

STAR Kids Volunteer Handbook



Pastor Jakob Koch - June 2018



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More Information?

Contact the Family Ministries Pastor
 By calling 905-387-5358 ext.135



Welcome to Children's Ministries! (aka STAR Kids)

We are so excited to welcome you to our team of passionate and enthusiastic volunteers! Here at West Highland we work together to bring the Gospel to life for each and every child we encounter. We believe in having fun and interactive teaching with the children and in coming alongside of them to encourage them, pray for them, and love on them. We hope that you're excited!

"He said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them."
Mark 10:13-16

West Highland's Statement of Faith

The Statement of Faith that members and directors of the Corporation are required to subscribe to can be accessed in full at: <http://www.westhighland.org/whatwebelievec152.php>

STAR Kids Mission Statement

West Highland STAR KIDS ministry team partners with families to introduce children and young people to Jesus and His Word, equipping each generation to live and share their faith effectively and navigate the challenges of life within their generation.

We want all children and young people to know they are safe, loved, called and capable, And God has a purpose for them.



STAR Kids Ministry Values

We have identified several key ministry values by which we guide our efforts. The evidence of living according to our values is that people will demonstrate genuine love for Christ, for His body of believers, and for those outside the Kingdom of God.

WE VALUE CREATIVE BIBLE TEACHING. Because we value the depth and creativity of God and His Word, we strive to provide opportunities for the children to experience Him through engaging activities and discussions. We believe children understand and retain more when the learning process takes into consideration how they learn best. We provide age-appropriate rooms with curriculums designed for each age group. We want all children to love God's Word and understand the value of applying it to their lives.

WE VALUE GROWTH. We believe that entering into a relationship with Jesus Christ is a process-oriented experience, not just an event. The life of the disciple is one of continual growth and maturity. Our aim of Christian Education and discipleship is to equip learners of all ages to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

WE VALUE SAFETY. We believe that physical and emotional safety is vital for both children and volunteers to function well. Screening, background checks, and training is required of all volunteers. We adhere to the safety policies of the West Highland's Children/Youth Protection Policy; as a part of this policy, recording of all attendance of all children infant to grade 6 is mandatory in the classroom. All volunteers are required to wear identification badges.

Guests to West Highland are required to register their children so that volunteers are provided with vital information needed to help serve children better. This application process includes listing any health concerns and who the parents/guardians of this child are in case of emergency. If a child is injured on church property or during a STAR Kids scheduled event, and injury/accident report must be filled out and submitted to the director of Children's Ministry. Each child must have a STAR Kids Check-In tag and whoever wishes to pick up the child at the end of the program must have the corresponding parent tag with the matching security code.

WE VALUE FAMILY. We desire to build-up Christian homes by encouraging families in their task of raising God fearing and loving children. We desire to help restore families to live in the fullness of God by providing strong, effective programming that supports the family's faith efforts for their children. We also encourage parents, as members of the this body, to serve in our Children's Ministry in some capacity.



STAR Kids Ministries

STAR Kids Sunday School: Sunday morning programming (at both 9am & 11am church services) provides a time of worship, fellowship, and discipleship for the children of West Highland. The age groupings for this program are as follows:

- **Nursery:** Babies will be checked in by their parents and will spend the service with our amazing nursery volunteers until the end of the service.
- **Preschool:** Toddlers in this program are checked in by their parents and will spend the service with our amazing preschool volunteers. They have a craft, snack, play time, a Bible lesson, and song time. They stay with the volunteers until the end of the service.
- **Kindergarten (Ages 4&5):** Kids in this program will be checked in by their parents and will spend the service participating in the class which includes a craft, play times, song time, and a Bible lesson.
- **Grades 1-6:** Kids in this program will be checked in by their parents prior to the service and will be dismissed from the service to come to their program. Each grade has their own small group first where there is attendance and small activity. Then all grades meet together for a time of worship, games, and a Bible lesson. The grades will then go back to their own individual classrooms for their second small group where there will be another activity based on the Bible lesson and some discussion questions. Children are to be picked up by parents at the end of the service.

