

Serving in Fellowship Children's Ministry

Some information in this chapter has been adapted from Bethlehem Baptist Church's training manual.

Vision for Team Ministry

In Fellowship Children's Ministry, we have a strong commitment to team ministry, believing that each team role is vital and instrumental for effective ministry to children, parents, and one another.

Qualifications & General Expectations

Qualifications

To serve on a Fellowship Children's Ministry Team (not as a substitute), each person should meet the following criteria:

- Be a disciple of Jesus Christ
- For adults, be a member or pursuing membership at Fellowship Raleigh
- Meet with a Fellowship Children's Ministry leader
- Fulfill the appropriate training requirements
- Pass a national criminal background check (must be re-submitted every 5 years)
- If serving in the nursery, be at least high school age

General Expectations

All Fellowship Children's Ministry Team Members should earnestly seek to magnify the glory of God and advance the faith and love of the church by using their gifts and energy to nurture the faith of the children they teach and to support the ministry to the parents and children at Four Oaks Community Church.

- They will be expected to faithfully perform their duties in a way which honors Christ and is a godly example to the other team members and to the children.
- They will seek a vital, growing relationship with the Lord through personal and corporate worship, the study of God's Word, and prayer.
- They will be committed to Four Oaks Community Church and active in a fellowship group (or a similar, age-appropriate small group).

Roles & Responsibilities for Team Members

Fellowship Children's Ministry Roles

Below are the roles one can fulfill in Fellowship Children's Ministry:

- Leaders: Leads one aspect of Fellowship Children's Ministry (ie: curriculum, scheduling, volunteer management, supplies, etc)
- Team Teachers: leads, prays, and cares for team members on their assigned Sunday. Teaches the Bible lesson to children. On each Sunday, we have 2 co-teachers share these responsibilities.
- Helpers: assists the teachers in nurturing the children and leads a small group of children each week in prayer and application of the lesson. Young or inexperienced workers can be paired with a more experienced leader to lead help in the classroom.

Responsibilities for Leaders

- Help maintain the vision and core values of Fellowship Children's Ministry.
 - Meet with Fellowship Children's Ministry staff on an as-needed basis.
 - Attend Team Leader meetings.
 - Provide leadership over your team.

Responsibilities for Team Teachers

- Help maintain the vision and core values of Fellowship Children's Ministry.
 - Read all introductory material and have a clear understanding of the curriculum's purpose and goals.
 - Attend team meetings, orientation, and training events.
- Prepare and teach lessons for scheduled teaching times.
 - Pray for the Lord's help in preparation.
 - Master the lesson material.
 - Seek creative ways to communicate truth.
 - Provide discussion questions or activities for Small Group leaders.
 - Meet with a Helper at least once to prepare a lesson.
 - Post a summary of the lesson and what the children did that day in FCM on The City
- Maintain positive relations with the parents.
 - As time and opportunity allows, communicate via The City and in person with the parents and support and assist the parents in nurturing the faith of their children.

Responsibilities for Helpers

- Help maintain the vision and core values of Fellowship Children's Ministry.
 - Read all introductory material and have a clear understanding of the curriculum's purpose and goals.
 - Attend team meetings, orientation, and training events.
- Give spiritual leadership and form a mentoring relationship with the children in your group.
 - Regularly pray for the children and their parents.
 - Endeavor to know each child and be attuned to current needs/circumstances in their lives.
 - Follow-up with a card/phone call when a child is absent. Note children's birthdays and give support to each child in times of accomplishment, transition, or crisis.
- Maintain positive relations, support, and good communication with the parents.
 - Be able to recognize the parents of each child in your group and greet them by name.
 - Communicate regularly with the parents and keep them informed of their child's progress and signs of growth (developmentally and spiritually). Inquire about ways the class can encourage and be supportive of what the parents are trying to do at home.
 - Respond quickly and appropriately to parental concerns.
 - Support and assist with efforts to link the classroom program with the home.
 - Be with the parents and support and assist the parents in nurturing the faith of their children.

