

Footprints for Kids

How to Lead a *Footprints for Kids* Small Group

Welcome to *Footprints for Kids*, a small group experience for parents/mentors and their children. Thank you for your willingness to lead an inter-generational small group on a discipleship journey with Jesus Christ.

Footprints for Kids contains 24 lessons divided into 3 phases of discipleship:

- 1) Lessons 1-6 focus on "Building your relationship with Jesus"
- 2) Lessons 7-18 focus on "Knowing the truth of Jesus"
- 3) Lessons 19-24 focus on "Sharing Jesus"

Footprints for Kids is focused on children aged 8-13 while we often have children younger or older participating with their siblings.

I. Parent's / Mentor's Role

Footprints for Kids is designed to be used after *Footprints for Parents & Mentors* as been completed. The last lesson (12) in the *Footprints for Parents & Mentors* curriculum gives parents/mentors useful tips for making the discipleship experience meaningful for their children. Repeat these to the parents/mentors as you begin *Footprints for Kids*.

Say: It is important that you facilitate the discipleship experience for your child as you go through the *Footprints for Kids* small group experience together. Here are useful tips:

Tip # 1 Pray for the Holy Spirit to Lead You

The work of transformation in our lives is the work of the Holy Spirit. Pray each day that God will fill you with His Spirit as you spiritually nurture your child.

Tip # 2 Focus on your child's journey

From week to week it is important for you to facilitate your child's experience. Share the questions you may have about the lesson topic or the Bible passages during small group meetings, but don't let your questions dominate the study time.

Tip # 3 Commit to the Process

Actively participate each week with enthusiasm so that your child will be engaged. Follow through with home activities. The take home assignments are vital to the discipleship journey. Make time in your schedule to do these at home each week.

As you begin this small group experience:

II. Dos and Don'ts for leading *Footprints for Kids*

Laugh! Smile! Share how you are learning too! Provide opportunities for kids to move around. Involve the kids in the leadership of the small group by greeting others, writing on the marker board, distributing materials, etc. Encourage the children to respond to the questions by using eye contact and addressing the questions to the children and not to the adults.

Don't get involved with adult conversations, insights, etc. during the small group time. Don't ignore quiet, shy kids. Don't assume the adults and children will find it easy to talk about spiritual things together. Don't show irritation or frustration with kids who need to move or wiggle.

Pray through the goals of each section of the lesson each week. Think through the whole experience. The Holy Spirit yearns to go deep into each heart. His goal is nothing less than complete transformation! Submit to His loving lead.

III. Stay on Time and End on Time

60 minute schedule:

Welcome (7 Minutes)

- Welcome each parent/mentor and child.
- Invite kids to assist you as you welcome families as they arrive.
- Invite the participants to share what they did for the ***Grace Point***, by having each participant share with a partner.
- Invite the participants to share what they did with *T.A.G.* or *Mentoring Moments* each week. Write "T.A.G." on one soft ball and "M.M." on another ball. Use the ball to ask about T.A.G. or Mentoring Moments. Toss the ball to one participant ready to share what he/she did. After he/she is finished, instruct him/her to toss the ball to another participant. Tell the participants to say "Pass" if they do not want to share then throw the ball to someone else.
- Share the goals of the lesson.
- Consider opening with a joyful praise song.

The Bridge (10 Minutes)

- Recruit a child to assist with materials and handouts.
- Involve **everyone** in the activity to allow each participant to connect with the lesson concept.
- Inspire fun!

Into the Word (25 Minutes)

- Involve each child in looking up Scripture and finding Bible answers. Read the question from the leader's guide before the child volunteer reads the Scripture to the group. Encourage the participants to listen to what God is saying to them in the text. Affirm each child's response even if it is not a correct. In this case, ask the question again in another way.
- Recruit a student to write the discovered points on the marker board. If a child's response is not the wording for the point as in the leader's guide under "Write on the board," but is a correct response from the Scripture, use the child's words for the marker board rather than the summary printed in the leader's guide.
- Involve parents in short, focused observations and illustrations.
- Summarize/review the points then quiz the participants by covering the points on the marker board. Invite the children to respond to the quiz by thinking of points that were from Scripture texts looked up by others, not those texts they looked up.

My Choice (5-8 Minutes)

- Share your testimony on how the lesson choice has impacted your life.
- Recruit a child to distribute the handouts.
- Invite the parents/mentors and children to form family circles with their chairs.
- Facilitate the parents/mentors as they call their child to make the choice.