STAR Kids Plus Class: This class runs during the 11am service to minister to the children of families who have parents attending one service and then serving in the other.

STAR Kids TREC: Sunday Evening programming is a time for interactive learning of God's word and fellowship with other children for Grades 1-6. There is also a childcare class provided for children 5 years of age and under.

STAR KIDS QUEST: This is a mid-week Bible program for children Grades 1-6. During this program, children are introduced to Jesus Christ and encouraged to develop relationships with the other children. This night offers Bible teaching, music, skill development, crafts games, gym activities, and more!

Other than weekly programs, STAR Kids has occasional special events. Most notable is our week long full day Vacation Bible Camp held in August.



Ministry Positions

There are many different ways that you can serve within our Children's Ministry! A brief description of each role our volunteers play in is written below. If you are interested please let the Children's Ministry Director know for a more detailed description.

UNITE Team: Each individual on this team is chosen by the Children's Ministry Director; they are individuals who are mature in their faith, members of our church, have spiritual gifts of leadership, faith, wisdom, and administration. These individuals have served in a ministry leadership capacity prior to being on the Unite Team. This team exists to prayerfully guide STAR Kids ministries. They evaluate past ministry and envision future ministry. They communicate the vision and direction of STAR Kids to all other volunteers. They also help the Children's Ministry Director prayerfully address matters of conflict and/or discipline.

STAR Kids Volunteers: These people volunteer in one (or more) of our ministries for STAR Kids. Either as a teacher, small group leader, classroom helper, or on tech. They are gifted in helps, shepherding, and service. They are members of our church or on their way to becoming members. They are people who help children apply the biblical truth they are learning. They must be able to build authentic relationships with children and strive to minister to children outside of the church context. These people are integral to this ministry and are involved in multiple areas of our STAR Kids ministries!

"He called the little children to him, and placed the child among them. He said: 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become more like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. If anyone causes one of these little ones - those who believe in me - to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.'" Matthew 18:2-6

We have a large role and privilege to play in these children's lives. It is not something that we take lightly. We work together as a team of volunteers to love, encourage, minister to, teach each and every child that comes through our church doors.



Requirements for Being a STAR Kids Volunteer

To be a volunteer in STAR Kids, you must have the following qualifications:

- Desire growth in the Word of God and Fellowship with other Believers weekly. Strive to glorify God by being most satisfied in Him! (John Piper)
- Model Christ-like character and attitudes. Living according to biblical virtues and values.
- Build authentic relationships with children, parents, and the volunteers you serve with.
- Live by the Fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). Especially demonstrating self-control and patient love in times of unplanned and unexpected turn of events.
- Be Faithful, Available, and Teachable (Howard Hendricks). Being Committed to attending meetings and training opportunities. Being on time and being prepared. Being responsible in finding substitutes if you are unable to attend your scheduled time.
- Be willing to adhere to and implement our safety policies (i.e. wearing your STAR Kids ID tag, using the check-in system and check-out protocol when appropriate, and obtaining a police check).
- Be a member of the church or in the process to become a member (if applicable).

Volunteer Background Police Checks

STAR Kids volunteers are required to have a Standard Police Check performed and submitted to West Highland every two years. If you are working one-on-one with a child or a vulnerable person then you must obtain a Vulnerable Sector Check.

You are able to obtain your Police Check online through West Highland BackCheck which is accessible through the Church Website or via the following link: <http://www.backcheck.net/westhighland/>

Doing your Police Check through BackCheck will send your completed Police Check directly to the church. This is our preferred option as the church can receive your Police Check in as little as 24 hours.

If you wish to do yours in person then you must receive an application form and letter of reference from the Family Ministries Pastor or the Director of Children's Ministry at West Highland. Fill out the application form. Go in person to the Hamilton Police Service Station. Bring with you the completed form, your letter of reference and personal ID. The cost is approx. \$15 but sometimes they will do it for free if you are a volunteer.

Please submit the police check to the Family Ministries Pastor or Director of Children's Ministry. You cannot serve in STAR Kids until that search has been received and your application has been processed.



How to Join our STAR Kids Team!

