

# **Some ABCs of Children's Ministry**

## **Tasmanian Ministry Training Conference**

### **30<sup>th</sup> May 2015**

## **Introduction**

### **Who is this for?**

- Coordinators
- Helpers and Team Members

### **Scope**

Primary aged children – kinder (4yo) – grade 6 (12yo).

### **Introductions**

## **Part 1 - Building a Gospel Vision for Children's Ministry (10 mins)**

### **1.1 Children and the Gospel**

*The gospel is for children* - Mark 10:13-16

“Instead of the child needing to wait until he grows up and becomes a man, it is the man who must *grow down* and become like a child...may we almost wish that we could be little children again, could forget much that we now know, could be washed clean from habit and prejudice, and could begin again with a child's freshness, simplicity and eagerness.” Charles Spurgeon, *Spiritual Parenting*

*Children need the gospel* - John 1:12

“If you indulge in the novel idea that your children do not need conversion, that children born of Christian parents are somewhat superior to others and have good within them that only needs development, one great motive for your devout earnestness will be gone...There is a tendency to evil even where as yet it is not developed into act, and that tendency needs to be overcome by the divine power of the Holy Spirit causing the child to be born again.” Charles Spurgeon, *Spiritual Parenting*

### **1.2 Having a Gospel Vision for Children's Ministry**

What is your church's vision for your Children's Ministry?

## **Part 2 – Teaching the Gospel to Children (20 mins)**

### **2.1 The Big Idea**

- Have a Big Idea
- Just have One Big Idea. Don't have multiple Big Ideas or a complex network of abstract ideas
- You don't (and can't!) teaching every thing in every lesson. Teach one idea at a time.
- So make sure you are Very Clear on the Big Idea!

### **2.2 Use stories and games to teach abstract concepts**

- Abstract words
- Jesus was a Master Story-Teller.
- Some examples – Substitution, Redemption
- God is a Story-Teller. The Bible isn't all propositional truth. It's a story!
- Be careful in your use of language.

### **2.3 Don't forget about Learning Styles**

- Auditory
- Visual
- Tactile/kinesthetic
- Logical/analytical

### **2.4 Think carefully about *application***

- Keep coming back to Jesus. Avoid the constant temptation to moralise.
- 3 examples.

### **2.5 Memory verses, catechism and songs add depth and variety to the program.**

- Think Play School
- Add flavour, variety, retains interest.
- Memory verse games: The Robber Game, Chants, \*see Appendix 1 for *lots* of ideas

### **2.6 Keep remembering the importance of:**

- Praying for and with children
- Leaders building relationships with children.
- The gospel. *Expect* God's Spirit to be at work as the gospel is proclaimed.

## Part 3 – Assembling a Children's Ministry (15 mins)

### 3.1 The Leaders

### 3.2 Content

Curriculum		DIY	
Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons

### 3.3 Children

- Know the children
- Ages
- Numbers
- Personalities
- Consider how you'll divide groups
- Specific issues
- Be ready for visitors

### **3.4 Preparation**

#### **Before the Day**

- Have your material ready
- Make sure you're really clear on the Big Idea!
- Pray
- Think about application
- Rehearse
- Disseminate lesson plans early enough
- Delegate clearly

#### **On the Day**

- Be prepared, get set up, make it feel welcoming and interesting
- Pray together beforehand
- Define the spaces you're using
- Sharp pencils and working texts

### **3.5 Discipline and Behaviour**

- Have a system that everyone knows – leaders, parents, children
- Have clear, simple rules that must be adhered to
- Have consequences for disobeying those rules:
- Remember that you're a teacher and a leader not a peer.
- Regularly communicate the rules clearly and simply to the children.

### **3.6 Communication**

- Communication with pastor/elders.
- Communicate with the leadership team.
- Communicate with parents.

### **3.7 Working Safely with Children**

Vital in our current climate.