Mission, 7 Core Values, Vision, and 5 Core Principles

MISSION

Fellowship Raleigh's mission is:

"To glorify God through making passionate disciples of Jesus Christ who love God, one another, and the world."

How does it tie into children's ministry?

Making disciples is what God commanded us to do as believers (Matthew 28:19). In the children's ministry we have the privilege of making little disciples who hear God's Word, respond to it, and trust in the saving grace of Jesus Christ to transform their lives. As they grow up in the knowledge of the Lord through our teaching of His Word, by the power of His Spirit, we trust God will use these children to go and make disciples of all nations.

7 CORE VALUES

- Children are a gift from God (Psalm 127:3-5)
- Ministry to children is of the same value as ministry to everyone else (Matthew 19:13)
- Children are sinners and in need of redemption- as are adults. (Psalm 51:5, Proverbs 22:15)
- Children from an early age can understand deep biblical truths. (2 Timothy 3:15, Psalm 78:1-8)
- We should seek to intentionally minister to children's spiritual needs and guide them to encounter Jesus Christ (Matthew 19:13,15)
- Parents have the primary responsibility for teaching God's truth to their children (Deuteronomy 6:7) – Fellowship Raleigh will corporately assist parents in spiritually mentoring children
- It is a blessing to minister to children (Matthew 19:13-15)

Vision

At FCM, we desire to partner with parents in equipping children with an understanding of the truths of God's Word, the grace of the Gospel, and the character of God, so that they might worship the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength. Our hope and prayer is to "...tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done...that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments" (Psalm 78:4, 6-7).

Jesus said, "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me" (Mark 9:37). Because it is a great privilege and delight to welcome Jesus and minister in His name, we highly value ministry to children. We believe that FCM will have great effects in the lives of the children and in the church as a whole. By God's grace, children will trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, grow in their worship of Him each day, be strengthened in their vision of God through careful teaching of the Scriptures, and learn how to spread His name both across the street and across the world!

Five Core Principles

God-Glorifying: We aim to teach children that God, not man, is the hero of every Bible story, and that He deserves all praise and glory.

There are many lessons and heroes in the Bible that children love to learn about, but we hope to point every story to our ultimate hero, God. He is the sovereign ruler, gracious provider, mighty protector, wonderful healer, and only savior. It was His power working in the lives of men and women in the Bible, and it is His power working in us now, all for the sake of His glory. It is such a privilege to be able to point children to our incredible God and His salvation for us through Jesus Christ.

Heart-Focused: We want to see children's hearts radically transformed by the Spirit of God. Our aim is to get past the outward behavior and to the heart of each child.

Sometimes it can be difficult to keep Bible lessons simple enough for children without becoming moralistic or legalistic in our approach. Often it can seem easier just to give children a list of rules to obey or tips to follow. However, we believe that real change and sanctification begins with Jesus moving and working in the heart. We long to dig deep into the issues of sin and see where the seed of it begins. We want children not just to obey to please others (or themselves), but to have a heart of obedience that desires to please God. By God's grace and through the power of His Spirit, we want children to have a heart change, resulting in a life change: one who truly knows Jesus and wants to live for Him.

Word-Saturated: We desire for children to be filled with scripture, seeing that the Word of God is living and active and speaks authoritatively to every situation.

Our goal is let God's Word saturate our entire experience with the children and our ministry to them. From bible lesson to prayer to all classroom activities, the Bible is central to everything we do. Each week, we teach the Bible to children (even toddlers), we pray God's promises and scriptures over and to them, we weave the theme of each week's lesson into our conversations, and we earnestly strive to plant seeds for God's glory into their hearts. We pray that they learn to love the Word and develop taste buds for its sweetness (sweeter than honey—Psalm 19:10)!