We do have an application process for anyone wanting to join the STAR Kids team and wanting to volunteer with STAR Kids. We have applications that are available through the Family Ministries Pastor and/or Director of Children's ministry. There are two different types of applications. One is for youth (anyone under the age of 18) and the other is for adults (18 and older). Once the application is finished, applicants are asked to return their application to the Family Ministries Pastor, Director of Children's Ministry or the Church Office. From there the Family Ministries Pastor and/or Director of Children's Ministry will evaluate the application and contact the applicant for an interview to discuss their desires on where they would like to volunteer and in what capacity.

In order to volunteer in STAR Kids we require our volunteers to obtain a standard police check. As well, we require our volunteers to go through our mandatory volunteer safety training called **Reduce the Risk**. Reduce the Risk is our safety training that is mandatory for each and every STAR Kids volunteer to participate in. It has to be renewed once a year. The church provides this on one Sunday a year after the second service.

Once through the application process the applicant will then receive their personal STAR Kids ID tag that states that they are an approved STAR Kids Volunteer. They can then go into the area that they are to serve in.



STAR Kids Headquarters - Resource Room!

The Resource Room is the headquarters of STAR Kids. It has everything and anything that you will need to volunteer in STAR Kids. Below is a tour with everything that the Resource Room has to offer.



The Resource Room

The Resource Room has lots of space available for volunteer meetings and space to prep and plan for upcoming Children's Ministry Programmes.



The Printer

The printer is accessible for all STAR Kids volunteers to use for ministries purposes. The cupboard next to it (pictured) has all of the printer supplies needed.



Paper Center

Here in the organized file holder (**Blue Circle**) we have all of the formal documentation (eg. registration forms for our programs, volunteer applications, background check information, incident/ injury report forms, & cheque requisition forms).

The Safety Binder (**Red Circle**) is available for all volunteers to access. It contains the safety policies, injury report forms, reduce the risk information, and all of the church procedures.



Craft Shelves

Here is where all of our craft supplies are located. Every box is labelled and is placed on the shelf with the corresponding label.

If you take something, please put it back. If you use the last of something let the Director of Children's Ministry/Admin Assistant/Intern know so that more of it can be ordered.



Bookshelves

(Red Circle) This is where all of the Bibles that are available to give out to children and youth (if they do not own their own personal Bible) are located. The shelf above is full of devotional books that can be given to kids/youth when given a Bible.

(Blue Circle) This is where all of our Bibles that can be used during classes/programs are located. These Bibles are not to be given away.

(Green Circle) This is the birthday/prize cart. Children are able to come pick a prize on their birthday or if a leader awards them with a prize.



STAR Kids ID Tag Station

This pillar in the Resource Room is home to the STAR Kids ID Tags. This is where all of the ID Tags are kept. With the exception of the Nursery and Preschool Volunteers. Their ID Tags are located in their classrooms.



Black Cupboards

These cupboards store seasonal decorations, VBC supplies, Quest Supplies, and the Sunday School Attendance sheets amongst other supplies.



Procedures

Discipline

When a child is disruptive, all the children are affected. Our goal is to handle disruptions and behaviour issues quickly, consistently and graciously. Remember that all difficulties are opportunities for you to build and encourage the children you lead, and to be a positive role model in their lives. Proper behaviour management benefits all the children, and makes them feel safe and secure, while providing opportunity for disruptive children to learn and grow. You may have to attend to situations where the leader is unable to further handle a situation. If you need further assistance do not hesitate to call the Director of Children's Ministry or the Family Ministries Pastor.

General Goal

In all cases of behavioural concerns, our goal is to lovingly teach our kids the right action or reaction. Remember Proverbs 22:6 "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is older he will not turn from it." We want to build up our kids by showing them acceptable behaviour. Open and ongoing communication with the parents is essential in keeping this teaching consistent between church and home.