### **Final Discussion, Prayer and Conclusion (5 mins)**

## Appendix 1

### Memory Verse Games

1. Erase a Word—Write the memory verse on the board. Erase the verse a word at a time, each time asking the children to say the verse.
2. Write each word of the memory verse on a slip of paper. Children must place the slips in the correct order.
3. Children line up or sit in a circle. Each child says a word (or phrase) of the verse, going from child to child.
4. Write the first letter of each word of the memory verse on the board. Children then try to write the verse.
5. Ping Pong—A child calls out the first phrase of a verse, then another calls back the second phrase, and so forth. This can be played in pairs or in teams with the children facing each other in a line.
6. Children sit around a table. Someone writes the first word or phrase of a verse (or the reference) on a sheet of paper and passes it to the next person who writes the next word or phrase, and so forth until the verse is completed. The next person starts another verse, and so forth. By timing the children to see if they can “beat” their previous time, you can liven up the activity. Timing the activity may help you determine which verses and how many to include (e.g., see how many verses they can they write in 10 minutes).
7. Have a “spelling bee” to review verses.
8. Make a word search using all the words in the verse.
9. Hot Potato—Have children sit on the floor in a circle. The first child says the first word of the verse and rolls a ball to anyone in the circle. The child receiving the ball says the second word of the verse and so on.
10. Line Up—Write each word of the verse on a separate slip of paper. Tape a slip of paper onto the front of each child and have them line up in verse order. (Variations: Play this as a team game or tape the slips onto the back of each child and have them ask questions to find out which word is on their back and then line up in verse order.)
11. Picture It—Have the children write the verse, drawing as many pictures for the words as possible.
12. Verse Relay—Divide the children into two teams. Place a chalkboard, white board, or large sheet of paper at a distance from the starting line. Hand the first child of each team a writing implement, and on the shout of “Go” have him run to the writing surface and write the first word of the verse. Then have him return to his team and hand the writing implement to the second person. The team that finishes writing the verse correctly first wins.

### Ways to Teach a Memory Verse

1. Wax Paper: Before Sunday, cover 8 1/2 X 11 sheets of white paper with wax paper. Trace your memory verse on the wax paper, pressing hard with a sharp pencil. Use large letters in your work. After the lessons of the day, hand each child a piece of paper upon which you have written the memory verse. Let the children brush tempura paint over the paper. If done properly, the paint will not adhere to the wax from the paper. Your memory verse will seem to magically appear as the paint is brushed on.
2. Mirror Writing: Write the memory verse backwards on the chalkboard and let the children discover what it says.
3. Erase-a-word: Write the entire verse on a chalkboard and erase one word at a time. Have the children repeat the verse after each new word is erased. At the end, the board should be blank and the children should know the verse.
4. Jumbled Words: Write the memory verse on strips of paper. Place one word on each strip. Mix the strips and have the children arrange the words in proper sequence. For use on a flannel board, back with flannel.
5. Translations: Look up your memory verse in some of the many different Bible translations. Do the verses say the same thing? Is one translation clearer than another? From which translation do the children prefer to memorize the verse?
6. Secret Code: During the week send each child in your class a letter containing a secret message. Ask the children to crack the code and learn your message. The message? It's your memory verse, of course! Be sure to include the code index (ex: A=Z, B=Y, etc.) with your message. Books on various types of codes may be found in your public library.
7. Life Application: When studying a memory verse, show the children how they can use a particular verse in their own life. You may also want to ask the next week how many children used this verse during the past week.
8. Bulletin Board: Decorate your bulletin board to represent the verse of the day. Have the children tell you the correct verse.
9. Verse-of-the-Month: If your children have difficulty memorizing difficult Scriptures, try having them learn just one verse a month. Select the most appropriate verse to fit your lessons. It is better to have one learned than none!
10. Puppets: Let a puppet teach the memory verse to the children.
11. Competition: Let the boys compete against the girls in a review of the past quarter's verses.
12. Want Ads: Write the memory verse in black marker (or bright colored chalk) across the want ad pages of your local newspaper.
13. Pictures: Find pictures to match various verses you have studied. Let the children match them to the correct verse.
14. Cassette Player: Pre-record the memory verse on a tape before the class begins. Allow the children to listen to the verse at their own pace. You may want to include some explanation as to what the verse means.
15. Mystery Voice: Similar to #14, but let a mystery voice record the verse. Children will then try to guess whose voice is saying the verse. This could be a means of introducing them to various people in the church (ex: the Pastor, deacons, etc.)
16. Key Words: Look up the meanings of various key words in a verse. Use a concordance or a Bible dictionary.

