CHARACTER

Program Target: To help youth reflect on what it means to be "a person of character"

What to do: Divide your group into four smaller groups. Give each group a separate space to meet and make sure all have Bibles. Assign one of the following Bible characters to each group:

- Joseph
- Esther
- Daniel
- Mary, the mother of Jesus

Each group should read together the relevant Bible passages about their character and discuss why this person deserves to be described as a person of strong character. Why was he/she strong? What important decisions did he/she make? What was his/her source of strength?

Give each group 20 minutes to prepare. After reading and discussing the passages, they are to choose one person from their group to portray that Bible figure and coach that person on how to respond when asked about his/her life story. They should choose someone who knows their Bible fairly well and is not shy about talking/performing in front of a group.

For the second part of the program, everyone returns to the main meeting area. Call the four people who are portraying the Bible characters up front for a panel discussion. Use the following questions and any others that occur to you or to your group as discussion starters:

- What was the most difficult time you experienced in your life?
- What got you through that time?
- What was the toughest decision you had to make?
- What influenced your decision?
- What advice do you have for young people today facing difficult choices?

Allow about 30 minutes for the panel discussion.

Preparation Time: This program requires little preparation, but will rely heavily on the skill of the four youth chosen to play the parts, and on your own ability as a moderator to draw them out and make the discussion both interesting, and relevant to today's youth. You may want to work briefly with each group during their preparation time to make sure they have chosen someone suitable for the part, and have prepared that person well. Also, be sure they don't get bogged down reading the quite long Bible passages–they should skim the familiar stories for the main details. For an added touch, if you have time and resources, bring a few costume items and props so they groups can dress up their character in a "Bible times" costume.

Bible Texts:
Joseph: Genesis 37, 39-45
Esther: Esther 2-5, 7
Daniel: Daniel 1, 2, 4-6
Mary: Luke 1:26-56, Luke 2, Matthew 1:18-24, Matthew 2

Song Service:
“I’ll be true, Precious Jesus”