

Small Group Leaders Guide

Child Care Ideas for Off-Campus Groups Birth – 5th Grade

Preface:

This document is simply a guide to aide in structuring a Small Group meeting. Nothing in this guide is a rule or set in stone.

Purpose:

The purpose of this guide is to provide different ideas on how to handle child care for off-campus groups. Childcare can be particularly challenging, especially when there is a large variety in ages of the children. One important thing we must never forget, God has intentionally given these precious children to this small group and we as parents are directly responsible for their growth and discipleship. We must be intentional to engage them with the Gospel and teach them ourselves.

So a good question is “how do we practically go about doing that?” Below are some different ways to try to manage childcare.

One suggestion for the leader is to designate one person in the group to coordinate all the childcare arrangements each week. This can be the Associate Leader or Care Coordinator.

Birth – Kindergarten Ideas:

Each week, rotate couples to keep the children at the location where the group meets. Have at least a couple pre-planned activities, such as a game, snack, craft, lesson, movie/video, etc. This does not have to be anything complicated or tedious, just something to focus their time and attention. This is effective if the house has a room/basement where the children can play and not directly disturb the study.

Each week select two people from different couples, such as two wives or two husbands, to keep the children at the location the group meets. This is effective if the house has a room/basement where the children can play and not directly disturb the study. Similar to the above idea, but this method will allow for at least one of the spouses to participate in the Bible study and share when they get home.

Each week, drop the children off at one house and study at a different house. This can be done utilizing a baby-sitter or designating a couple or one spouse from two different couples, such as two wives or two husbands, to keep the children. Have at least a couple pre-planned activities, such as a game, snack, craft, lesson, movie/video, etc. This can be effective if the house selected for the childcare and the house where the group is meeting is fairly close.

If you are close to the church, Sunday nights and Wednesday nights have pre-arranged childcare and the children can be dropped off. The downside here is that limits the Home Group to a fixed time limit and provides no flexibility in meeting times.

1st – 5th Graders:

With this age, it is a little easier to have the childcare and study at the same house. However, we still want to be intentional to engage them and teach them. The planned activities with them do not have to take the entire time. If the house/yard permits (and so do the parents), most of their time can be free play (so to speak), such as playing together on a play-set, in a back yard, video games, etc..

Each week select two people from different couples, such as two wives or two husbands, to keep an eye on the children and teach them a lesson. Have a lesson to teach (can be simple), and some activities such as games, crafts, and snacks. Simple games with prizes are always lots of fun for this age range.

Each week, drop the children off at one house and study at a different house. The best method to disciple the children here is to have two people from different couples, such as two wives or two husbands, to keep the children and have some fun pre-planned activities, such as a game, snack, crafts along with a lesson. This can be effective if the house selected for the childcare and the house where the group is meeting is fairly close.

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