17. Mobile: Make a mobile using the various words of a verse. Display and let the children say the verse.
18. Slides: Put the memory verse on a write-on-slide(s) and show the verse on the wall. Allow the children to learn the verse while it is being shown.
19. Find the Verse: Place the individual words of a memory verse on strips of paper. Hide the pieces around the room and let the children find them. For an added challenge, hide a few extra words and let the children discover which are the correct ones. If they need help, let them look up the verse in their Bibles.
20. Photo Cube: Put the words of a memory verse in the various windows of a photo cube. Let the children handle the cube and learn the verse.
21. Window Shade: Write the memory verse in large letters on an old window shade. Then as the children learn one line of a verse you can pull the shade down to the next line. You will need to start writing the verse at the bottom of the shade.
22. Use the Wall: Place individual words of a memory verse on card strips. Place these strips on different sections of your wall. Have one child stand by each strip. Then let each child say the word he is standing beside in the proper word sequence.
23. Picture: Have each child draw a picture of the way he can use the memory verse in his own life.
24. Paraphrase: After having learned the memory verse, let the children write the verse in their own words.
25. Rebus: Find pictures of symbols to replace various words of a verse. Let the children read the verse.
26. Hot Potato: Let the children stand in a circle and pass an object around the group. When someone says, "stop", the one holding the object must be able to quote the memory verse. If unable they must sit out the rest of the game.
27. String Across Board: On a piece of poster board; in scrambled order, write the words of your memory verse. At the beginning of each word, place a wire brad. At the first word of the verse, tie a long piece of yarn or string to the brad. Then by wrapping the yarn around each brad, let the children follow the words of the memory verse in sequence.
28. Original Song: Learn the memory verse by putting it to music.
29. Fill-in-the-Blanks: Write your memory verse leaving out key words. Let the children supply the missing word.
30. Whispering: Seat the class in a semi-circle. Beginning with one of the end children, whisper the memory verse to him. Each child in turn whispers.
31. Bible: Let the children look up the memory verse in their Bibles.
32. Adding Machine Tape: Stretch a long piece of adding machine tape across one wall of your room. Call on different children to come to the tape and write the next word of the memory verse on the tape.
33. Those Wearing Red: In order to use variety, try having various groups recite the verse together. For example: "Everyone who has red on, say the memory verse."
34. Find The Other Half: Print some of the quarter's memory verses on colored slips of paper. Cut these slips in half. Hide one of the halves around the room. Then, give each child one of the remaining half pieces. The child is to find his matching piece only. When all are found, read the verses out loud.
35. Puzzles: Write the memory verse on an 8 1/2 X 11 sheet of paper. Cut this sheet into various sized puzzle pieces. Let individual children reassemble the puzzle. If you wish, each child could be given a separate custom-made puzzle.
36. Together: Read the memory verse in unison.
37. Responsive Reading: If you have an exceptionally long verse let the boys read one part of the verse; then let the girls read the next segment.
38. Key Word: For a quarter's review, place one or two key words from a particular memory verse on a strip of paper. Let the children repeat the verse by seeing only the key word(s).
39. Envelopes: Write the quarter's memory verses on separate 8 1/2 X 11 sheets of paper. Cut each memory verse into puzzle pieces. Place in separate envelopes. Allow the children to choose one envelope and complete the memory verse puzzle. When they finish they should sign their name on the envelope to show they did that puzzle.
40. Monk Writing: Bring the memory verse with no spaces between words. Let the children draw lines to separate the words. For example: "Thoushaltnotsteal", would be "Thou/shalt/not/steal."
41. Morse Code: Place a copy of the International Morse Code on a piece of poster board. Write the memory verse in code and let the children translate it.
42. Scroll: Make a scroll. Write a verse or verses for the quarter on the scroll.
43. Scrambled Words: Scramble the words to a memory verse. Have the children quote the unscrambled verse.
44. Drama: Many verses can be acted out. Sometimes you can pose a situation related to the verse too. (example: "Thou shalt not steal.")

