

Prayer Activities for Youth

Suggestions for hands-on activities to engage youth in prayer for others.

You may want to use the “A Year in Your World Fact Sheet” (included, end) to provide the youth with some selected information about specific prayer concerns for youth.

Set up as many of the stations as you choose on separate tables or in separate areas. Invite the youth to participate in the prayer/activity stations. Allow the youth to move freely from one station to another in no particular order observing the prayer concerns and participating in the activities. Following the Prayer Activities, allow some time for the youth to debrief and share their experiences. (As an alternative plan, include one or two activities or emphases in the Sunday/Wednesday sessions during a month.)

Close with a time of group prayer.

Station 1: Praying for the children and families of the many nations represented in Houston

Supplies: A bowl of many-flavored jelly beans.

Activity: Jelly Bean Celebration

Pray for . . . someone who is different from you.

Prayer Activity:

- Have a jelly bean, or several!
- Celebrate the fact that all people and nations are created in the image of God.
- With each jelly bean, thank God for a friend or acquaintance who is different from you.
- Pray that our differences will be opportunities for growing and celebrating - never for violence and division.

Station 2: Praying for the children and families in poverty

Supplies: A Map of Harris County & Red & Blue Marker Pens

Activity: Create a Poverty Visual

Pray for . . . all the children in Harris County who live in poverty - nearly 1 out of every four.

Prayer Activity:

- To create a visual representation, place 3 blue dots on the prayer poster. With each blue dot, say out loud something that you are thankful for.
- Then, place one red dot, and say a prayer for a child in poverty who may not have the food, clothing, or health care that they need.

Station 3: Praying for those have been arrested or incarcerated and for their families

Supplies: White poster board & Colored Markers

Activity: Create a “Prayer Wall”

Pray for . . . those who have been arrested or incarcerated and for teens who have family members in prison.

Prayer Activity:

- On this prayer poster, place the first initial (or an X if you don’t want to write a name) of any people you know who have been arrested or put in jail.
- Pray for that person and for the families who are affected

Station 4: Praying for an end to the violence

Supplies: Violence Grid (attached, end) & Black Markers

Activity: Create a Grief Grid

Pray for . . . an end to the violence, revenge and murder among teens and any involved in gangs

Prayer Activity:

- Each square on the grid with an X represents one on the 173 teens who were violently killed in Harris County during the year, averaging more than three a week for every week of the year.
- If you know someone who has been murdered, black in a square to symbolize loss and grief.
- Pray for the families of those teens and for others whom you may know who have lost a family member or friend due to violence.

Station 5: Praying for victims of violence

Supplies: Long String and Black/Red/Yellow/Pink plastic beads

Activity: Create a Prayer String

Pray for . . . peace and lack of fear for those who have been victims of a violent crime.

Prayer Activity:

- String a Bead
 - Black - for any person you know who has had a friend or family member murdered
 - Red - for any person you know who has been a victim of any type of violent crime or abuse
 - Yellow - for any person you know who has committed a crime
 - Pink for any person you know who has had a friend or family member commit suicide
- Say a prayer for the victims of violence that they will be able to forgive and live without fear and hatred.

Station 6: Praying for spiritual health and self-esteem

Supplies: Adult supervision & Possibly Outdoors / Large pottery bowl or metal trash can with incense cones, lighter & paper and pen for writing prayers. (Alternate plan, use votive candles for them to light and keep their written prayers without burning them)

Activity: Sending Up Our Prayers Before God

Pray for . . . those who feel pressured to have sex or to give in to social pressures for other destructive actions - drugs, alcohol, self-harm, even suicide.

Prayer Activity:

- Light a cone of incense to remind you that our prayers are an offering to God.
- Write a private prayer note for yourself or someone else who is engaged in or considering potentially harmful behavior.
- Keep your prayer or offer it up to God by allowing it to burn in the flame.

Station 7: Praying for friends of different faiths

Supplies: Map of Houston & Colored Push Pins

Activity: Create a Visual of Diversity

Pray for . . . your friends who are of a different faith. If you don't have friends of a different faith, pray that God will bring you some.

Prayer Activity:

- Stick a push pin in the map for every friend that you have who is of a different faith from you.
- Pray for opportunities to respectfully share what your relationship with Jesus means to you.
- Listen to what their faith means to them and ask God to help you know what to say.
- Consider going on a City Tour to visit various mosques and temples in the Houston area. (Sally Hinzie in our office can set one up for you, 713.957.2000.)

Station 8: Praying for each other

Supplies: Strips of colored construction paper cut to make a prayer chain & and one rock to be taken home by each youth participating

Activity: Youth Prayer Chain

Pray for . . . the others in the youth group.

Prayer Activity:

- Write your own name on a link and add it to the prayer chain as your commitment to pray for others in your youth group.
- Write the names of other youth for whom you will pray.
- Select a rock and take it home with you to remind you that God is with you always.