

ORIENTATION/REGISTRATION SESSION

Holding a Single & Parenting Orientation/Registration Session prior to starting the actual 13-week cycle of video content is an excellent strategy that will help orient new group members and calm what would otherwise be first-session nervousness and discomfort.

ORIENTATION/REGISTRATION SESSION COMPONENTS

- 1 As participants arrive, have them sign in and fill out registration forms as needed. Collect the registration fee and distribute the participant workbook to each person.
- 2 Allow 5–10 minutes of refreshment/fellowship time before you start the meeting.
- 3 Welcome everyone, and introduce your leadership team and group facilitators. Have each leader give a short two-minute summary of his or her single-parent journey.
- 4 Stress that all are welcome, whatever the circumstances that created their single-parent status (such as divorce, separation, death of a spouse or never married). Explain that throughout the material they will hear references to each of the scenarios listed above, but the underlying concepts are relevant to all single parents.
- 5 Show two promo videos.
- 6 Take five minutes to walk through the workbook and give an overview showing and explaining the importance of the different sections (video outline for note-taking, Hopework, Rest for Single Parents, etc.).
- 7 In a circle, invite participants to introduce themselves, using first name only, and share one thing that makes them “crazy” about single parenting and what they hope to gain from this Single & Parenting support group. (If more than 8 participants, break into small groups. Ideal size: 6–8 per group, plus two leaders.)
- 8 While in your small group, go over the Group Guidelines Agreement with participants. Ask them to sign and give the agreement to you for your records before returning to the larger group (if they were in small groups).
- 9 Once in the larger group, have an alumnus come in and share a two- to three-minute testimony of healing and hope and how attending a support group and completing the weekly Hopework exercises will be beneficial to the participants' journey.
- 10 Share why the three components of Single & Parenting are important:
 - Ask this question: **“What three things does every human being need to live?”**
 - Answer: Air, water and food.
 - You would not eliminate any of these.
 - Just as God has provided those three essentials for our survival, Single & Parenting provides three essentials for us as we journey together as single parents: (1) the video, (2) the group discussion and (3) the workbook exercises.

Explain that in Single & Parenting there are three forms of communication:

- **Video presentation:** Others talk to you.
- **Group discussion:** You talk to each other.
- **Workbook exercises:** God talks to you and you talk to Him.

Then stress how each component is intertwined and important to the process of becoming a better single parent.

11 Questions and answers.

12 Close with prayer.

BENEFITS OF OFFERING AN ORIENTATION/REGISTRATION SESSION FOR NEW GROUP MEMBERS

Find the location – church building, parking lot, room location

Register, complete forms, receive a participant workbook

Meet and get acquainted with the Single & Parenting leadership team and church staff

Meet and get acquainted with other single parents who will be in the group

Watch a promotional video on Single & Parenting

Hear a testimony from an alumna of Single & Parenting

Hear an overview of what to expect during the 13 weeks

See a snapshot of what the 13 sessions will look like

Get a hands-on view of their workbook

Learn about child care arrangements and location (if church is offering child care)

Ask questions

Experience the small group atmosphere

Feel a sense of “ease” and safety; get rid of any jitters or apprehensions

Be encouraged that they are not alone on this single-parent journey

Gain assurance that there is hope and help for their single-parent journey

Invite other single parents to come with them for the first session

BENEFITS OF OFFERING AN ORIENTATION/REGISTRATION SESSION FOR LEADERS

Take care of housekeeping items (registration, distribute workbooks, forms)

Meet single parents who will be coming and get to know their circumstances

Give an overview of what to expect during the 13 weeks

Answer questions

Pray for single parents who have registered before the first session

Experience a calm and gentle start, especially if prone to large numbers

Set the tone for the small group atmosphere

Identify any child care needs

Be better prepared for the first session

Check supplies and workbook inventory in preparation for the first session

Have a “practice run” before the first session with job assignments

Check equipment and room setup

Encourage single parents that they are not alone on this single-parent journey

Give assurance to single parents that there is hope and help for their single-parent journey

Pray with other leadership team members for the first session and the single parents