My World (5-8 Minutes)

- Pray/Intercede for the families during this time.

Closing (2 Minutes)

- Invite the family groups to share their plans for the **Grace Point**.
- State the **Grace Point** clearly.
- Recruit a child to distribute the *Mentoring Moments*.
- Pray or invite a child to pray for the focus points.
- Dismiss.

IV. Model Mentoring During Small Group

As a leader, affirm the parents in their mentoring role during the small group time. Encourage the children in relating to their parent(s)/mentor(s). Your affirmation during the small group will encourage the mentoring relationship between parents and their children outside of class.

How to affirm the parents/mentors during class:

- Encourage! Encourage! Encourage!
- Affirm the positive interaction you see between mentor and child.
- Be available to listen and pray with the parents/mentors.

How to affirm the children during class:

- Encourage! Encourage! Encourage!
- Involve each child in active learning.
- Show great respect for their parents/mentors.
- Affirm their answers.
- Do everything possible to help the children bond with their parents/mentors.

V. Focus on Life Transformation

Personally seek the infilling of the Holy Spirit. You have nothing to give the families unless you first are filled with the Spirit of God. Ask the Holy Spirit to daily transform your life and completely transform the lives of each participant in your small group.

Continually point the children and their parents/mentors to the Holy Spirit as their Helper. Encourage them in knowing that as they offer Jesus their willing hearts, His Spirit will help them become like Jesus. He will empower them to share Jesus with boldness.

Ask the children questions that get them thinking not just parroting information. Continually challenge the parent/mentor and child teams to try out what is learned. Model open-hearted prayers by asking God to change your hearts.

Invite the parents/mentors and children to share from week to week what they did and what they learned from the ***Grace Points***.

VI. Small Group Ground Rules

At your first meeting share the following ground rules for the small group meetings.

1. Show respect for others by listening to their contributions.
2. Don't interrupt others when they talk.
3. Disagree without being disagreeable.
4. Remember there is no "dumb" question or answer.
5. Participate in the group without monopolizing the time.
6. Show love for others by maintaining confidentiality – "What is shared in this room stays in this room."
7. Agree that God's Word is the last word on all discussions.

VII. Pre and Post Surveys

A pre and post survey is provided as a means of assessing the effectiveness of your small group. The survey included in the *Footprints for Kids* curriculum is an anonymous survey that participants take at the first and again at the last small group meeting.

VIII. How to Celebrate the Completion of *Footprints for Kids*

It is important to celebrate the families and children who have completed *Footprints for Kids*. Do something special for your last meeting or celebrate the families during church service. Include 1) a certificate for each participant as available on the K.I.D. website, 2) an opportunity for each participant to share what they have gotten from *Footprints for Kids*, and 3) a special prayer of dedication for each family as they continue the discipleship experience.

IX. How to Adapt *Footprints for Kids* for Single Family Use

Footprints for Kids is designed as a small group experience, but can be adapted for use with a single family. Consider inviting families from your neighborhood to join you as you go through this discipleship adventure. Set a specific day and time each week for your family to go through the *Footprints for Kids* lesson.

Welcome

- Open your time together by briefly sharing one thing you have done during your T.A.G. this past week.
- Invite your child to share what he/she has done with T.A.G.
- Invite your child to share what he/she did with the **Grace Point** from the previous lesson.
- Read together the goals of the lesson.

Bridge

- Adapt the Bridge activity to your family setting.
- Use the debrief questions to connect to the Bible Study.

Into the Word

- Invite your child to look up each Scripture and find Bible answers.
- After each question invite your child to write the discovered points in a notebook.
- As you go through the Bible passages, ask your child if he/she understands each point or has any questions.
- At the end of the Bible study, review the points.
- Give a short quiz by asking your child to recall the points.
- Affirm your child's learning.

My Choice

- Use the "My Choice" page to help your child make the choice related to the lesson.
- Say the *Footprint* together.
- Skip the review in number 2.
- Share from your experience.
- Invite your child to make the choice.
- Pray together.

My World

- Use the "My World" page to practically apply the lesson.
- Let your child know that at your next *Footprints* time he/she will be invited to share what he/she did for the **Grace Point**.
- Note what you as a parent/mentor will be asked to share in the next lesson so you can reflect on this in the coming week.
- Use the "Mentoring Moments" ideas for family worship during the coming week to reinforce the lesson.

Closing

- Encourage your child to continue to connect with Jesus throughout the week.
- Pray together.