Gospel-Centered: We believe the message of the cross is central to all of life. The good news of Jesus Christ is our only hope yesterday, today, and forever.

We want to have a well-worn path to the cross. In presenting children with the truth of God's Word, we aim to point every story to the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus. We seek to make those connections for the children by applying the cross to the lives of people in the Old Testament, New Testament, and our present day. However, it's not just the lesson time when we point to the cross, but all of life. We should always be asking, "How do Jesus' life, death, and resurrection change who we are and how we live?"

Discipleship-Driven: We seek to partner with parents in intentionally pursuing the hearts of children by presenting Christ to them in both word and deed.

At FCM, we recognize that parents are the primary disciplers of their children, so we want to partner with parents in this glorious opportunity to raise up a new generation of worshipers. Our aim then is not only to provide a place for children to learn God's Word and grow closer to the Lord, but also to give parents the tools and encouragement they need to continue fostering their children's spiritual growth everyday in the home. We long for parents to disciple their children and for the church to be a place of support and community for doing so.

FCM Policies and Procedures

Fellowship Children's Ministry aims to provide every child with a safe and secure environment in which to learn and grow in his/her understanding of the Lord. To help meet this goal, we have developed policies related to the following: Finding Substitutes, Check-in, Greeting, Discipline, Diapering/Bathroom trips, Snacks & Allergies, Full Classes/Worker-to-Child Ratios, Well-Child Policy, First Aid/Accidents, Cleaning Rooms, and Emergency Evacuation.

Finding Substitutes

If you determine you'll need a sub, please try and find a replacement a couple of weeks before you're scheduled to be out. You can either ask a parent or a friend who is a member or regular attender. Then, let the appropriate person (your Team Teacher or FCM Director) know who this is, so we can send them some basic guidelines about what to expect. Below are some suggestions for how to find a sub.

- **Step #1:** If you know a friend who would like to serve, feel free to ask that person before a parent.
- **Step #2:** Post about your need for a sub on The City at least a couple weeks out. Also, make sure to click "share" and share the post with certain parents who you know or who your leader/co-teacher suggests.
- **Step #3:** If you don't hear anything from friends or on The City, try to talk to regular parents on the Sunday before you're out. Ask a Fellowship Children's Ministry member or your Team Teacher for help.
- **Step#4:** If you're unable to find a sub, we're happy to help! Please let the FCM Directors know before the upcoming Sunday.

Sick/Emergency Policy: On the weekends, call your Team Teachers first and also notify an FCM Director that you will not be able to serve that Sunday.

Sub Approval: Please note that Fellowship Children's Ministry Directors or Team Teachers must approve all substitutes. Only Fellowship Raleigh members and regular attenders will be approved (note: sorry, but out-of-town guests cannot help you in the classroom).

Check-in at FCM

First-Time Guests

When a parent/guardian arrives on a Sunday or to a special event, he/she can sign their child in at the FCM check-in table (A person on the Welcome Team should be assigned to be at this table exactly 15 min. before the start of service.). If the parent is a first-time guest, he/she should look for a sign that says "Fellowship Children's Ministry". A greeter will help the parent check in their children and then direct them to the appropriate classrooms.

Greeting in the Classroom

1. One volunteer in each room will serve as the Classroom Greeter at the beginning and end of each service.
2. Once a parent has checked in their child (including any special instructions and a beeper/cell number if appropriate), the Greeter will welcome the parents and child and ensure that all personal items (diaper bag, bottle, pacifier, etc) are clearly labeled. For younger children, the Greeter also will write the child's name and any appropriate information or special instructions (feeding time, potty-trained, beeper #, allergies etc.) on the white board or sign-in sheet.
3. If the family is a first-time guest, the Greeter should do the following:
 - a. assure the parents that we will page/call them if anything happens to their child or if the child is inconsolable for longer than 10 minutes;

- b. tell the parents of toddlers and preschoolers we have goldfish for a snack each morning; and
 - c. ask the parents if the child has any allergies that we should know about and note it on the attendance sheet if it's not already been entered on The City.
4. For security purposes, only screened workers and parents are permitted beyond the classroom door.
 5. When parents come to pick up their child, the Greeter will call the child to the classroom door for pick-up. The Greeter should give a quick summary of the lesson theme and how the child did during class.

