

Welcome! What's This Group All About?



Goals

Participants will be able to:

- State the purpose, goals, and expectations of the group
- Get to know other members of the group
- Begin identifying and expressing thoughts and feelings regarding the transition to high school

Pre-group Preparation

- Prepare a sample of group agreements, group consequences, and group goals
- Obtain a paper bag with about 50 pennies inside
- Preparation for Next Session: contact the Wellness Coordinator, Dean/ Head Counselor, Nurse, College to Career Counselor (if you have one), and GEAR Up Coordinator (if you have one) to prepare them for office visits or group panel

Materials

- Tape
- Markers
- Pens or pencils
- Butcher paper
- Bag of Pennies (about 50)
- Index cards (one per participant)

Icebreaker – Pennies for Your Thoughts

- Pass around the bag of pennies.
- Ask each participant to take some pennies; do not instruct them on how many to take. Mentor should participate as well.
- After each student takes their pennies, explain that for each penny participants have to tell the group something about themselves. You can offer prompts, such as favorite food/activity/color, number of siblings, zodiac sign, etc. Make sure participants state their names.

Discussion

You're all here because you have made the transition to high school. When we experience big changes in our lives, it's often helpful to plan ahead and think about the challenges we may face, and the anxiety and excitement we might feel. Although change can be difficult we can learn from each other and support each other along the way. This is our Mentoring Group. We will get a chance to learn about each other, our school, and our community. Sometimes we will share stories, do activities together, and as time goes on, hopefully we can plan some field trips together.

Briefly review the logistics of the group: structure and length of each session, and group duration. Answer any questions participants may have.

Activity 1 – Group Norms

- Explain to participants that when working in a group it is helpful to develop some agreements about what we expect from each other, so everyone can feel safe and so the group can be productive.
- Tape two pieces of butcher paper on the wall, and label them “Group Agreements,” and “Group Goals.”
- Ask group to brainstorm Group Agreements. Further explain the concept if the group seems confused; provide examples as needed. Make sure list includes confidentiality, right to pass, and mutual respect.
- Ask each participant to sign his/her name.
- Explain to members what the Group Goals are, write these down, and ask for additional goals. For example, feel better prepared for high school, know where to go to ask for help/support, learn how to get involved in activities, etc. Make sure all members understand and agree with group goals.
- Bring all Group Norms and Group Goals to every session.

Activity 2 – Question/Fear/Goal

- Distribute index cards and pencils to group members.
- Ask participants to anonymously write one question about high school, one fear about high school, and one personal goal for the group (i.e.: describe something they hope to learn or get out of participating in this group).

- Collect cards and read them aloud, normalizing thoughts and feelings expressed, and describing how the group will address these questions, fears, and goals
- Keep “Question/Fear/Goal” index cards for future sessions.

Check Out – One Word Check Out

- Explain that at the end of each session there will be a check out activity.
- Since everyone is still getting to know each other, have each person check out with one thing they are looking forward to this coming week.
- Thank each person for being there and being willing to try something new.