dim the lights for better viewing and make sure you have the tissue box available.

If You Really Knew Me ...

When the clip is done, invite your guests to join you in doing the "*If You Really Knew Me*" activity featured in the documentary. You probably want to use the timer to make sure everyone gets the same amount of time; one to two minutes is a good amount of time.

One of the main goals of a Circle of Change is to build community. This activity is a great way to bring even the closest of friends closer. How often is it that we sit down and focus all of our attention on one person and just listen? As the host of the party you'll probably be the first person to go. If it sounds intimidating, don't worry; it's all about speaking from your heart. An "If you really knew me ..." might sound something like this:

"If you really knew me, you'd know that I was a little nervous to ask you to come here tonight. I know that everyone is busy and I am so happy that you decided to come see what it's all about.

If you really knew me you'd know that even though I did well in high school and I had a lot of friends, I felt like I never fit in. I felt like I was faking it a lot of the time just to

fit in. I can only imagine what it might've been like if my school would have had a Challenge Day.

If you really knew me, I love my job and my family, but I've always dreamed of doing something more.

If you really knew me, you'd know that as soon as I saw Challenge Day, I knew that this was the thing I'd been looking for and even though I'm not totally sure what it will look like, I believe that we could have a great Circle and we could do some really wonderful stuff for our community."

Remember the more vulnerable and real you are, the more vulnerable and real your guests will be and ultimately the more successful your Circle will be.

Group Discussion (15-20 minutes)

When everyone has had an opportunity to share, open up the floor for a group discussion. You might want to ask your guests a few leading questions to get the conversation started. If you already have some ideas about how you would like to create your Circle and what you would like your Circle to accomplish, now is the perfect time to share your vision. Remember your guests may have fantastic ideas you've never even thought of. Make sure you have pen and paper available to take notes.

Conclusion (5-10 minutes)

Take a couple of minutes at the end of the group discussion to decide how you want to proceed. Do you want to set a time for your first official meeting? Or maybe it's easier for people to participate on a conference call. Make sure you have everyone's contact information and encourage them to invite their other friends and family to join you next time.

Appreciations (10 minutes)

Invite everyone to say what they appreciated about the event. When everyone has had a chance to say their appreciations, then thank your

guests for attending and promise to give them an update including when a Challenge Day program is being held near you.

Every home event will be unique. Have a great time introducing Challenge Day to your community! If you have any questions, please contact the Challenge Day Circle Team at circles@challengeday.org.