Discipline

Although it is possible to control the outward actions of a child and produce a desired behavior, the goal of our ministry to young people is to direct their hearts toward God and cultivate a spirit which is responsive to Him. True obedience and discipline flows from a heart that is responsive to the Lord, not merely the conformity to an external set of rules. Therefore, if we are concerned about the behavior of our children, the most important thing that parents and youth workers can do is to seek God's help in nurturing hearts of faith out of which acts of righteousness will flow.

In light of this overriding conviction, children should have respect for the Lord, for authority, for other children, and for themselves.

Respect for the Lord: Children are expected to honor the Lord in all things. One specific example is to treat church or site buildings, furnishings, and equipment in a way that honors the Lord and use those things in the way they were intended.

Respect for Adults: We want the children to honor adults in the church with respectful speech and behavior. Sassing or defying the instruction or correction of an adult are examples of what is considered disrespectful.

Respect for Others: We endeavor to provide a physically, emotionally, and spiritually safe environment for every child involved at Fellowship Children's Ministry. Children are encouraged to think before they speak and find encouraging things to say to others. Therefore mean, crude or hurtful speech or actions toward others is not acceptable.

Respect for Themselves: We encourage children not to act in ways that will put their bodies or their faith at risk.

To encourage children towards these four basic teaching goals, we believe that discipline should primarily be positive, where workers are quick to praise and affirm godly behavior. However, we also commit to providing immediate and consistent responses to negative behavior before it escalates into a more serious problem. In addition, we should keep in mind that children come from different types of homes and may need varying levels of support and care in order to meet behavioral standards. Finally, we support teachers who work with parents to set up reward systems for children who have particularly difficult problems. Team Teachers should be available to assist helpers in dealing with behavioral issues.

Below are some basic suggestions for preventive discipline and corrective discipline that are adapted from Bethlehem Baptist.

Preventive Discipline:

- Pray before entering the room.
- Establish your authority.
- Create a calm, quiet, ordered atmosphere.
- Be prepared and organized.
- Anticipate problems before they arise.
- Let children know your expectations...Establish rules and make your rules consistent.
- Enforce rules...don't ignore infractions. Follow through on the instructions you give.
- Let children know the consequences of misbehavior.

- Affirm positive behavior.
- Let children make choices when possible.
- Make activities interesting and fun.
- Move quickly from one activity to the next.
- Make sure activities and expectations are appropriate for the age level.
- Give warnings before activity changes, especially with toddlers and preschoolers.
- Arrange your room to prevent problems.
- Separate combinations of children that prove to provoke conflict or disturbance.
- Turn troublemakers into helpers...keep them busy.
- Ignore attention-getting behavior unless it is harmful or distracting to others.
- Be actively involved with the children...postpone conversations with church members and come to class prepared so you are not preparing during class.
- Know your children.
- Help children feel safe; let them know you will protect their rights.

Corrective Discipline:

- Pray for wisdom!
- Redirect behavior.
- Let the child experience the natural consequences of his/her misbehavior when possible.
- Take action! Don't lecture or just threaten to take action. Listed below are steps of corrective discipline in increasing levels of consequences:

1,2,3 Approach

1. Warning about behavior ("That's 1")
2. Loss of privilege ("That's 2")
3. Isolation/Time out...for younger children, consider 1 minute per year of a child's age ("That's 3")

If behavior continues...

