

Colorado Community Church



Children's Ministry Teacher Training Packet

Know ~ Grow ~ Go

"Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it." Proverbs 22:6



Thanks for your commitment to the Lord and to the Children's Ministry at Colorado Community Church. You are needed and very much appreciated!

You have been called to serve and to be part of a team that...

*has a teachable Spirit

*is enthusiastic

*is flexible

*is dependable

*has team players

... and most of all, shares our Philosophy of Children's Ministry.

From us you can expect us to love you with the love of Christ, pray for you, *challenge* you, and be your servants and leaders.

From you we need a *commitment* so you can see the progress you are making and so the children see the same people ministering Jesus' love each week.

God Bless you as we serve together,

Annie Waterman
Children's Pastor

WHAT A CHILD NEEDS TO KNOW

A. Who God is

1. God is alive.
2. God is the creator.
3. God is the author of the Bible.
4. God is holy and just.
5. God loves you and me.

B. His /Her need of a Savior (Romans 3:23)

1. You are born with a “want” to sin.
2. You do many sinful things.
3. The Bible says, “all have sinned.”
4. God says there is a punishment for sin.
5. Only God can save you from sins’ punishment.

C. God’s way of salvation (1 Corinthians 15:3,4)

1. Jesus is God the Son.
2. Jesus was a perfect man.
3. Jesus died, was buried and rose again to pay for your sin.
4. Jesus now lives in heaven, seated at the right hand of God the Father.
5. Salvation is a free gift, paid for by the Lord Jesus.

D. The child’s response (Acts 16:31, John 1:12)

1. You must believe Jesus died for you.
2. Salvation is a free gift, not something you can earn by anything you do or don’t do.
3. You must receive this gift from God.

E. God’s promise to each believer (John 3:16, Hebrews 13:5)

1. God forgives your sins and gives you everlasting life.
2. God promises never to leave you.
3. God will help you live a life that pleases Him.

Mission

To help our families in laying a spiritual foundation for our children, encouraging personal relationships with Jesus Christ and equipping our children to share their faith with others.

Vision

Our goal is to let the Son of God shine to the world as our children develop a personal relationship and grow in that relationship with Jesus Christ.

Core Values

Provide comfort to parents by providing a loving and accepting environment adapted to the special needs of each child.

KNOW

(Evangelism)

Our Children's Ministry will encourage personal relationships with Jesus Christ and outreach to non-believing children.

John 3:16 (NIV) "For God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Our Children's Ministry will show our children that they matter to God and to us in a kid-friendly place.

Matthew 19:14 (NIV) Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Psalms 127:3 (NIV) "Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from Him."

Grow

(Discipleship)

Our Children's Ministry will be based around the Bible and prayer and will strive to show the Bible's relevance to today's world.

Isaiah 43:18-19 (NIV) "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now is springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert streams in the wasteland."

Our Children's Ministry will be a team effort that promotes unity and fellowship.

Acts 2:42 (NIV) "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."

GO

(Servanthood)

Our Children's Ministry will equip our children to share their faith with others.

Exodus 34:34-35 (NIV) "But whenever he entered the Lord's presence to speak with Him, he removed the veil until he came out. And when he came out and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, they saw that his face was radiant. Then Moses would put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with the Lord."

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NIV) "And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

Matthew 28:19 (NIV) "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."

Teachers Vow to...

Show unconditional love to each child because God loves him/her with an overwhelming love. We will strive to show each child who comes in our doors that he or she is special just because they are loved by God.

Matthew 18:1-5 (NIV) “At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, ‘Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?’ He called a little child and had him stand among them. And He said: ‘I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.’”

Matthew 18:10 (NIV) “See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.”

Get to know each child by listening, talking, observing and questioning. It is important to know the relationship each of our children has with Jesus.

Proverbs 20:11 (NIV) “Even a child is known by his actions, by whether his conduct is pure and right.”

1 Cor. 9:20, 22 (NIV) “To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.”

Provide a spiritual foundation for children that encourage them to have a personal relationship with Jesus and encourage them to grow in grace.

Philip. 3:10 (NIV) “I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death.”

Come prepared on the weekend, and other days of service prayerfully studying. Having meaningful age-appropriate activities that involve each student and helping each child to know how the Bible lesson is relevant to their life.

2 Tim. 3:16-17 (NIV) “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

Children's Ministry Covenant

As a volunteer in children's ministry, I acknowledge having read the following and am in agreement with the statements set forth.