## Appendix 2:

# Crossroads Kids Ministry Overview 2014

### VISION (This is what we long to see...)

To see a mighty and growing throng of children – both believers and non-believers – gathering eagerly to hear, learn, savour and live out God's good news to us in Jesus. There is a team of enthusiastic leaders who've taken a real ownership of this ministry and through it Crossroads and our broader communities/families are blessed.

### VALUES (These are the things that are important to us...)

- ; . Encourage and support parents as those entrusted by God with the primary responsibility of raising children in the Lord...
- < ...whilst recognising that in Christ we belong to a larger family and therefore encourage the entire Crossroads Community to value and include children in church life
- =. Teams-based ministry, overseen by the Creche and Kids Coordinators and utilising these [teams] as a platform for service for those with gifts in kids ministry and also as a training ground for new leaders
- >. Biblical, stimulating and practical teaching for children from Kindergarten-Grade 6, based around the Jesus Story Book Bible Curriculum.
- [ . A safe and enjoyable creche for 1-3 year olds with a simple and engaging learning and activity time for the older children in this group based on the Big Picture Story Book Bible.
- ] . Establish a warm and accessible tone that welcomes children who have never been to church or who go to other churches. Work hard to avoid 'Christian kid cliques' or a climate that looks on visitors/newcomers with suspicion.
- { . Give the ministry a distinctive Crossroads flavour – thoughtfulness, excellence
- } . Crossroads Kids and Creche provide safe places for children and leaders - all Team Members have been screened and trained in Breaking the Silence policy and code of conduct
- ~. Crossroads Kids Coordinator to work closely with Creche Coordinator and pastoral staff to ensure an integrated whole-church approach to children's ministry
- ; : . Pillars of Crossroads Kids are:

- ; . Help children to better understand what the gospel is and how it applies to all of life
  - < Supporting meaningful participation of children [as appropriate] in the main meeting
  - = Team members praying with and for children
  - >. Team members developing quality spiritual relationships with children – 'spiritual aunts and uncles' who can provide gospel mentoring to Crossroads' kids as they grow. This also and especially includes those who don't have their own children and recognises the unique role and input they can have into the lives of little ones.
- [ . Memory verses – utilise games, songs, rhymes, repetition
- ] . Practical service 'outlets' that can be owned by the children and their families (eg: the ministry of Fiona Lockett in Chile, visits or cards to Aged Care Home residents, supporting TEAR, fundraising for and fostering a relationship with a Sponsor Child/School/Church)
- { . A variety of teaching methods and styles to accommodate differences in learning styles and gifts

### **ACTIONS (This is what we're going to do to make it happen...)**

- ⤴ Crossroads Kids and Creche Coordinators liaise with monthly Teams to ensure good lessons are run.
- ⤴ For Crossroads Kids: During the term there is a monthly team rostered on to implement the JSBB Curriculum. A lighter holiday program runs through school holiday times.
- ⤴ For Crossroads Creche: We run a standard roster of volunteer helpers, but each week there is a short (~15 minute) time of Bible stories, crafts and song for the older creche children (2-3year olds) in the 'wet room' adjoining creche. This is based around 'The Big Picture Story Book Bible'. After this 'learning time', all the creche children come together for afternoon tea and then play time.
- ⤴ There will be regular (~monthly) Announce@ emails from the Crossroads Kids Coordinator informing parents and the broader church what is happening in our Children's Ministries.
- ⤴ There'll be an initial training session for Team Members and regular monthly team meetings throughout the year.