

How About the Children?

Children and Adult Accountability Groups

Many churches, both traditional and non-traditional, are implementing home Bible study groups, accountability groups, affinity groups, cell groups, etc as means of equipping new believers, involving pre-Christians in Bible studies, and discipling Christ-followers.

The question always arises, “What about my children?” Some groups provide childcare; some groups do not provide childcare. Often, the childcare is simply providing entertainment for the children through a video.

The church is committed to providing quality learning experiences for children each time they come together in a church-sponsored activity or event. Based on research conducted by internationally known researcher George Barna, the amount of time children are in learning experiences at the church house is significantly less than the amount of time children spend weekly watching television/media; therefore, we as the church can do no less than provide Bible-based learning experiences for our children while they are gathered at church.

A Bit about How Preschoolers and Children Learn:

Preschoolers and children learn best through hands-on experiences, through involvement, through doing. For this reason, we provide opportunities for preschoolers to touch, to explore, to ask questions, to wonder. We know they are very concrete thinkers, i.e, an orange is an orange unless they determine the orange to be something else.

Similarly, we provide grade-schoolers with occasions to role play, to dialogue, to research, to create scripts, all of which relate to the Bible story and the main focus of the Bible materials. Children are capable and creative; we build on these assets.

Recommendations to provide quality Bible learning experiences for children as part of an accountability group:

1. Children should participate with the parents in “opening” portions of the accountability group. Is there singing? If so, children should participate with the parents in the singing (remembering that parents are the primary shapers of their children’s faith). Are prayers offered? If so, children should participate in the prayer time (they model what they see and hear).
2. Two non-related adults (18 years or older) should be recruited to prepare and provide learning experiences for the children. Consider adults whose schedule may not permit them to teach on Sunday morning.

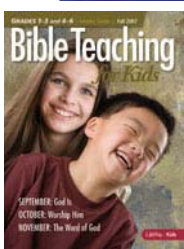


3. Recruit a team of 3 adult leaders who would rotate teaching the children, with 2 of the 3 adults being present each session. For example, leaders “A” and “B” would teach one month; the following month, “B” and “C” would teach; the third month, “C” and “A” would teach. Each leader would guide the children’s learning for two consecutive months and have no responsibilities for the third month.
4. The church should conduct criminal background checks on adults who lead the learning experiences with children, just as the church does for all volunteers ministering to and with minors on the main campus.

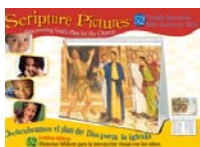
Resources to Use with Children:



TeamKid: resources for children in grades 1-6; the leader’s guide includes resources for 52 sessions. Each session is designed for 1 ½ hours and may be adapted to a shorter time frame. Sessions include a Bible story, Bible verse games and activities, application of the Bible story/study, and a game time. This one-time purchase is available from www.Lifeway.com.



Bible Teaching for Kids, Broadly Graded: each session is designed for one hour teaching time and includes a Bible story, Bible related games, Bible verses, music, and an activity to reinforce the Bible story. The one leader’s guide for children in grades 1-6 offers teaching suggestions for 1st –3rd graders and 4th–6th graders. The corresponding leader pack provides additional teaching resources. These materials are available from www.Lifeway.com on a quarterly basis.



Scripture Pictures: Discovering God’s Plan for the Church: a flipchart format that provides the Bible story and corresponding Bible picture for 1-6 graders. This one-time purchase is available from Cook Communications Ministry.



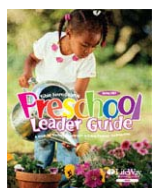
E-Anytime: an electronic version of “Anywhere, Anytime” materials for grades 1-6. This cost-per-lesson resource includes a Bible story, Bible verses, games, and music. This resource is available from www.Lifeway.com.



G-Force: this resource is designed for grades 1-6 and includes games to introduce children to the main point, Bible story, and key verse for the session. The materials are designed for 1 hour teaching time and provide both large group and small group interaction. Computer and LCD projector are needed for the presentation of the Bible story and games. These materials are available from www.Lifeway.com on a quarterly basis.



Rooted: Growing in God’s Love: this downloadable resource is designed for 30-45 minute sessions with grades 1-6. These materials are available from www.group.com/rooted.



Bible Foundations: this is recommended for use with preschoolers. The lessons are designed for a 1 hour teaching time and includes Bible stories, music, and activities to use with preschoolers, babies—2’s and 3’s—kindergartners. A leader pack provides additional resources needed in the session and for parental communications. These resources are available from www.Lifeway.com on a quarterly basis.

May these suggestions assist you as you assist parents and families to grow in their faith.



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