4. Remove child from the room and contact a Team Teacher for help
 5. Notify the parent either during or after the worship service
 6. Always make it "right" (help the child to apologize, ask for forgiveness, make restitution if necessary, restore the relationship, and pray with the child)
- Point the child to Jesus as the only source of hope for real and lasting change.
 - Analyze causes for misbehavior to assist in avoiding a recurrence, if possible.

Note: *Since parents are the primary disciplers of their children and the church is called to partner with them, we are committed to talk with parents about their child's disobedience and to work with them on ways to encourage their children towards appropriate behavior. It also is our conviction that parents alone should provide any form of corporal punishment.*

Diapering and Bathroom Procedures

When changing diapers, please follow the two rules listed below.

1. Only trained female volunteers who are 16 years old or older may change diapers. Men are not allowed to change diapers.
2. All children wearing diapers should be checked and changed near the end of each service in addition to any other need that arises.

Bathroom Procedures

1. One worker may offer necessary assistance, but not linger in the bathroom. In addition, he/she should keep the door cracked at all times while in the bathroom.

2. In the case of an “accident”, wear gloves when cleaning and changing the child. If spare clothes have not been provided by the parent, notify the parents of the child.
3. Plan ahead and schedule a restroom break for the class. Encourage all the children to use the restroom at this time.
4. Check inside the restroom before allowing the child to enter and then wait outside the door until the child is finished (unless assistance is needed). Wait until all children are finished before taking the group back to their classroom. In other words, do not leave a child in the restroom while escorting the other children back to their classroom.
5. When older children (grade school) need to use the restroom during class, you may let them go to the restroom one at a time. Be sure to leave the classroom door open so that you may keep an eye on what is happening in the bathroom area.

Snacks & Allergies

Snacks (typically goldfish or graham crackers) and water are served in all toddler/preschool classrooms, and each classroom should be stocked with a sufficient supply of snacks and paper products. Elementary teachers are welcome to bring in snacks for their classes as well. However, as a safety measure, we must never serve any nut (or their derivatives – oil, butter), including peanuts, walnuts, pecans, etc.

Please let a Fellowship Children’s Ministry leader know if you do not have enough snacks or supplies by making note on the paper hanging in the FCM supply area. Also, please help us maintain a healthy environment by sanitizing the children’s hands with sanitizer before snacks are eaten.

For babies, all foods should be given provided by the parent.

Food allergies should be listed on the attendance sheet as well as on the child’s nametag (marked with an “!”). Look for any food allergies before feeding the children. Typical food allergies include nuts of any kind, wheat, and fruit juices. If you discover a food allergy that is not on the attendance sheet or nametag, please make a note of it on the attendance sheet next to the child’s name so we can update our City records.

While we cannot provide different snacks to accommodate children with allergies, we welcome parents to send along a snack with their child provided it is approved by the FCM Team Teachers that Sunday.

*Note there is Benadryl in the First Aid kit in the FCM supply area

Full Classes/Worker-to-Child Ratios

Our goal is to never turn away a child from a class. Yet, as we grow, we will experience times when classes must be considered full and no other children can be accepted unless additional measures are taken. This is especially necessary in our nursery. When a class meets the maximum worker:child ratios listed below, then the class is considered “full” until other accommodations can be made.

Infants	1:2	K-5 th Grade	1:8
Toddlers	1:3		
Preschool	1:4		

If you think that your class is getting close to full, please contact your Team Teacher or an FCM Director so that accommodations can be made, such as:

1. Adding a worker or parent to your class so that additional students may be received.
2. Diverting additional students to another age-appropriate class.

There are two other important things related to worker:child ratios.

1. NEVER turn away a child who has already been checked in.
2. Should a classroom door be closed in the nursery, toddler or preschool rooms, there must be at least 2 workers present.
3. There should always be at least one female present in the nursery room.

