

YOU ARE MORE THAN JUST A TEACHER.....

While teaching is the most recognized aspect of children's ministry, you have the opportunity to become so much more to your children. Here are some ideas for enhancing the impact you have on your class in the name of Christ.

1. Get to know your kids.
 - a. Greet each child by name.
 - b. Make sure the kids know your name.
 - c. Help the kids get to know each other.
 - d. Ask about their families, pets, vacations, school, etc.
2. Keep a prayer journal on your class.
 - a. Carry a journal to class with you each Sunday.
 - b. Bring the journal to circle time and ask the kids for prayer joys and concerns.
 - c. Write down their joys and concerns and let the kids know you will be praying for them during the week.
 - d. Call the child during the week if something major is going on in their family.
 - e. Alert the staff to situations requiring a minister (someone's died, lost a job, a parent moved out, etc.)
 - f. Follow-up with the child in Sunday School the next week.
 - g. As you can tell, communication between teaching teams will be key in this area. If you are only there every other week, you will have to let the other team know what has occurred the previous Sunday. An easy way to do this is by e-mail.
3. Create a class e-mail list. Whether you're communicating with the kids or with their parents, keep people apprised of what's going on in class. (Ex: Today we studied Noah's Ark. The kids reenacted the story using puppets. We made banana snakes for snacks. Here are the words for the song we learned about the animals going on the ark. {include words}. Next week we need each child to bring a paper grocery sack with them to class.)
4. Contact the kids outside of class. Kids love to receive mail. Send out birthday cards, Christmas cards, Valentine's, etc., to the kids in your class.
5. Share your faith with the kids. Do you have a favorite Bible verse? Share it with the kids and have the class learn it as a Bible memory verse. Bring the Bible you received as a child. Bring the Bible you use now as an adult. Tell the class about your favorite memory of going to church as a child.

NAMETAGS ARE CRUCIAL!

We can't over-emphasize the importance of getting to know the names of the children in your class. Nametags play an important role in this process.

We are in the process of moving to a computerized check-in system which will print out nametags and claim checks for each child. This system will be phased in during the first part of the fall of 2009. You will receive more information as we phase in your age/grade level.

ATTENDANCE CHARTS

Many classes like to include an attendance chart as part of the check-in routine. The name of each child is listed on a chart. Children then place a sticker next to their name on the Sundays they are in attendance. This helps reinforce that attendance is important. Some of our curriculum provides an attendance chart. If your curriculum does not and you would like to use one, please requisition one and we will provide the chart and stickers.

COLLECTING OFFERING

Teaching children to be good stewards is a wonderful gift both to our church and to the children. While it would be nice to save the offering for circle time, logistically that just does not work. Our suggestion is to have a basket available for offerings as the children enter the room. Later in the lesson when you do circle time, bring the offering basket and sing the doxology as a class. Offer a prayer to God thanking God for.....

MUSIC IN THE CLASSROOM

Trust us.....you do NOT have to be a professional singer to lead children in music! But, we do know it can be intimidating to lead singing. So, here are some tips:

1. Use a CD of songs. All you have to do is sing along!
2. Speaking of CD's, almost all of our CD players have "walked away." So, if at all possible, please bring a CD player with you each Sunday to class. We've spent hundreds and hundreds of dollars on CD players. It just doesn't make good stewardship sense to keep replacing machines that disappear constantly. If you do not have a CD player, let us know and we will make arrangements to keep one in the office for you to pick up on Sunday mornings.
3. Plans are underway to provide music once or twice a month for children through third grade. Stay tuned for more info.
4. When choosing a CD to use, here are some suggestions:
 - a. Use the VBS CD from last summer.
 - b. Use a CD your kids like to sing to at home.
 - c. Visit a Christian bookstore.

- d. Best of all, use the same CD we will be using to lead music in our Sunday School music sessions.

CIRCLE TIME IN THE CLASSROOM

Worship is an important part of Sunday School. We suggest that you spend a few moments of each class session in CIRCLE TIME. Here are some suggestions:

1. Gather children in a particularly designated part of the room for circle time. You might want to have a certain table or tablecloth you use for your worship center.
2. If you are comfortable with this, light a candle, explaining to the children that this is a traditional Christian sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the room. (An alternative explanation is that we light the candle to remind us that Christ is the light of the world.) Of course, be very careful with the candle.
3. Incorporate your prayer journal into this time.
4. Show the children the offering basket. Sing the Doxology.
5. Read a verse from the Bible. If you have a memory verse, say the verse together.
6. Offer other prayers or songs.
7. Especially with young children, it's helpful to have some "tradition" to this time. For instance, always begin with the same song. Or always say the Lord's Prayer together. Or always pass the offering basket around the circle.