I understand that to work in the children's ministry I covenant to:

- A. Follow Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and strive to have an intimate, growing relationship with Him
- B. Regard the Bible as the authoritative guide to faith and life, and follow the principles stated within
- C. Commit to a balanced Christian lifestyle that reflects maturity, stability and accountability
- D. Subscribe to the following priority order in terms of my life's focus and energy; God, family, ministry
- E. Regard service as an extension to my commitment to Jesus and not a duty or obligation
- F. Maintain unity – agree not to teach or practice things contrary to the Bible or the mission of Colorado Community Church
- G. Work with other team members, head teacher and subs to provide coverage when I am not available
- H. Have open lines of communication with the children's ministry staff with any issue that may affect our Ministry
- I. Serve for **12 months**, or as agreed upon with children's ministry staff
- J. Read and respond to communications from children's ministry staff in a timely manner(via email, website or in the classroom)
- K. Arrive early enough to participate in before class prayer time, relieve other teachers and greet children in my class (**half hour before each service hour**)(**Weekend volunteers only**)
- L. **Be willing to be held lovingly accountable to fulfill my commitment**

I have **prayerfully considered** volunteering in children's ministry, and **fully realize the importance of my commitment**. In order to help maintain continuity and stability in the lives of the children placed under my care, **I am agreeing to be faithful in both my preparation and attendance**. I am determined to be committed to the children, children's ministry team and the Lord as I strive to serve Him and impact precious young lives for His glory!

Signed _____

Date _____

Printed _____

**Colorado Community Church
Ouch Report Form**

Child's Name: _____

Class Name /Hour _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Description of what happened: _____

Description of action taken:

Follow-up suggested: _____

Always fill out both portions of this form. Tear off the bottom part and give it to the parents.

Give this top part to the Children's Ministries Pastor. Thanks!

.....

**Colorado Community Church
Ouch Report Form**

Child's Name: _____

Class Name /Hour _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Description of what happened: _____

Description of action taken:

Follow-up suggested: _____

Prayer Request and Praise Report

Your Name: _____

Your Grade: _____

Your Request or Praise: _____

Please make prayer a regular part of your class time. We meet every Wednesday afternoon to pray over the requests of our kids and teachers. You'll find both of these forms in your classes on the bulletin boards.

Teachers How Can We Pray for You?

Your Name: _____

Area you Serve: _____

Your Request or Praise: _____

Safety and Emergency Policies and Procedures

In the event of an accident:

1. All accidents will be handled by the class leader. An ouch report should be filled out and signed by the class leader before the service is over. One copy of the report will be given to the parent, the other copy will be given to the Children's Ministries front desk.
2. Parents must be notified no matter how small the incident.
3. First aid kits are located in the resource room. Send a teacher to the front desk for assistance and the kit. Page parent for an incident that requires more than an ouch report.
4. In the case of a severe accident, send one assistant immediately to call 911 using the phone at the front desk (or cell phone). Page parent, then locate the Children's Ministries Pastor or Assistant. All of these tasks should be done calmly without causing a disturbance. The class leader must stay with the injured child. The other volunteers must continue to minister to the rest of the children so that they do not become upset or frightened.
5. Pray with the child. Touch the child to reassure them but do not move them. Give instructions in a calm, low voice.
6. Fill out an Accident Report Form and give it to the Children's Ministry Pastor or Assistant.

In the event of a fire:

1. See the route for your class – posted in you individual classroom.
2. If the fire starts near your classroom, send one person to report the fire to the Pastor and pull the alarm
3. If the fire alarm is ringing or a fire is obvious, immediately gather all children.
4. Take the laminated class sign with you
5. Children will be escorted out of the classroom by the class leader. Instruct each child to stay with the group and not leave the group for any reason
6. Move children as quickly as possible, but do not rush or frighten them
7. Keep children in a close group reassuring them in calm voices
8. Move as far from the building as needed to be safe but stay on the church property (within parking lot / grass area). Have your sign ready to hold high for parents to see where their kids are
9. Do not release any child without going through the usual security checkout
10. No leader or teacher may leave the group until all children in the class are safely reunited with their parents

In the event of a weather emergency:

1. Classroom leaders and assistants will be notified by the Pastor of any weather related emergencies (e.g., tornado)
2. Children should be gathered and escorted by the class leader. Instruct each child to stay with the group and not leave ht group for any reason
3. Children should be taken to the restrooms or dressing rooms nearest each classroom.