Specific Procedural Details:

- 1) It is never permissible to use physical force for discipline.
- 2) Acceptable form of discipline is to separate a child from the group, i.e. sitting by themselves until they are ready to re-enter the group situation.
- 3) After three serious warnings/infractions per class session, a child may be removed from the program. An usher is called to bring the parent(s) to their child. For Quest, the child may be taken to the Coordinator. If the problem persists, the parent(s) may be asked to attend class with their child.
- 4) Any unusual incidents (i.e. serious behavioural problems or confrontations, etc.) should be reported to the Director of Children's Ministry in a written report. Incident/Accident report sheets are kept in the resource room with the file organizers.

Physical discipline is never permitted. Using physical restraint (i.e. preventing a child from doing something dangerous) is permitted. Children need to be affirmed and encouraged.

Medical

For minor injuries use a cool cloth and/or BandAid. First Aid Kits are available in the Resource Room, Kitchen, and Foyer Welcome Window. When a child is treated (even just a BandAid) an incident report needs to be completed and returned to the Family Ministries Pastor. The parent needs to sign it. A ministry team member will follow up.



Serious Injuries involving broken bones, seizures, convulsions, fainting, unconsciousness, or other bodily injury should be treated as follows:

- 1) **DO NOT MOVE CHILD**. A leader must remain with the child. Get the other children out of the room.
- 2) Stay calm and speak reassuringly to the child while another leader gets an **Emergency First Aid or Standardized First Aid certified person to assist**. (List of First Aid Certified People Posted in Resource Room)
- 3) Get the Family Ministries Pastor or Director of the specific ministry to come for assistance.
- 4) Ministry Team Staff, Family Ministries Pastor, or Director of the Specific Ministry involved is to call 911 if necessary.
- 5) Ministry Team Staff, Family Ministries Pastor, or Director of the Specific Ministry involved is to call parent(s) and take over the situation. If a person arrives at the scene and has a higher first aid certification they trump and take charge.
- 6) Incident Report needs to be completed following the incident.

Volunteers are, under **no circumstance**, allowed to administer medication. Including Epi-Pens. If a child is anaphylactic and requires an EpiPen they must administer it themselves or their parent must do so. If an EpiPen is administered on church property paramedics **must** be called. Paramedics can arrive at the church in 3 and half minutes.

Fire/Evacuation

- 1) Director of Children's Ministry should supervise or designate a supervisor to evacuate.
- 2) All classes maintain a log as to the number in the class each time rooms are being used.
- 3) All classes will familiarize evacuation routes from their area of the church-also familiarize your secondary access route, if needed.
- 4) Upon activation of evacuation procedure - teacher with adult classe will instruct their class to leave the building using the designate route. Advise all members to move to the furthest point away from the building.
- 5) Children's Ministry Leaders will evacuate their children using designated exit route. Use ropes provided to keep children under control.
- 6) Children's Ministry Leaders in the Preschool and Nursery classes prepare children for evacuation. Congregation Teams will come to assist in the evacuation of these areas.
- 7) Leaders and Assistants are to confirm a head count. If anyone is missing - advise the Director of Children's Ministry/Family Ministries Pastor.
- 8) All persons evacuated from the church will proceed to furthest area from the exit they excited from. All children to be kept in their group until parents arrive.

Policies, Procedures, Forms/Miscellaneous and Guidelines

Subject: Children/Youth Discipline Procedure - Index 1.7.1. (Created Dec. 5/05)



Safety Policies

A. Purpose

The church has a legal responsibility to provide a secure environment for children participating in church programs who are under the care and authority of the church. As well as to give guidance to our workers in order to protect them from unfounded accusations of child abuse.

This policy is intended to further the above responsibilities by addressing the following issues:

1. The church's responsibility to protect those under its care from possible harm.
2. The church's responsibility to protect our workers and the church from any unfounded accusations from those with whom they work and the parents of a child.
3. The church's responsibility under the law to report signs of child abuse.

B. Children's Ministry Personnel

1. All those who work with children and youth under the age of 18 years must be members of West Highland Fellowship Baptist Church or in the process of becoming a member.
2. Screening and approval of workers shall be done in accordance with separate "Procedure for screening Children/Youth Workers".
3. All those who work with children and youth must be at least 12 years of age.