Well-Child Policy

We ask that parents keep their child home if the child has any of the following symptoms/or illnesses. Please, do not accept any children into your classroom with these symptoms. If you need help explaining this policy to a parent, ask your Team Leader or a Fellowship Children's Ministry staff member to help you. If a child becomes ill during class, contact your Team Leader immediately. He/she will then page the parent(s) and seek medical help if necessary.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| -Fever | -Lice |
| -Runny Nose (anything other than clear) | -Active Chicken Pox |
| -Questionable rashes | -Measles |
| -Coughing | -Mumps |
| -Sneezing | -Pink Eye |
| -Vomiting | -Any other illness that is contagious |
| -Diarrhea | |

First Aid/Accidents

If a child needs simple first aid, there are basic supplies in the supply cubbies between the nursery and preschool rooms. If, however, a child needs advanced medical attention, take the following steps.

- Stay calm.
- One teacher should stay with the child to provide comfort. Another teacher should notify the parent and return to the class immediately to care for the other children.
- Call 911 if immediate medical attention is necessary.

As a general rule, we will not administer any medication to children while in our care.

It is of utmost importance that accidents be documented and reported to the Fellowship Children's Ministry staff. If a child is involved in an accident, an Accident Report (see the Appendix) must be filled-out. These forms may be found in the cubbies located between the nursery and preschool rooms. Accidents include, but are not limited to incidents involving: cuts, bruises, concussions, sprains, broken bones, and allergic reactions.

The teacher should notify the parent(s) of any accident and follow-up the same day with a phone call to see how the child is doing.

Room Preparation and Cleaning

Although we cannot provide a perfectly sterile environment, we make every effort to keep our classrooms sanitary and clean. Toys should be wiped down with a disinfectant wipe after each service. Below are the specific cleaning procedures.

Each worker is responsible for the safety, cleanliness, and comfort of his/her own classroom environment.

1. Before the children arrive, check each room to ensure there hasn't been anything left in the rooms during the week that could be dangerous or unsanitary.
2. Fill a pitcher of water and ensure all "sippy" cups are cleaned and ready for use.
3. Play music and prepare an activity for the children to do when they first come into the room. This is especially helpful for children who have a hard time leaving their parents.

4. If a child puts a toy in his/her mouth, set aside the toy once the child is finished with it so that germs are not spread to another child.
5. Wipe all toys that have been handled with a disinfectant wipe after each service and then place in the appropriate spot.
6. Wash and dry all “sippy” cups in the kitchen and return them to FCM.
7. Clean floors if you made a major mess.
8. If no one is using the room after you, wipe tables, chairs, and counter tops with a Clorox wipe.

Emergency Evacuation

It is important that you are aware of where emergency exits are in relationship to your classroom. Once you have exited the building, go to the back of the building where there is plenty of space for us to re-group. Make sure that your class stays together and maintain our security procedures as parents come to retrieve their children.

Available workers should go directly to the nursery and help move babies out of the building.

Training Materials

In this chapter, we include training materials for teaching Bible lessons and teaching and reviewing memory verses.

Tips for Teachers

In preparation...

- 1) Ask God to teach you. When preparing, ask the Lord to make the Bible lesson real to you—what does this passage say about God and what does it say about you and how you should respond to Him. It is much more effective (and easier) to teach a lesson that has personally changed you.
- 2) Begin with the Bible, not the curriculum. Before looking at the curriculum, meditate on the Bible passage. Ask the Lord to show you how a major theme (each curriculum has suggested or chosen themes for you) is illustrated in the passage(s) and how you can present it to the children. Then, refer to the curriculum for additional ideas and support.
- 3) Practice your presentation. The best way to ensure you're ready is to practice your lesson ahead of time. Time your lesson to ensure you're around the suggested length. We recommend 5 minutes for nursery, 10-15 minutes for preschool, 15-20 minutes for early elementary. Make sure you practice with the illustrations you plan to use.

In presentation...