Drop off/Pick up Procedures:

- Children should be accompanied by a parent and have already signed in and received a nametag from children's ministry staff. If do not have a tag, please send them back to the CM desk.
- The number on the child's tag (nursery – Kindergarten classes only) is the number you would ask the nursery to page if a child's parent needs to be called.
- Please look at the "Class Age Breakdown" on the bulletin board in each classroom for the correct age of the children in the class. You will go by their birth date and not their current age. We move children up to their next class, all together, in September of each year. The only exceptions, are the Chicks and Bunnies classes, where children are moved from Chicks to Bunnies at 18 months and from Bunnies to Ducks at 2 years.
- If a child has an "Allergy Alert" sticker on, please look closer at their nametag to confirm what they are allergic to. If it is related to food, CCC lists the ingredients of each snack we serve (goldfish & animal crackers) on the bulletin board in each classroom for parents to look at. If the child cannot eat gluten or has a severe peanut allergy, let a CCC staff person at the CM desk know and we can provide popcorn.
- When a child is picked up, please verify that the person picking them up has a printed claim number that matches the child's nametag. If they do not have their tag, please send them to the CM desk to speak with a staff member.
- Only children with !!! on their name tag may be excused from class without a parent picking them up. !!! does not excuse them from class at any time. Please do not release kids until other parents begin arriving and service is clearly over. There are forms at the CM desk that parents may fill out if they would like their child to be able to excuse themselves from class.

Worship Time:

- We have worship time led by kids for kids in the upstairs classrooms. During the first Saturday service and the Sunday services, this is a joint time for 1st-6th grade kids. The worship time starts 5 minutes into the hour, in 456 classroom.
- At the 2nd Saturday service, the 1st – 6th graders will attend service for the first 15 minutes in the Worship Center. Teachers will sit with the kids and bring them up to class during announcements.
- Please consider this as much a time of teaching and learning as the rest of the time you are with the kids. While some "crowd control" is necessary, we ask that you seek to engage kids by being an example of worship! ☺ If the kids see you in the back of the room not participating then they will see that as an invitation to do the same.

Lesson Supplies:

- Lessons are available online or directly from CCC staff. Please let us know if you don't have access to the internet.
- Each lesson includes a Bible verse for the children in the Lambs-6th grade. Bible verse stickers are located in the black supply bin for Lambs-Kindergarten. 1st-6th grade kids have a ¼ page sheet of cardstock with their verse on them in the black supply bin.
- Classrooms are stocked with common teaching supplies (i.e. crayons, markers, scissors, glue sticks, etc.) If your classroom gets low on supplies, please let us know so we can restock. Specific lesson supplies will be provided by CCC staff and left in the black bin on the counter.
- Please avoid bringing special snacks to class with you and only serve the snacks we provide. We have a number of kids with allergies.

Teacher/Child Safety:

- Never be alone with a child(ren) in a classroom.
- Keep upper part of classroom door open at all times.
- In downstairs classes (Ducks – Calves), 2 volunteers need to take children to the restroom. If there are only 2 volunteers in the classroom, one volunteer should stay while the other takes the children to the restroom. That volunteer should stop by the Children's Ministry Desk to ask a front desk volunteer to accompany them so that 2 volunteers are in the restroom with the children.
- If you have a teen in class, please send them on bathroom runs as they cannot be left alone in class with your kids.
- Due to typical staffing, it is preferable to send female teachers to the front desk for bathroom runs.
- While in the restroom, never be in a stall alone with a child. If they need assistance, help the child while keeping the door open or stay outside the stall.
- "Floater" volunteers are scheduled during services to provide additional supervision if a teacher is late or does not show for any reason, or if there are a higher number of children than expected. Floaters are not expected to teach the lesson but instead assist with crowd control, bathroom runs, snack, lesson and craft preparation, calming children, etc. Floaters are scheduled as they are available and are not guaranteed per service.
- Children with special needs are included in CCC classrooms. If the child has higher needs they are supported by a "Buddy", a volunteer assigned to that child to help them feel more secure and succeed in the classroom environment. Teachers will be informed in advance of the children in their classrooms who have Buddies. If you are concerned about how to provide support for a child with special needs (regardless of whether or not they have a buddy) please let a staff person know. We can help to provide some additional support.