C. Guidelines for Workers

1. All workers involved in Children's Ministry and/or Student Ministry shall avail themselves of training opportunities directed at issues of child abuse, identification, and reporting obligations, as prescribed by the church leadership. (I.e. Reduce the Risk)
2. A system shall be in place to ensure children under the age of 9 years are picked up from a program by a person predetermined and agreed upon between the leaders and the guardian. (I.e. STAR Kids PCO Check-In System)
3. More than one worker shall be present in a closed room whenever a child(ren)/youth is present.
4. Workers shall not be "one-on-one" with a child/youth in a vehicle.
5. Workers must not be alone with children in washrooms. Washrooms must be checked for unsafe conditions prior to allowing a child in and waiting outside thereafter.
6. Consent forms are to be completed and signed for trips outside the church.
7. Workers are to make themselves familiar with procedures and appropriate interactions with children/youth in the area of their ministry.
8. Workers are under no circumstance allowed to administer medication in the case of emergency including epipens. *See above medical procedures for guidelines.*
9. Discipline:
 - a. It is never permissible to use physical force for discipline (i.e. Spanking, jerking, slapping, squeezing, pressure points, etc.)
 - b. An acceptable form of discipline is to separate a child from the group (i.e. sitting by themselves until they are ready to re-enter the group situation).
 - c. See separate Behavioural Discipline Procedure for dealing with a child who does not respond to verbal correction.
10. Any unusual incidents (i.e. serious behavioural problems or confrontations, etc.) should be reported to the Director of Children's Ministry in a written report. The incident log book located in the Safety Binder in resource room should be used for this.
11. Injuries are to be reported on and in accordance with the Incident/Accident Form, located in the resource room.



D. Reporting Child Abuse

1. Each person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child (under the age of 16 years) is or has suffered abuse, is or may be in need of protection, shall forthwith report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to those in authority in the church (Family Ministries Pastor and/or Director of Children's Ministry). The individual (in authority in the church) shall report the occurrence to the Church's licensed counsellor and then the Children's Aid Society in compliance with the Child and Family Services Act. (See separate Policy and Procedure relating to Abuse).
2. Abuse can take various forms:
 - a. Physical, Mental, and/or Emotional Harm
 - b. Neglect
 - c. Sexual Molestation or exploitation
 - d. Lack of medical treatment

E. Policy for Those Alleged to have Abused a Child

1. Those with concerns about possible child abuse by a fellow worker are required to express such concern to their ministry team director.
2. If there is no satisfactory resolution or if there is a written report alleging that any person has caused or has threatened to abuse a child, the Family Ministries Pastor and/or the Senior Pastor (or his delegate) shall be informed. As a matter of policy, such person shall immediately be removed from any duties or responsibilities in the children's ministry pending the outcome of the investigation. (The suspension from duties and responsibilities is not and shall not be seen or accepted as the "guilt" of the individual, but only as an indication of the priority given to the need to protect our children.)
3. As required under the Child and Family Services Act, the incident shall be reported by the individual making the allegations in conjunction with the Family Ministries Pastor and/or Senior Pastor (or his delegate) to the Church's Licensed Counsellor and the Children's Aid Society. Any notice of suspension from duties shall be given in such a way that no investigation of the Children's Aid Society or police will be put into jeopardy and shall be done in consultation with the civil authorities. The Family Ministry Pastor and/or Senior Pastor (or his delegate) shall be the church's only spokesperson when dealing with outside agencies.

Any person, volunteer, or employee, found to have abused a child or placed a child at risk shall, apart from any other discipline process, be prohibited from future participation in any children's ministry in the church.



STAR Kids Check-In System

Purpose: To provide a secure environment for our children under our care and for peace of mind for parents who leave their children with us.

