

5 Secrets to a Great DNow

At LeaderTrekS we love DNow, and we're passionate about equipping youth workers for transformation. Here's what we believe are the "5 Secrets to a Great DNow":

1. Decide on a clear purpose

An effective DNow retreat starts with a clear purpose that's understood by both students and adult volunteers. When you start planning your DNow, begin by identifying one overarching theme you want to teach students. Some weekends are focused on prayer, personal devotions, or outreach. After you choose your one idea, design every talk, discussion, and experience to focus on this topic. Need ideas? Visit dnowstudies.com.

2. Set a balanced schedule

It's important that we realize the value of both large group and small groups and use both times to reach our goals. Large group speakers present compelling truths and aim to inspire change, while small group discussions challenge students look for connections between a specific principle and their own life experience and make life applications. When large group talks and small group discussions are working together, students are more likely to both understand and apply biblical truths.

3. Train small group leaders in discipleship

Small group leaders will have more time with students than anyone else involved in your DNow weekend. Too often we say to our volunteers, "Go lead this small group" without giving them any training or checking in to see how it's going. Take time to train your volunteers in the discipleship process. Help them to build meaningful relationships, share personal stories, ask intentional questions, make life applications, and hold students accountable.

4. Discover the Host Home Advantage

Host homes can be one of the most powerful parts of a successful DNow event. Think outside the box both when selecting host homes. Consider that you're extending an invitation to a family or couple to participate in what God is doing in and through the youth ministry. Once you've assigned host homes, be sure to give them the Host Home Advantage by providing basic training and a series of questions to go deeper with students. Host homes should provide not only a location but also a space for students to process and grow.

5. Plan a DNow that doesn't end

Your DNow event should help kick start further ministry with students. It should provide an opportunity to build relationships, discover what students need, and develop a plan for their growth and discipleship. Don't get caught up in the details of planning for the event itself that you lose sight of planning for what should take place next. So whether you plan to debrief with volunteers after the event, utilize a follow up curriculum, or meet individually with students, look for ways to continue the learning process.