

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS: THE FOUR CRIES OF A STUDENT'S HEART



I think most adults think it's hard to build a relationship with teenagers. They think students are totally different from them and they can't understand their world. I don't really buy into this though. I think students have real needs and if you can meet those needs, you can have a transformational relationship with them. The key to understanding those needs is what I like to call the cries of their heart.

THE FOUR CRIES OF A STUDENT'S HEART ARE:



1. SPEND TIME WITH ME

Students know that your time is valuable, so when you give them your time, they know they are valuable to you. When students know you value them, they're willing to open their hearts to you.

2. KNOW ME

Students have a favorite subject and it's them. Not many people want to talk about themselves, so if you spend time asking them questions about them they'll be your friends forever. Here are a few of questions to ask them:

- *What's your favorite movie, song, book, or video game?*
- *What are your dreams, goals, and fears?*
- *Who do you like? (This may seem awkward, but few people actually ask them this question)*

3. CONNECT WITH ME

Students have hobbies, interests, and activities that they love. Some of these activities are the same things you love. Find common interest and bond over them. You may like the same sports teams, hobbies, or food. When you discover something you connect on, use this to build conversations outside your structured small group environment.

4. PURSUE ME

Students want to know that you'll not quit on them. Many adults in their lives have left them and they don't want to be treated that way. By pursuing them you are demonstrating how much you care. Seek them out during the course of the weekend. Make it a point to engage with them one on one.

If you understand the four cries of a student's heart you can build a transformational relationship with them.