- Each child must be checked in by a parent or guardian for each event.
- The unique security number printed on each label will change for each event.
- The child paging number will be printed on each label and will change for each event.
- For each child checked in, one adhesive label will be printed, the label is to be affixed on the child.
- One label will be printed for the parent or guardian who retains this label to pick up their children.
- For check out, the parent unique security number **must** be matched with the child's security number. The child cannot be released to a parent or guardian without the matching security label. Check out policies are posted in every STAR Kids classrooms.
- We have two types of check in stations, manned and self serve.
- STAR Kids Welcome desk: Parents fill out the registration paper form and then are inputted into the PCO (Computer) so that they can get their name labels. Only their names and phone number will be inputted into the computer to save time. More of their information will be inputted later.
- We have six self serve stations:
 - Two at the south-east entrance
 - Three outside the Star Kids resource room
 - One on the main level in the lobby



Child Development - Infants (0-1yr)

Every child develops differently

Physical Development:

- Their world is tangible - use their senses by observing, touching, holding, and putting things in their mouth to learn.
- Reaches for objects
- Eyesight is becoming more fine-tuned. Likes to watch bright things move.
- Like to be held closely and rocked
- Can recognize repeated distinct sounds like voices and music
- Can mimic movements
- Can learn cause and effect through what looks like playing

Social Development:

- Family is significant
- Can recognize faces and can be fascinated with faces
- Can be away from parents for longer periods of time as they age

Emotional Development:

- Feels safest when parents are near
- Cry to express needs (hungry, tired, scared, overwhelmed)
- Enjoys smiling
- Loud or sudden noises can startle
- Experience love through caring and providing safety

Spiritual Development:

- Experience God's grace and love through people by their body language and words, hearing that God made them and loves them. (Eg. praying over a baby, caring for a baby, etc.)

Mental Development:

- Communicates by: pointing, crying, reaching, etc.
- Learns through repetition and can recognize familiar music, faces, and voices.
- Learns by using their senses



Child Development - Toddlers (2-3yrs)

Every child develops differently

Physical Development:

- Can walk without support at about 12-18 months
- Can drink from a cup without assistance
- Increase in overall Gross and Fine motor skills (running, standing, balancing)
- Toilet training stages occurring
- Can start to dress and undress themselves

Social Development:

- Number of people who they trust is getting bigger
- Likes to play with peers and/or playing beside peers (parallel play)
- Learning how to share with others
- Can imitate the behaviour of people around them
- Can experience separation anxiety

Spiritual Development:

- Can listen and learn simple Bible stories.
- Accepts and learns simple truths (i.e. Jesus loves me, God is my friend)
- Beginning to experience prayer and can begin to start saying small prayers.

Emotional Development:

- Emotions can fluctuate and are typically visible
- Can get frustrated when unable to express needs or wants (can show frustration with a temper tantrum)
- Sometimes emotions are based off of physical needs

Mental Development:

- Beginning to talk, use short sentences, tell stories...
- Can begin to follow one or two step instructions
- Learning right from wrong
- Very curious about the world around them
- Shorter attention spans
- Learn through play and movement



Child Development - Kindergarteners (Ages 4-5 yrs)

Every child develops differently

Physical Development:

- Gross and Fine Motor skills are continuing to develop
- Can dress and undress self
- Can participate in more gross motor activities (ie. running, skipping, jumping, throwing a ball, etc.)

Social Development:

- Family is important
- Likes to play with other children
- Starting to understand taking turns and sharing

Emotional Development:

- More flexible about changes in routine
- Express emotions through actions (i.e. jumping when happy or exciting, hitting or grumbling when angry)

Spiritual Development:

- Learning about prayer (means talking to God, learning importance of it)
- Beginning to ask questions about God
- Can show God's love by doing kind things for others
- Can start to remember simple Bible stories
- Know that God loves them and wants to be their friend.
- Consistent adult leaders help children to understand and experience God's love and commitment more.

Mental Development:

- Asks questions to learn and are curious about the world around them
- Learning to read and remember stories
- Can take what is said literally



Child Development - Grade 1 & 2

Every child develops differently

Physical Development:

- Eye-hand coordination is improving
- Beginning to throw and catch a ball more easily
- Gross Motor Skills are beginning to fully develop (Gymnastics, soccer, baseball, dance, etc.)