Scheduling/Classroom Procedures:

- Work directly with your Head Teacher to communicate your schedule preferences and confirm your teaching dates.
- If you know beforehand that you can't teach on a date you're scheduled, please:
 - 1) Contact other volunteers in your class to see if one of them can switch teaching dates with you.
 - 2) If they can, please alert your Head Teacher and CCC staff of the change.
 - 3) If they can't, please contact CCC staff to see if a sub can be found.
- If you have to cancel your teaching assignment last minute due to illness, accident, etc., please contact your assigned CCC Staff person (Michele 303-902-5419 or Dejah 720-620-0837) up until Saturday night. If it is Sunday morning, please contact Annie at 720-320-6736.
- Feel free to contact the other teachers you are teaching with to determine how you would like to structure the class (co-teaching or rotating lessons). Contact information for the volunteers in your class will be provided in early September.
- Teachers are asked to attend a mandatory prayer meeting, ½ hour before each service begins to corporately ask God into our classrooms, lessons and interaction with the children.
- Occasionally siblings and visitors want to stay together when they attend church. For safety reasons, CCC policy is to have older siblings/friends go to their younger sibling's/friend's class only. Please have them check with the front desk staff before allowing this.
- In the nursery – Calves classrooms, teachers at the 6:05 Saturday and 10:45 Sunday services need to disinfect the toys. Instructions for this are located on the bulletin board in each classroom.
- During second services on Saturdays & Sundays, we provide "Kid's Korral", a place where kids whose parents are serving at CCC can go after they have attended their Sunday School class. It is designed for kids ages 4-12 and is staffed by paid childcare workers. Kids can play board games, have a snack, do a craft, watch a video, etc. Sign-up for KK is at the front desk and we ask that parents sign up during the 1st service so that we know if we need KK workers for the 2nd service.

Discipline/Classroom Management

- One of the most effective ways to prevent discipline issues from occurring is to avoid “down time” in class. We will provide coloring sheets and other activities for your kids to do during the beginning of class. Please come prepared with your own “bag of tricks”.
- Active games are a great way to engage older kids who might not enjoy doing a coloring sheet. Be sure any active game you play with your class is adequately supervised and under control. Avoid high impact games (i.e. dodgeball or kickball) where there is high risk for injury and broken stuff.
- Finding a way to get the attention of your kids is important. If your kids are talking to one another, get them quiet before you begin talking. If you try to talk louder than them they will always win and you will end up frustrated and not respected by your kids.
- There are several strategies you can use to gain their attention quickly:
 - Shutting off the lights briefly or flickering the lights.
 - Saying “1,2,3 eyes on me”. The kids repeat back, “1,2, eyes on you!” and then are quiet.
 - Raising your hand in the air silently. The kids respond by raising their hand and turning off their voices.
 - Say “Clap once if you can hear my voice..” wait for kids to do it. Then say
 - If you have other strategies, feel free to implement them!
- If you have a child in the nursery-Kindergarten who is being incredibly disruptive in class (crying, tantrums, etc.) take their pager number to the nursery and have the workers page their parents. If they do not respond, please bring them to the CM desk.
- If you have a child in 1st-6th grade who is being rude or disrespectful in class and not responding when you move them from other disruptive friends or give them a warning, call or text the staff member working (their phone numbers are always listed on the teacher letter on the counter) and they will come and remove them from class.

If you are seeing repetitive behavior problems with kids, please communicate with parents regarding the issue. If kids dismiss themselves and you're not able to speak with the parents, please communicate with the staff member on duty so we can contact the parents.

Characteristics of Infants

Physically

<i>How infants are</i>	<i>How to teach infants</i>
Infants are born with the ability to hear, feel, taste, and smell, but motor control is limited. In early stages, they have a startle reflex that can be a source of concern for the care giver. The infant usually grows out of this stage by the time they are three months old. Infants begin to recognize familiar faces. They have a great need to suck and sleep. Crying is their main method of communicating.	Promptly and regularly meet the baby's signs of discomfort. Provide a calm and pleasant environment in which a baby can feel safe and secure. Provide mobiles and pictures to stimulate vision and focusing skills. Cuddle, hold, and rock the baby for comfort. Encourage them to move their legs and arms. Give them things to hold, shake, roll, and look at.

Mentally

<i>How infants are</i>	<i>How to teach infants</i>
Infants are just beginning to develop simple problem-solving behavior such as pushing aside obstacles in order to get at a desired object. They are stimulated by the sights and sounds around them, particularly pleasant ones. They can locate sounds and respond to them by turning his or her head. They are beginning to respond vocally when played with.	Place objects within an infant's reach that they can touch (e.g., rattles, balls). Show them simple books and talk to them about the pictures. Place infants where they can move (e.g., swing, walker, jump seat). Talk and sing to them on a regular basis in a gentle and pleasant tone. Play pleasant music.

Socially

<i>How infants are</i>	<i>How to teach infants</i>
Infants begin to focus on the people around them. They will smile at familiar faces and pleasurable gestures. By about six months, infants are friendly, happy, and alert to their own name.	Smile at the infants when you talk to them. Tell them how special they are. Play simple games such as patty cake and peek-a-boo to help develop social interaction.

