



TREASURE CHEST

... a container filled with valuable items

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e-NEWSLETTER FOR PEOPLE INVOLVED IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY.
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*We are entrusted to pass
the baton of faith from
one generation to the next*

He commanded our fathers to teach them
to their children, so the next generation
might know them and they in turn will
teach their own children. Psalm 78



Olympic Games

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
5 - 21 August 2016



The Olympic Flag has been part of the Olympic Games since 1920. It is a plain white background with 5 interlocking coloured rings.

At the closing ceremony of the Olympics, the mayor of that city presents the Olympic flag to the mayor of the next city where the games are to be held in 4 years time (Tokyo, Japan in 2020).

The 5 interlocked rings represents the five original continents and the fact that athletes from these continents meet together in the true spirit of sportsmanship.

However, when I look at the colours of that flag, it reminds me of God's good news message.

Firstly, **blue** reminds me of the sky and the sea. The sky surrounds the world and the sea joins the continents together. God has made a beautiful world for us all to enjoy.

The **yellow** colour reminds me of gold which is very valuable and precious. However, people are worth **more than gold**. We are loved by God and are valuable and precious to Him.

The **dark** colour reminds me of 'the dark side' of people's lives. There are things that we sometimes do that we are ashamed of. The Bible calls that SIN and it causes us to do wrong, like lying, stealing, bad attitudes, disobeying, etc. It also cuts us off from being friends with God.

Green reminds me of life - green grass and leaves. God wants me to live a good life, but sometimes I fail. There is only one person who lived a perfect life and that was Jesus.

Red reminds me of Jesus who was nailed to a cross on that first Easter and the blood that came from his body. He died to take the punishment for our sins.

The **white** (background colour of the flag) reminds me of something that is pure and clean. When we pray and ask Jesus to forgive us for our sins, he does forgive us and we have a clean new beginning and become part of God's family.

INFORMATION vs TRANSFORMATION

In our kids ministry we spend a lot of time disseminating information. We are telling them things to learn, things to know and things to do. But does information on its own bring about transformation? Was it just information that formed your life of faith?

The Foundation for Transformation

Information becomes the foundation for which faith **formation** begins in a person's life. And then the **transformation** is something that God's Spirit brings about – when and as He chooses.

Information + Formation = Transformation

I wish it was that simple and that we could always ensure if we were giving the right information and we were creating environments for formation that automatically transformation would take place.

But this is why we need to partner with God's Spirit because transformation is something supernatural. It's something that only God's Spirit can do. Pray regularly & specifically for the kids in your class.

We still have to do our part in the areas of information and formation. But information alone is not enough.

Take for example the story of Noah and the Ark. We teach them that it rained for 40 days. That 2 of each kind of animal went on the ark (7 pair of some kinds), the type of wood was gopher wood, the size of the boat was 450 feet long and so the facts go on and on.

These are great little pieces of information that we store away in our mind and as teachers we love it when we teach, and the kids can regurgitate back all the right information that we gave them!



But at the end of the day don't think that just knowing a lot of information equals transformation. Our task is to also give **application** ... how does this story help me grow in faith and live a life that pleases God? How does it relate to everyday life?

It's important to know these facts, but they on their own won't help a child when they are being bullied at school or when a pet dies. In the midst of all these facts of Noah and the Ark, we need to teach that God was in that story providing a way of salvation. God keeps his promises. God is merciful.

So when the child is being bullied or is grieving ... (over page)

(from page 1) ... over the loss of a pet, the child doesn't need to necessarily know facts & figures, but is encouraged, strengthened and full of hope when they remember the character of God – He keeps his promises, He will never leave us or forsake us, He is faithful.

Information is good, but only when it's the foundation. We want to make sure that we're giving them the forming aspects of experiencing a living God and knowing him, not just knowing about him.

(Based on an article by Michelle Anthony)



MINI-OLYMPIC GAMES

Simple Olympic-themed games that can be played during your kids program that doesn't require a large area.

Cotton Ball Shot Put

Competitors place a cotton wool ball in the cup of their hand and throw the ball in a pushing motion from behind a line (use masking tape).



Straw Javelin

Competitors are given one drinking straw each and have to toss it (one competitor at a time) from behind a line, like a javelin throw.

Long Jump

Instead of a run up then jump, the competitor stands with toes on a line and does one jump with 2 feet together from a standing start. One competitor at a time.

Toe Wrestling

Similar to Indian arm wrestling but using feet. 2 (older) kids sit on the floor facing each other with their legs flat and the soles of their right foot touching the soles of their opponents right foot. Shoes and socks off. The aim is that they lock their toes together and then on a given signal, try to pin their opponents foot to the floor.



Back to Back Gymnastics

Have 3 pairs/teams (6 competitors). Each pair stand back to back and link their 2 arms with their partner's arms. One pair at a time drops to the floor (bottoms must touch the floor) and stand up again without unlinking arms. Time each pair/team to see who can do it the quickest.

Synchronised Swimming (without Water)

Explain how in synchronised swimming all competitors in the team have to do the same action.



All kids stand up and have to follow the leaders directions. E.g. Hand on nose, Ear on floor, Left hand under right foot, Left foot on right knee, Spin body twice, etc.

It can also be played where the leader is silent and the audience just follows the leaders actions.

SPEAK WORDS OF LIFE

Proverbs 18:21

by Kathie Phillips

A month ago, my daughter and I began a weekly one-on-one Bible study. We are working our way through Elizabeth George's book, *A Young Woman After God's Own Heart*. The conversations that have come out during our time together have far exceeded my expectations. I get to hear her share more of her tender heart, her struggles, what matters to her, more than I have by just asking her to tell me about her day. Our time together gives me the opportunity to **speak life** into her, to encourage her, to pray over her and with her. My time with her accounts for some of the most precious minutes of my entire week.



Yesterday I was reminded that some girls don't have a female at home who cares for them and invests time **speaking life** into them. One of my leaders came into my office, deeply burdened by something that a little girl in her small group asked this past Sunday. Her question: "What if your Mom says you're worthless?"

The girl's leader expressed to me how speechless she was. She (the leader) found it hard to believe that a child so young had 'worthless' as a part of her vocabulary. As only God could orchestrate, I was able to look my heartbroken leader in the face and remind her that this is why we minister each and every week. It's more than just preparing and teaching a lesson. We are building relationships with children from broken homes; children who are struggling to know that they matter and have worth because God created them for a purpose.

We have the opportunity to **speak life** into people in our circle of influence. Whether we lead a staff, teams of volunteers, a small group of children at church, or are parenting our own children, we have an opportunity to **speak life**.

What might that look like?

Take time to listen—really listen. Listen with your ears and your heart.

Remind them of their worth in Christ.

- He created them in a special way (Psalm 139:13-18).
- He delights in them (Zephaniah 3:7).
- He has a purpose for them (Jeremiah 29:11, Eph 2:10).

Tell them how important they are to you: do this regularly.

- What special traits/gifts/talents do they possess?
- What do they do well?
- How are you seeing God work in their life?
- What do they bring to the group? How would the group be different if they were not a part of it?

I am so thankful to serve in a church that places a high value on Children's Ministry. I am thankful to serve alongside volunteers whose hearts break for hurting children. Children today need to hear positive messages from the adults in their lives. Our words have power. They need us to pray regularly for them and with them. They need us to **speak life** into them.

Which child needs an encouraging word from you today? Ask God to reveal that to you and then act. Speak life!