Social Development:

- Friendships are expanding
- Want to please others
- Play in smaller groups
- Test limits to learn rules

Emotional Development:

- Can be impatient
- Beginning to develop a personal sense of humor
- Can sometime accept constructive criticism
- Feeling more independent

Spiritual Development:

- Has an understanding of what it means to be in a relationship with God
- Can start to better understand Biblical concepts (i.e. That God is everywhere, He is all knowing, etc.)
- Consistent adult leaders help to understand and experience God's love and commitment.
- Can learn Biblical truths like: The Bible is God's Word. The Bible teaches people about God. We can trust the Bible. God loves me and sent His Son to die for me. God is loving. God created the world and all that is in it.

Mental Development:

- Asks questions to learn
- Attention span is expanding
- Still learning difference between right and wrong
- Beginning to read and write more



Child Development - Grades 3 & 4

Every child develops differently

Physical Development:

- Mastering gross motor movements and improving fine motor skills
- Girls typically develop faster than boys do.
- Developing coordination

Social Development:

- Can be competitive
- Beginning to cooperate and work well in a group of people
- Starts to reach out to others more than think only about themselves

Emotional Development:

- Enjoy being praised
- Developing sense of humor
- Feeling more independent
- Emotions can be visible

Spiritual Development:

- Asking questions about the Bible, God and Heaven
- Beginning to understand more about what it means to follow Jesus and to be in a relationship with Him
- Understand that God wants them to grow and become Christ-like, that they can trust Him, and that God wants to them to develop their talents that He gave them.

Mental Development:

- More verbal and able to express thoughts and emotions
- Can read and write
- Learning more about math
- Has a longer attention span
- Understands cause and effect
- Increased ability to solve problems



Child Development - Grades 5 & 6

Every child develops differently

Physical Development:

- Developing coordination, speed, and accuracy
- Gross and fine motor skills increase
- Increasing awareness of the differences between boys and girls

Social Development:

- Want a sense of belonging
- Form groups based on shared interests
- Enjoy communicating with others
- Looking for role models outside of family
- Friends begin to have a bigger influence

Emotional Development:

- Becoming more independent
- Becoming more self-conscious
- Impressionable
- Criticism and compliments affect them
- Increased ability to empathize with others

Spiritual Development:

- Hearing personal testimonies help them to understand who God is
- Beginning to understand Biblical symbols
- Learning that God wants them to grow, learn, and follow Him
- Understanding what forgiveness means
- Learning about giving and serving

Mental Development:

- Critical thinking skills are developing
- Like to participate in discussions
- Interests are increasing as they learn what they like and don't like
- Increased reading and writing ability
- Increase in problem-solving skills
- Can start to make their own decisions



Child Development - Special Needs

Every child develops differently

Physical Development:

- Delayed reactions
- May have a limp
- Difficulty walking
- Difficulty talking
- Smaller/shorter than other children their age
- Taller than other children their age
- Delayed gross and fine motor skills
- May not be able to use their motor skills as well as others their age

Social Development:

- Not understanding social cues
- Shy in interactions with others
- Timid and/or Quiet
- Outgoing
- Have evident comfort levels
- Don't always understand the comfort levels of others

Emotional Development:

- May not be able to read others emotions
- May not show emotions as clearly as others
- May show a lot of emotions
- Can become frustrated easily
- Their emotions can change rapidly

Spiritual Development:

- May not have a good understanding of the Bible
- May have an amazing understanding of the Bible
- May not be able to break down concepts of what is being taught
- May need lessons to be broken down.

Mental Development:

- Could be behind other children their age
- May take longer to understand a concept than children their age
- May be at a younger age mentally than children their age
- May excel at a certain subject more than others.



Answering Difficult Questions

How we talk to about faith to children in their phase of life matters. One of the best things that you can do is to be a coach, not a teacher. The best thing to remember is to care about every question that a child may ask, because the answer to that question is important to them. How you respond to them will determine if they will want to continue to talk to you about their faith and their questions. If you do not know the answer to their question then you can always admit that you do not know the answer and that you'll find out. Then get back to them and follow through with answering their question.