Emotionally

<i>How infants are</i>	<i>How to teach infants</i>
Infants gain a strong attachment to their parents, and at some point around nine months, exhibit a loss of security when their parents leave them. They respond to what makes them comfortable. They can show anger as well as pleasure.	Comfort infants quickly as parents are leaving and provide interesting toys to distract them. Meet their immediate needs so their trust can be maintained. Talk, smile, and cuddle infants so that they feel valued and loved. Call for parents if the infant is experiencing distress for too long, so that they are comforted.

Spiritually

<i>How infants are</i>	<i>How to teach infants</i>
Infants are building a sense of trust as their immediate needs are being met. This is the foundation for understanding God and His unfailing love.	Respond in love to infant needs. Verbalize of ten to the infant that God loves them and that you love them. Handle infants gently.

Characteristics of Toddlers

Physically

<i>How toddlers are</i>	<i>How to teach toddlers</i>
Toddlers are developing their large muscles. They have learned to walk, but may not be steady. They are active, but tire easily. They have some small motor skills, enabling them to grasp small toys, pick up small items they discover on the ground, and feed themselves. They use taste and touch to explore their environment.	Provide a safe environment for toddlers to move about freely. Keep small objects that they may pick up and swallow out of their reach. Provide activities that utilize their large motor skills rather than small motor skills. Encourage learning by allowing toddlers to do as much for themselves as possible. Provide a balance of active and quiet play.

Mentally

<i>How toddlers are</i>	<i>How to teach toddlers</i>
Toddlers have a limited vocabulary composed mostly of nouns and verbs. They can combine words into simple sentences. They have no concept of time. Toddlers have a short memory and a short attention span. They need lots of positive directions. They love repetition.	Keep activities brief and change the pace often. Choose stories that can be taught using a simple vocabulary in a short amount of time with lots of action. Repeat the story frequently. Use taste and touch to enhance their learning. Encourage toddlers to participate in firsthand experiences and give positive feedback as often as possible. Sing simple, repetitive songs often.

Socially

<i>How toddlers are</i>	<i>How to teach toddlers</i>
Toddlers enjoy being around other toddlers but do not play directly with them. They are primarily concerned with self and want to do things for themselves. They can indicate their wants physically or verbally. They can help with simple tasks and imitate the actions of others.	Use activities where toddler children can do the same thing simultaneously so that toddlers can learn independence within a group setting. Don't expect toddlers to stay in a group for more than a few minutes. Don't interpret a toddler's self-centeredness as selfishness.

Emotionally

<i>How toddlers are</i>	<i>How to teach toddlers</i>
Toddlers may act out their emotions during their play. They can show a wide range of emotions. They are more secure with familiar people, surroundings and structure. At about 18 months, they fear separation from their parents as well as other 'security' items.	Provide secure and familiar surroundings. Consistent adults in their classroom are important. Express love to the toddler in words and actions. Speak calmly and sing with them. Help them say good-bye to their parents, then play with them.

Spiritually

<i>How toddlers are</i>	<i>How to teach toddlers</i>
Toddlers believe what they are told. They do not understand concepts. They see God through the modeling of the teacher.	Repeat simple stories to toddlers often. Sing simple Bible songs and repeat simple Bible verses with the children. Repetition is something they will enjoy. The positive attitudes as well as love and acceptance by the teacher, builds trust and a feeling of security. Tell toddlers often about how much God loves them.

Characteristics of 2 and 3 Year Olds

Physically

<i>How 2's and 3's are</i>	<i>How to teach 2's and 3's</i>
2 and 3 year olds are developing their large muscle coordination. They are very active, but tire easily. Their small motor skills are not as developed, so scissors and crayons can be difficult. They usually limit themselves to one kind of movement at a time. Their vocal cords are not yet completely developed.	Provide 2 and 3 year olds with a balance of active and quiet learning experiences. Keep tables and chairs at a size that they can easily use without climbing into them. Toys and movement should focus on large motor skills. Do not encourage loud singing.

Mentally

<i>How 2's and 3's are</i>	<i>How to teach 2's and 3's</i>
The attention span of 2 and 3 year olds is 2 – 4 minutes. Their memory abilities are limited. They learn best through repetition, imitation, and asking questions. They are literal thinkers, so they do not understand symbolism, time, distance, or space. Their vocabularies and personal experiences are still limited.	Repeat the Bible story, main idea, songs, and memory verses many times. They do not tire of their favorite stories and songs. Use pictures to illustrate stories. Let the child tell what is happening in the pictures. Do not combine Biblical and fictitious characters in the same story since they cannot distinguish between the two.

