

Leading an Invitation for Kids

Leader's Guide



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Anyone can get kids to raise their hands or repeat some words but how do you give an invitation that is effective and appropriate?

The following was written to help you develop an effective plan for giving kids the opportunity to respond to the Gospel.

It also addresses two extremes that we see growing inside our churches:

- Because we're afraid that kids will make salvation decisions when they're not ready and without a full understanding, some churches have moved to a position of presenting the Gospel but not giving kids a chance to respond.
- Other churches have adopted a position of inviting children with the idea that "God will eventually sort it out" without the resources and training to help kids truly understand the decision they are making.

Suggestions

Consider the ages of the kids in the room - We will often dismiss 1st grade or kindergarten-aged kids and younger after sharing the Gospel but before giving an invitation. We want them to hear the Gospel but we can easily leave them with the idea: If you have questions and want to talk with someone about why Jesus died for you and how you can give your life to Christ, then you can talk to...(and specifically point out the people with whom they can talk).

Point out leaders - Throughout your VBS or event, point out the leaders that students can talk with about salvation. We will many times have them wear a badge or a T-shirt, something that sets them apart from the other leaders, to make sure that the kids approach leaders who are trained and know when a child is ready to accept Christ and how to lead a child to Christ. (Please go to www.330resources.org/children to get information for training these leaders and information on how to lead kids to Christ.)

Give a clear presentation of the Gospel - Be clear. A great way is simply to walk them through the drawing for the plan of salvation. This is a short and simple explanation of how Jesus made a way to save us and how we receive Him. (Learn more about this drawing and leading kids to Christ at www.330resources.org/leading-kids-to-christ.)

Don't take long - Don't turn this into a church service. Remember that a seven-year old under the conviction of the Holy Spirit is still a seven-year old and will still have the attention span of a seven-year old.

If you give kids a chance to respond as a group...

Be clear - Explain what you are doing - i.e., “If you’re not sure you’re going to Heaven or you have questions about how Jesus can save you from your sins, in a moment we are going to close our eyes and when I tell you to, I want you to go...” (Tell them where to go - To the back of the room and stand next to a certain person. Point this person out to them. Or, have them come up front and tell them where to stand and then they are going to follow a certain person out to talk, etc.)

Be short - Tell them that you’re not going to wait long, probably only a minute or two. If God is dealing in their hearts, they don't need long to know that He is “tugging” for them to come.

Try to avoid “flocking” - Tell the kids that you only want them to come if they want to know more about receiving Jesus, not to come just because a friend comes, etc. We call this “flocking,” when one kid comes and a few more come behind him simply because he came.

Be silent - We usually don't play music during an invitation with kids because we want the control to cut it off if we see “flocking.” We also usually leave them sitting down and just tell them to close their eyes and to make room for anyone that might need to move past them.

Don't push - You've shared the truth. Now let the Lord move in their hearts.

Be prayerful - Let the Holy Spirit guide you as you lead the invitation.

Be prepared - Have enough trained leaders ready to talk with kids as one-on-one as possible when they come. Remind these leaders that just because a child comes to talk doesn't mean that they came for the right reasons. Have them always ask why the person came and how they can help them but also keeping in mind that some kids might not be able to verbalize well the reasons why they wanted to come. It's okay to ask questions such as, “Did you have question about Jesus or how to go to Heaven?”, etc. Also, make sure that these leaders understand the Stage of Accountability (how to know when a child is ready to accept Christ). You can find more information on this at www.330resources.org/stage-of-accountability.

Leave the door open - After the invitation, tell the kids that it's okay if they want to talk or have any questions. Point out the people they need to talk to. During VBS we usually give an invitation toward the beginning so that kids have the opportunity to approach leaders through the day if they have questions. This also allows enough time for us to begin following up on kids before they even go home.

AUDIO

- [Leading Invitation Times with Children \(8:39 min\)](#)
- [Preparing a Decision Room for Children \(7:22 min\)](#)