Going Bananas

A resource for youth leaders to plan an event!

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Faith in Real Life

Youth nights provide an opportunity for young people to learn about their faith in an environment that is safe and supportive. They can help young people develop leadership skills by providing them with opportunities to lead activities or take on roles within their group. But they can also help young people develop social skills by providing them with opportunities to interact with peers in an informal fun setting.

While there is a devotional part to this event, most of the night is spent in fun and fellowship in a safe environment.

I encourage youth and leaders to "let down their hair" and have a good time with this.

Devotion

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. - Galatians 5:22-23

Invite students to talk about what true love is, about what true joy is. What it means to have peace and patience. What kindness is, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Ask: Which fruits of the Spirit do you think you're doing pretty well with?
Which fruits of the Spirit do you need to work on?

Say: Thankfully we don't have to do these things on our own, because we can't.

Explain that for these things to be truly pleasing to God they must come from a place of faith instilled in us by the Holy Spirit.

Luther writes,
"Faith must be the mother and source of works that are truly good and well-pleasing to God, which God will reward in this world and in the world to come." (FC SD IV 9)

Prayer

Dear Lord, we thank you that we don't have to do these things on our own. Thank you for giving us the Holy Spirit to instill faith and the fruits of our faith within us. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

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Sample Games

1)Scavenger Hunt

Have a scavenger hunt where each team is given a banana and a list of things to measure in banana lengths. Make sure that the bananas are all similar in length. Give points for each accurate measurement.

Sample items:
The height of a stop sign
a garage door
pulpit

font
Height of a Staff person
width of a sidewalk
someone's waist
the banana area of a window
(window banana length x window banana width)

2) Banana Dress-Up

Each team or group is given a banana and a baggy of random items (felt, foil, beads, etc. - BE CREATIVE). They then are told to create a personality and appearance for their banana with the items they get. One volunteer from each group gets up and introduces their banana to the group. It's better if each group gets different items for variety.

3)Going Bananas

Youth will pass a banana along a line to learn about patience.

Have kids stand in a straight line. Say: Let's see how fast we can pass a banana up and back down the line. Here is the catch: You can't use your hands. You must hold the banana with your chin. Pass the banana, chin to chin, up and down the line. If someone drops the banana, you must start over.

4) Banana Bluff

Ask for three volunteers and place a peeled banana in front of each one. Blindfold each player, making sure to blindfold the middle player last.

After the middle player is blindfolded, QUIETLY remove the blindfolds from the other two players while casually explaining the rules (keep hands behind back, eat banana without using hands).

Try to keep other youth standing around from revealing the secret. After saying, “Go!”, cheer on all three players as if they were all playing. The look on the middle player's face is usually priceless when they remove their blindfold and find the other two bananas uneaten.

5) Banana Rumble

Give everyone a banana. Everyone puts a mark on their banana to be able to identify their own. All the bananas are put in the middle of the room in a big pile. Everyone is in chairs in a square around the room around the pile. Be sure to be in a square shape because each side of the square is a team...4 sides--4 groups.

When a signal is given, everyone rushes to find their banana. The team that has their bananas and is sitting down first wins. [Doing this game several times is likely to get a few squished bananas out of it so make sure you have quite a few extras.]

6) Banana Feet

Choose some volunteers (one from each team) to sit on a stool. Place newspaper down on the ground underneath them and tell them to take off their shoes and socks. Give everyone a banana with a bent stalk so that the start is easier. On the signal they must try to peel the bananas with their feet. The first or the most successful player has won. Give them paper towels to clean their feet.

7) Banana Race

Divide the players into two teams and give each team a banana. The first player from each team has to run to a designated spot while holding the banana between their chin and neck. They then have to pass the banana to the next player without using their hands. The first team to finish wins.

8) Obstacle Bananas

Set up an obstacle course. Choose a pair from each team and position them behind a starting line. Each pair receives a banana which they must hold between their teeth (at top and bottom ends). The hands are kept behind the back. The obstacle course starts on the command. The first team back to the starting point is the winner.

Last Words

You know your youth group best. Some of these games will go over better with different groups of people. Don't feel you need to do them all. Have fun!