Socially

<i>How 2's and 3's are</i>	<i>How to teach 2's and 3's</i>
2 and 3 year olds are self centered. They are just learning what mine means. Typically they play alone, even when in a group. They are possessive of toys and may physically protect them. They are some times timid. They want attention and are anxious to please. They can help, if they have supervision. They rely on others to help them as they are just learning to do things themselves.	Focus more on individual activities and less on group activities. Introduce the concepts of taking turns and sharing, but don't expect them to do it easily. Encourage children to do things on their own, but be ready to help them as needed. Show appreciation when the child helps. Let children know that Jesus is pleased when they help others and do good things.

Emotionally

<i>How 2's and 3's are</i>	<i>How to teach 2's and 3's</i>
<p>This age is easily frightened and upset by noise and confusion. They may have many fears and cry easily. Familiar people, surroundings and routines provide needed security. Their actions are based on their feelings. 2 and 3 year olds may “act out” in order to get what they want.</p>	<p>Arrive early to be well prepared so that when the children arrive, there is a peaceful, calm room. Aim for overall consistency. Plan transition times from one activity to another. Use soft music to set a peaceful mood as children arrive. Avoid loud talking. Minimize any fearful elements in a Bible story. Reward appropriate behavior with smiles and praises to minimize “acting out.” If a child “acts out” take him/her to a quiet part of the room to calm down.</p>

Spiritually

<i>How 2's and 3's are</i>	<i>How to teach 2's and 3's</i>
<p>2 and 3 year olds are beginning to develop the concept of right and wrong. They will ask questions about god. They can begin to pray. They respond to external motivation. They believe what their parents and teachers tell them as they are beginning to learn about trust. They do not understand religious symbolism, but can understand basic Bible truths.</p>	<p>These children will learn love for God, respect for the Bible and the people at church from their teacher. They will imitate their teachers and parents. Use simple prayers that the child can repeat. Answer questions simply and honestly, avoiding confusing religious symbolism or Bible verses beyond the child's understanding. Do not use statements like, “Jesus won't like you if you do that.”</p>

Characteristics of 4 and 5 Year Olds

Physically

<i>How 4's and 5's are</i>	<i>How to teach 4's and 5's</i>
<p>4 and 4 year olds are very active and restless. They still tire easily, however. Their large muscles and corresponding motor skills are developing rapidly. They run, jump, and move quickly. Their small muscles and corresponding motor skills are developing at a slower pace. Cutting, coloring and printing skills are developing, so some may experience difficulty in this area. They are proud of their growth and may view themselves as grown up.</p>	<p>Provide lots of space for the children to be able to move around. Provide large, sturdy equipment and materials for them to use. Change activities frequently, interspersing opportunities for rest and slower paced activities. Encourage the children to participate in things they are big enough to do, but provide help as needed. Encourage experimentation with materials, but avoid criticism of a child's efforts or undue requirements for the finished product.</p>

Mentally

<i>How 4's and 5's are</i>	<i>How to teach 4's and 5's</i>
<p>These children are curious. They ask many questions. Their vocabulary is increasing, so they are able to put thoughts and ideas into words. Their attention span is only about 5 – 6 minutes. They cannot distinguish between fact and fantasy. They do not understand symbolism. Their concept of time, numbers, and space is still limited. They learn best through imitation, play, and using their senses. They forget easily.</p>	<p>Help these children memorize literal verses. Teach stories that are literal, not symbolic. Take time to help the children understand the meaning of the verse or story. Be patient with the many 'why' questions that the children will ask, because this is how they are learning. Provide a variety of sensory learning experiences: touch, taste, see, smell, hear, and do.</p>

Socially

<i>How 4's and 5's are</i>	<i>How to teach 4's and 5's</i>
<p>4 and 5 year olds imitate adults. They play in small groups and learn to share. They are still self centered, but are more aware of their own needs rather than the needs of others. They tend to conform. 4 and 5 year olds want the approval of</p>	<p>Teachers need to be good role models. Tell Bible stories, and then tell a story that show how that idea happens in life today. Help them to start looking for the needs of others. Provide group activities where all children can get</p>

adults, but they may ‘test’ to see how much they can get away with. They need boundaries to feel secure.	involved. Encourage the child by praising their efforts. Be firm with a child when needed, but be fair and consistent in discipline.
--	--

Emotionally

<i>How 4's and 5's are</i>	<i>How to teach 4's and 5's</i>
4 and 5 year olds appear more confident, but their emotions are often intense and near the surface. They express anger, love, laughter and tears easily. Adult approval is very important. The need affection and security as fear is a main emotion. They pick up easily on the emotions of others around them.	These children need a calm, secure, unhurried environment to help keep their emotions in check. Don't rush children through activities. Try not to show favoritism, but show attention equally to all the children. Encourage all the children, especially the shy ones, but don't focus attention on them. Do not show your own emotions to an extreme, as the children will quickly imitate the same emotion.

