



TREASURE CHEST

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e-NEWSLETTER FOR PEOPLE INVOLVED IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY.
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Have you been passing
on the baton to the
next generation?

Games, Craft or other activities

Giving Instructions to kids.

- 1. Use as few words as possible:** Don't go over and over explaining every little step of the game but just clearly and concisely explain it, maybe a quick demonstration and then get into the activity.
- 2. Give instructions BEFORE putting anything in front of them.** If the items are in front of them then they will be tempted to play with the items or even start the craft.
- 3. If you are going outside for a treasure hunt, game or some other activity, give instructions BEFORE you head outside.** Describe what you are going to do and where your boundaries are.
- 4. Show a sample craft or example of how the game is played.** This gives them a visual of what is the goal and for your 'visual learners', this is easier for them to follow than just listening to your words.
- 5. Think about everything that could possibly go wrong.** Anticipate anything that the kids could misunderstand or how they could stray from what is expected. Figure out beforehand how to eliminate those distractions or prevent misunderstandings.



Use these 6 simple ways to help kids grow in their faith

1. Ask Good Questions: As kids get older they need to learn to question life and search for answers and meaning. Asking difficult questions without you, the teacher, immediately answering them helps children think through issues for themselves and to search for answers. Encourage the children to ask other people to give their thoughts and then next week, together, look at the answer. You need to be prepared for the "whys"— the cause-and-effect questions about good and evil and other faith issues. Make sure your answers are clear, concise and make sense and not just a bundle of religious jargon. Also, ask more questions than you give answers. This develops a sense of wonder in children.



- 2. Relevance:** Is the Bible and Christianity relevant for me? When you teach biblical principles, always give practical examples of how these principles apply to a child. Encourage children to ask themselves, "What are actual ways that I can put these teachings from the Bible into practice in my life?"
- 3. Rituals:** Expose kids to religious rituals and traditions. It's important to help children understand your church's rituals ... Communion, Baptism, Lent, Advent, Child dedication, etc. One day, these children may be in leadership at your church and they need to have a clear understanding as to why your church celebrates or practices these rituals. Do they have a purpose or is it just tradition?
- 4. Acceptance:** Accept kids' interpretation of religious concepts without criticising the child. Always affirm the child before correcting any incorrect understandings. It is important that the children are presented with the truth, however the way we respond to the child is extremely important. Kids have feelings. Many adults who have left the church say that it was because of someone's over-reaction to what they said when they were a child.
- 5. "Everydayness":** Make conversations about world events, spiritual matters and Bible content a regular part of your conversations. A great idea is to use God-Sightings — where you and the kids look for God at work around you every day, then report those to one another. Pray for people that we hear about on the news who are experiencing hardship & suffering. Be age appropriate and sensitive.
- 6. Habits:** Spiritual disciplines such as regular Bible reading, prayer, sharing your faith, journaling, silence & solitude, serving, giving, etc are great habits to develop. Don't teach them as legalistic requirements for Christian living, but good habits to develop that helps a person to live a godly life and become more like Jesus.

Using Games to Teach
The Great Toothpaste Race

Point: Think before we speak because our words can't be taken back.

Outline: Two children compete to see who can squeeze the most toothpaste out of a tube in 10 seconds. The next task is to put it back where it came from!!! It's easy to let words gush out from our mouth but difficult to undo the damage once it's done.



Key Verse: *Watching what you say can save you a lot of trouble.* (Proverbs 21:23)

Needed: Two tubes of 'no name' toothpaste, two plastic plates, two wooden pop sticks, stopwatch, table, wet cloth and towels.

How it's played: *(Ask two children to come to the front for a race. Explain that the object of the race is to get as much toothpaste out of the tube and onto the plate as they can in ten seconds. Time them with a stopwatch, counting down out loud for the last 5 seconds.)*

That wasn't too hard was it? It's easy to get the toothpaste out, but in a moment I have a trickier task for you to do. When we speak, it can be a bit like this toothpaste. It's easy for us to let all sorts of words come out of our mouths. We can easily tease people and call them names. It's easy in our anger to say things that are hurtful and unkind. Yes, it's easy to let unkind words come out of our mouths just like squirting this toothpaste out.

Now here's the trickier task. When I say 'go', you have 20 seconds to put the toothpaste back into the tubes. It has to go in the same way it came out, and you can even use these pop sticks to help. *(Time them and count down out loud for the last 5 seconds.)*

Which was the easier thing to do, to get the toothpaste out of the tube or to get it back into the tube? Of course, it's much easier to get it out but not so easy to take it back. It's not so easy to take back those wrong things that are said. We can't pick them up and stuff those words back in after we have hurt someone. *(Hold up some of the toothpaste and a tube.)* Trying to put this toothpaste back in caused a real mess. Proverbs 21:23 gives us some good advice – 'Watching what you say can save you a lot of trouble'. When we say hurtful things, it stays with people and we can often cause a real big mess in their lives and in our lives too.

We need to be wise in the things that we say and be careful that we don't hurt others by not thinking before we speak. Next time you are angry or upset, silently count up to 10 in your mind before you say anything. During those 10 seconds, you may realise that it would be better to keep your mouth shut rather than blurt out hurtful and unhelpful words.



Prayer:

Help me Lord to keep my mouth shut when I may say wrong and hurtful words. But encourage me to open my mouth when it's right to say kind and helpful words.



Sharing your Faith stories with kids

If you are doing teaching to a bunch of kids or telling a Bible story, then when it comes time to present your application, why not use something from your life as an illustration?

Personal faith stories:

1. **They are really important and powerful!** Your faith journey is unique to you and lessons you've learnt can have a big affect on the children listening.



2. **They communicate to the kids that God is still working now** and not just back 2,000 years ago. Christianity is relevant to today.

3. **No one can argue with what has happened to you.** It's your testimony of how God has been at work in your life.

4. **Kids want to hear your stories!** Children are fascinated to know that you are 'human' and throughout different times in your life you have experienced similar feelings and events just like they have.

5. **They make connections.** When you share your life experiences, not only do the kids establish a rapport with you, but it also gives them an opening to starting a conversation with you about their experiences in life.

6. **They free emotions.** It may be helpful to you when you tell your story, but it also gives permission for the listeners to bring their emotions to the surface as they laugh and experience other emotions as they relate to you and your story.

- Use common sense as you decide whether or not to share certain experiences.
- Don't over exaggerate just to make it sound good.
- Don't use stories that are inappropriate or are way above what the children can handle. Your life of drugs and crime may be a bit much for a 3 year old to handle!
- Don't dramatise and even glorify your wrong lifestyle choices. Bring glory to God!