What to say:

- "I don't know. But we can find out together!"
- "No question is too small or too big for God. He's thought of everything!"
- "I'm glad that you feel like you can come to me with questions."
- "Having doubts about your faith and God does not mean that you are doing it 'wrong'."
-

What not to say:

- "We don't ask those kind of questions."
- "If you really did have faith in God then you wouldn't be feeling like this or going through this."
- "If you really loved God..."
- "When you really love God and have a relationship with Him everything in life works out for you."



Leading a Child to Christ

You are to be a guide, model, and shepherd. God is the one who will lead a child to himself, not you. The Word is your map to helping a child understand what is involved in following Jesus. Your **primary purpose** is to share the gospel with a child and to offer to be with the child if they want to make a decision to believe in Jesus Christ and accept God's gift of salvation.

BEING PREPARED:

1. Be sensitive. Being sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit is the most important part of leading anyone to Christ. When you are submissive to God's leading, you will also be sensitive to the "seeker" and ready to become a channel through which the Holy Spirit can work.
2. Be prepared - Yourself, spiritually, totally dependent on the Lord and the working of His Spirit

LEADING THE WAY:

1. Ask why the child has come to you. i.e. to have my sin taken away, to accept Jesus as my Saviour, to be able to go to heaven, to become a child of God, etc.
2. Why do you need (want) to....? (Base this question on the previous answer.)
3. Have you ever before? (Base this question on the previous answer.)

If yes, ask when. If the answer is hazy, perhaps the child hasn't really taken this step or has gone through the "process" but hasn't really made a heart decision. If unsure, you may lead the child to the Lord again but clarify that this only needs to be done once. Sometimes, if the child knows he/she has sinned, the child may feel things are not right with the Lord.

Or... You may need to deal with assurance of salvation rather than conversion.

4. Do you know how to....? (Again the wording needs to refer back to the previous conversation.)



What are the important steps that need to be understood? There are many Scripture references you can use. Whether you use the “Roman Road”, the Gospel of John or other verses, know at least one reference well for each of the following:

- a) God loves you and wants you to live with Him forever Ref. *Romans 5:8*
- b) God cannot allow sin into His home (heaven) and since we have all sinned we need to be forgiven for our sin Ref. *Matthew 6:14-15*
- c) God the Son, Jesus, took the punishment for your sin when He died on the cross rose again. Ref. *1 Peter 3:18*
- d) When you are sorry for your sin and ask His forgiveness, He has promised to forgive and cleanse you. Ref. *Acts 3:19*
- e) When we tell Jesus we are sorry for our sin and ask Him to forgive us, He adopts us into His family forever. Ref. *Luke 6:37*

Make sure the child knows that this information comes from God’s Word.

5. As much as possible, the child should pray on his own when he is ready. You can help him formulate a prayer by asking questions such as, “What do you want Jesus to do for you?”
6. Lead the child to a “faith” relationship in Christ, i.e. What have you just asked Jesus to do? Has He done it? How do you know? These questions lead to accepting God at His word. (Be prepared with appropriate Scriptures.)
7. Thanksgiving is an important part of demonstrating faith. Lead the child to thank God (Jesus) for what He has done.

FOLLOWING UP:

8. If possible, provide the opportunity for the child to share what he has done with someone who will understand. This is a first great step in learning to share the Good News. Be careful of the wording of your statement. If you say, “George would like to tell you that he just accepted Christ as his Saviour”, you have left the child with nothing to say. It would be much better to say, “George has something to tell you.”
9. Immediate steps for growth are important to help keep the child close to the Lord. If time permits, do some coaching right away, provide literature, give direction for Bible reading and prayer or follow up as soon as possible.
10. Pray for the child daily and encourage him/her whenever possible.



Blessings

“The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace.” **Numbers 6:24-26**

“Only fear the Lord and serve Him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great things He has done for you.” **1 Samuel 12:24**

“But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” **Isaiah 40:31**

“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” **Ephesians 4:32**

“Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” **Colossians 3:17**

“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called Children of God.” **1 John 3:1**

“Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.” **Proverbs 22:6**

“When Jesus saw this, He was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” And He took the children in His arms, placed His hands on them and blessed them.” **Mark 10:13-16**