Spiritually

<i>How 4's and 5's are</i>	<i>How to teach 4's and 5's</i>
These children are still developing the concept of right and wrong, and may blame others for wrongdoing. They may confuse God and Jesus. They think of God in a personal way, and Jesus as a friend. They are influenced by external rewards and punishments. They can pray on their own. Their spiritual maturity is directly related to their emotional maturity.	Let the children know that doing what is right pleases God. Use stories that emphasize the difference between right and wrong. Help the children understand Jesus as a personal friend they can talk with. Encourage prayer as a time of talking to God as they would a friend. Let the children know that you can forgive them when they do wrong because God forgives us when we do wrong.

Characteristics of 1st and 2nd Graders

Physically

<i>How 1st and 2nd Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 1st and 2nd Graders</i>
1 st and 2 nd graders are full of energy and active, but they are growing at a slower pace. Their small motor skills are developing. Girls are ahead of boys in small motor development. They are willing to try most anything, often overestimating their own physical abilities. They are easily distracted and easily catch childhood illnesses.	Engage these children in plenty of activity while teaching. Allow for plenty of movement involving a variety of motor skills. Provide opportunities of slower activities as well.

Mentally

<i>How 1st and 2nd Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 1st and 2nd Graders</i>
These children are eager to learn. From school, they are interested in writing and reading. They enjoy games that involve words and number. They think mostly in concrete terms, but are beginning to develop reasoning skills. They like both fact and fantasy and have good imaginations. They can memorize well. Their attention span is about 10 – 15 minutes.	Provide opportunities for children to read and write, but do not force them if their skills are still developing. Provide Bible games involving words and numbers. Avoid symbolism. Distinguish between fact and fantasy. Teach memory verses. Change the pace several times during the Sunday School hour, using a variety of activities.

Socially

<i>How 1st and 2nd Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 1st and 2nd Graders</i>
1 st and 2 nd graders desire to please the teacher. They want to make friends and be accepted by their peers. They dislike criticism. Winning and being first are also important. They are still self centered and find taking turns difficult. They like to talk and may try to dominate social situations.	As often as possible, provide non-competitive activities where children can interact with others with a minimum amount of criticism. Provide opportunities to take turns. Try to show equal amounts of attention and praise to each child. Praise groups as they work well together.

Emotionally

<i>How 1st and 2nd Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 1st and 2nd Graders</i>
These children are easily excited. They are experiencing new and intense feelings and often move between emotional extremes. They may have difficulty controlling their behavior and resist personal demands. Shyness and fear can be overcome with familiar surroundings and routine.	Try to maintain a calm atmosphere. Establish boundaries and guidelines for the class and review those guidelines weekly with the class. Don't allow an activity to get out of control. Teach cooperation and obedience.

Spiritually

<i>How 1st and 2nd Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 1st and 2nd Graders</i>
1 st and 2 nd graders are beginning to understand concepts about God's love, his greatness, and that He is the creator. They have difficulty with not seeing a physical presence. They have faith in prayer and understand Jesus as their friend. They often have questions about death and heaven.	Help the children to see God in nature, in answered prayer, and in your faith. Provide opportunities for prayer and acknowledge answered prayer. Be sensitive to the developing spirituality in a child, but do not play on their emotions. Answer questions openly and honestly as they arise, keeping in mind that the children are limited to grasping concepts that are concrete.

Characteristics of 3rd and 4th Graders

Physically

<i>How 3rd and 4th Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 3rd and 4th Graders</i>
3 rd and 4 th graders have great stamina and do not tire easily. They are highly active and enjoy physical games, even playing roughly at times. Both large and small motor skills are developed. They are refining both their skills and their speed. There is steady physical development, with girls ahead of boys.	Provide an active classroom, with guidelines for maintaining order. Games and activities can be more physically involved and can go for greater lengths of time. Plan hands on activities as often as possible. Think of safety issues, because the children may overestimate their abilities.