- 4) Be enthusiastic. Use voice inflection and body movements to communicate what is going on in the lesson as well as your own reactions to what God is doing. Allow your emotions to be affected. The more excited you get, the more children will listen. Consider practicing in front of the mirror to see your facial expressions.
- 5) Use the hook. Each preschool and elementary lesson provides a “hook” to get children interested in the lesson. While you should not feel tied to the hook recommended by the curriculum, make sure you have something to grab the children’s attention and focus them on the main theme. As you teach the lesson, you can keep referring back to the hook to help children remember the theme.
- 6) Briefly review last week's lesson. After the hook, spend 1-2 minutes to review what happened the previous week. This gives children the chance to participate, children that weren't there the chance to catch up, and everyone the opportunity to see how the new story fits in with last week's lesson.
- 7) Use visuals, such as pictures. This is extremely important, as children are not just auditory learners but also visual learners. Visuals, such as picture cards, a children’s Bible/Bible storybook, object lessons, motions, or skits, help focus the children visually on the lesson and keeps their attention a little better.
- 8) Keep the main theme the main theme. The theme should be introduced at the beginning, repeated throughout the lesson, and stated again at the conclusion and application time. The goal each week is for children to remember one main thing about God, so we suggest you **repeat the theme at least 7 times** during the lesson. Consider having children repeat the theme with you each time you say it.
- 9) Teach from the Bible. For preschool, even though you have a script to use, consider reading a few verses from the Bible for emphasis.

For Preschool & Elementary, we want to teach from the Bible and read verses for points of emphasis and clarity; however, reading long passages to the children loses them quickly, especially because we don't have eye contact with them. Instead, choose the main points of the passage that tie into your theme rather than covering every detail of the story. *Certain lessons cover 2-3 chapters,*

so ask God for wisdom as to which parts of the passage you should teach and which parts you should skip. Remember, the goal is to highlight the theme of the lesson, not go over every detail.

9) Communicate the Gospel. Every story (Old Testament or New Testament) whispers (or shouts) the name of Jesus. Look for ways to communicate the truths of the gospel in each lesson.

10) Ask the right kinds of questions and at the right times. Asking questions encourages children to participate and engage with the lesson. However, there are a few things to remember:

- Ask specific questions to get specific answers. Be careful with open-ended questions, as they are often answered with responses that are not helpful to the lesson presentation (especially with younger children).
- Call on children who raise their hands, rather than allowing children to shout out answers.
- Call on different children to answer questions. Work on drawing people out.
- For younger children, we recommend you telling them that they should hold their questions until small group time. This prevents children from taking you off course.

In conclusion...

11) Close in prayer and tie it to a heart application. This gives you an opportunity to re-focus the children on the main theme and then pray accordingly. For example, if the theme is God is faithful, you could pray, "Thank you God for being faithful! We can always trust in you. Thank you also for the story of ____ and how You faithfully took care of him as he trusted in You. Help us do the same."

12) Tie your theme to all that you do that day. While children are playing, eating their snack, going to worship time, etc., review the lesson and the theme. If the theme is "God Made Everything", then point to different things in the room that God made and praise Him. When praying, pray that God would reveal to the children that He is their creator and made them for wonderful purposes. When children are being picked up by their parents, don't forget to remind children and their parents of the lesson theme. For example, you could say, "God made everything and He made you very special! See you next week."

Take a few minutes during snack-time to pray individually for each child, their families, and the worship service, out loud. There are ideas posted in each room about what and how to pray for children. This sets an awesome example to our children about prayer and how it is important!

Tips for Teaching and Reviewing Memory Verses

Teach the Memory verse using the IPEAR method (from Child Evangelism Fellowship).

I-Introduction: Introduce a concept in the verse using a question, story, or object lesson

P-Presentation: Read the verse from the Bible.

E-Explanation: Discuss the major points of the verse. Explain any confusing words.

A-Application: Provide at least one way the children can apply the verse to their lives.

R-Repetition: Play one of the verse repetition games to learn the verse. For readers, you can also show the verse enlarged (on a big piece of paper, overhead, etc.).