

HOW WE LEARN

Needs of Different Age Groups

Preschoolers

Preschoolers learn through:

- Imitation
- Curiosity
- Repetition
- By doing
- Play
- Satisfaction. A preschooler becomes discouraged if he meets too many failures. There must be plenty of time to manipulate materials, experiment with them and develop confidence in his ability to do things.
- Relationships. This is where they acquire feelings, attitudes, concepts, facts, and information.
- Their senses

Children

Children need to be taught the Bible in order to gain some basic understandings:

- Know the God of the Bible.
- Develop solid foundation for salvation.
- Know the Christ of the Bible and experience Him as Savior when they are ready.
- Make lifelong investments in high ideals.
- Learn and experience love.
- Learn from models after which they will want to pattern their lives.
- Know that the Bible is God's message to people.
- Know that God has commanded children to be taught the Bible.

The basic principles of learning are involved when teachers guide children in the study of God's Word.

Teachers help children learn:

- when teachers motivate children to want to know
- when children enjoy themselves
- when teachers relate what is being studied to things with which children are already familiar
- when teachers create a need within children for the information included in the study
- when teachers involve children in things in which they are interested
- when teachers present materials that have a logical order or relationship to the children's lives
- when teachers provide examples for children to imitate
- when there is repetition
- when the senses are stimulated; and
- when teachers involve children in the teaching-learning process.

The most important factor in the children's learning situation is the teacher. Teaching a child the truths of the Christian faith requires a teacher who can share these truths from personal experience.

How Youth Learn

Youth can learn; a healthy respect for the ability of youth to learn Christian concepts is necessary for the effective youth worker. Recognition of this ability will allow youth to explore ideas. Workers/teachers can and should guide them as they reach conclusions and make decisions.

Youth must be motivated to learn; creating interest in the study is the first step in any learning experience.

Youth learn by being involved; this idea refers primarily to the need of youth to test and experiment. Coming face-to-face with the challenges and demands of the Bible and the Christ of the Bible is an exciting experience and one that any youth will enjoy.

NEEDS OF DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS (continued)

Needs of Youth:

Youth Sunday School or Christian Education is something done with youth, not something done to youth. Following are some guidelines that every teacher who works with this group should become aware of:

1. Accept youth
2. Be aware of youth developmental stages.
 - a. Youth is a time of moving from childhood to adulthood.
 - b. Youth is a time of searching for identity.
 - c. Youth look for role models.
 - d. Youth are strongly influenced by peers.
 - e. Youth look for meaningful relationships.
 - f. Youth will test and experiment.
3. Know why youth come to Sunday School/Christian Education
 - a. Social involvement
 - b. Peer group
 - c. Parent's expectations
 - d. Role model's encouragement
 - e. Needs met
 - f. Personal desire to grow spiritually
4. Be involved beyond the Sunday School or Christian Education experience.
5. Know the spiritual condition of each youth in your group.
6. Stay in touch with your culture.
7. Trust in the abilities of the youth to learn.
8. Help youth assume responsibility.
9. Remember that every youth needs affirmation.

The greatest spiritual development of youth will come when teachers and workers can help them intersect life needs with the truths of the Bible.

Needs of Adults:

Even though adults may be mature physically, they should still continue to mature mentally, socially, and spiritually. Adults are not all alike. Some are homebound. Some are married with children. Some are formerly married. Some live in institutions, or are temporarily away from home. In short, there is enormous diversity during these years that makes working with adults one of the most challenging areas of service. In preparing to meet the needs of adults, let's consider three major groups:

First: Young adults (ages eighteen through twenty-nine) This group faces important challenges regarding such things as education, vocational choice, marriage, and family responsibilities.

Second: Median adults (ages thirty through fifty-nine) this is a strategic time for personal and spiritual growth. Some adults face difficult experiences during these years, such as loss of a mate, physical changes, and vocational adjustment.

Third: Senior adults (age sixty and up) Senior adults undergo physical changes, yet their capacity for enjoying Bible study and Christian service may be the strongest of their lifetime.

The greatest need for adults is to know Christ as Savior and Lord in their lives. Most adults in our nation do not know Christ as personal Savior. Our mission is to enroll adults in Christian Education - Bible study. We must witness to them about Christ and teach His Word. When we reach adults, other members of the family will be reached.