Mentally

<i>How 3rd and 4th Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 3rd and 4th Graders</i>
These children have a higher level of creativity but may be self conscious. They want increasing independence and express curiosity. Their attention span is about 10 – 15 minutes. They like fiction, adventure, and fantasy. They still have difficulty understanding symbolism. They are learning to reason thing out usually with a trial and error approach.	This is a good time to use drama, providing students the opportunity to act out stories – especially those with adventure. Plan a variety of activities. Give children the chance to investigate situations and reach conclusions. Avoid concepts that are abstract. Continue to distinguish between fact and fantasy.

Socially

<i>How 3rd and 4th Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 3rd and 4th Graders</i>
Participation in and approval by their peer group is very important to 3 rd and 4 th graders. They still desire adult approval.. They can work together in a group and enjoy competition. They look up to ‘heroes’ and ‘models.’ They may not like members of the opposite sex.	Plan activities where children can participate in a group by giving their input. Affirm each child. Make sure that competitions are equal and fair. Giver personal examples. Be a model of their behavior.

Emotionally

<i>How 3rd and 4th Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 3rd and 4th Graders</i>
3 rd and 4 th graders empathize with others. They enjoy challenges and are sensitive to criticism, nicknames, and teasing. Emotions vary widely from shyness to exuberance. Their feelings can be easily hurt. They vent anger both verbally and physically.	Provide these children with opportunities to help others. Do not allow children to criticize or tease other children. Affirm each child and their positive behavior. Help children to discover healthy ways to deal with anger.

Spiritually

<i>How 3rd and 4th Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 3rd and 4th Graders</i>
These children can recognize their need for forgiveness of their sins and their need for a relationship with Jesus Christ. They are developing a consciousness of right and wrong and are able to make deliberate choices. They have an interest in God, Jesus, and the Bible.	Talk with the children about forgiveness, sins, and their relationship with Jesus. Allow time for questions and personal decisions without pressure. Provide opportunities for prayer and resources for Bible stories.

Characteristics of 5th and 6th Graders

Physically

<i>How 5th and 6th Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 5th and 6th Graders</i>
5 th and 6 th graders exhibit slow and steady growth during most of this time. Some may experience a growth spurt around 12 years old. Girls will grow faster than boys. The girls may be entering puberty. They are strong, healthy, and have good motor coordination. They are noisy and like lots of activity. They enjoy competition.	Use creative techniques that challenge these students. Provide times where students can be noisy – perhaps during music time. Capture the student’s attention from the very beginning.

Mentally

<i>How 5th and 6th Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 5th and 6th Graders</i>
These students are transitioning from concrete to abstract thinking. They can think and reason, but still have difficulty with symbolism. Their attention span is about 15 – 20 minutes. They like talking, memorizing, collecting things, decision making, reading, and writing. They have a good vocabulary.	Provide opportunities for these students to discuss and question. Require them to do some thinking. Use activities that require the students to figure things out. Challenge the students to memorize, write and collect for classroom projects. Provide choices.

Socially

<i>How 5th and 6th Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 5th and 6th Graders</i>
5 th and 6 th graders can accept responsibility. Peer relationships are very important to them. They are beginning to pull away from parents and other adults in their desire for independence. Their loyalty to peers is increasing while their loyalty to adults is decreasing. They want to belong to a club or a group; however, they prefer same sex groups. They are hero worshippers.	Give students specific responsibilities so that they feel an ownership in the class. Build on group identity with class leaders, class project, class names, activities, etc. Don’t try to use heavy authority, but try using the coach approach, showing lots of love and concern for each individual. Don’t force opposite sex groups. Provide lots of positive role models of adults and teens.

Emotionally

<i>How 5th and 6th Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 5th and 6th Graders</i>
6 th graders are more emotional than 5 th graders as they are most likely entering puberty. Typically, they are happy, easygoing, friendly, and balanced emotionally. They dislike outward displays of affection and may be quick tempered. They can be very cruel to others at times, however they are beginning to develop a social consciousness for others.	Try to use humor, when appropriate, in the lesson. Emphasize that humor is not used at the expense of other, however. Avoid displays of affection. Build value and esteem by listening attentively, focusing on the student, remembering their birthdays, etc. Avoid problems by having a well organized lesson plan.

Spiritually

<i>How 5th and 6th Graders are</i>	<i>How to teach 5th and 6th Graders</i>
5 th and 6 th graders ask many questions about spirituality. Faith becomes more personal. They can develop the personal spiritual disciplines of Bible study, worship, and prayer. They are capable of sharing Christ's love with others. They may set high standards for themselves.	Answer questions honestly and openly. Use scripture to help answer student questions to develop their understanding of Biblical authority. Provide opportunities for student s to grow in their faith by leading lessons, worship, and prayer. Provide opportunities for the students to share their faith and serve others.