

2023 VBS TRAINING

Monday, May 15, 2023

YOUTH VOLUNTEERS, FOLLOW-UP, DISMISSAL

YOUTH VOLUNTEERS:

- Specify age requirement and specify where they can serve. It's good practice to have the volunteers be at least 3 years older than the kids they are volunteering with.
- Similar to adult volunteers, have an onboarding plan.
- Must be attenders/members of the church for at least 6 months.
- Require written application with 2 references.
- Training - separate from the regular adult training, online?
- Create space for them to ask questions and get to know you.
- Code of conduct - address things such as bathroom policy, cell phone use, physical handling of children, have them sign code of conduct agreement.
- Set expectations - job description, arrival time, duties, nametags, "uniform"
- The more you invest in them, the more serious they will take their role!

FOLLOW UP:

- Staff and volunteers
- Congregation
- Attendees

Staff and Volunteers:

As soon as VBS is over (the following Sunday?) hold a short (20-30 minutes) debrief meeting with staff and volunteers. Ask for input with what went well and what did not. Be open to listen! Take lots of notes. Give everyone a chance to speak. You want any and all suggestions! This will come in handy as you begin to plan for next year! Ask for funny or impactful stories that you can share with the congregation. Show your appreciation for them! Hand written thank you notes! Be watching and take note of special things each volunteer did during VBS. Don't forget to thank those youth volunteers!

Congregation:

- Recap the success of the VBS. Have a volunteer share a story or have an attendee from your church tell a story.
- Publicly thank everyone who contributed in any way to VBS. Again, handwritten notes go a long way.
- Further opportunities for them to pray for families?

2023 VBS TRAINING

- Pair unchurched families that attended VBS with a congregation member or family to stay in touch with all year. Provide ideas (holiday cards, invitations to future events, etc.), note cards, birthday cards, stamps, etc.
- Look at the geographic location of your attendees that didn't have a church home. Is there someone in the congregation who lives near them or in their neighborhood? Make the connection.
- Return any items the congregation may have let you borrow for VBS.

Attendees:

- Be relational and intentional.
- Here's where your registration form comes in handy!
- Break attendees into two groups: those already attending church and those without a church home.
- Build a plan for each: birthdays, future events, check-ins, encouragement, etc.
- Build a plan for follow-up with kids who may have made decisions for Christ or baptism (again - do they already have a church home? contact that church).
- Lifeway resources are great!
- Enlist your small group leaders to help. They were the ones who formed relationships with them all week! Follow-up from them is more personal than a generic message or note from someone else (director). Did the small groups have a time for prayer requests? If they were written down, use those for opportunities for follow-up (trips, sick family members, etc). Equip them with what they need: a plan, note cards, birthday cards, stamps, addresses, etc.
- Enlist a small team of 4-5 people that didn't serve all week to help with follow-up and writing note cards so they're "fresh" and ready to go after VBS!

Those without a church home:

- More intense and deeper
- You may pair these families with a congregation member or family to keep closer contact with all year and to pray for them - maybe someone who lives nearby.
- Call to action - follow-up event? Parent's Night Out, Board Game Night, Back to School event, fall events, AWANA, etc. Sunday mornings? Bible study for parents?
- Harder push for them to return to something
- At what point will the Pastor reach out? visit? gifts?
- Acknowledge birthdays and holidays - always have a call to action
- Are there any kids who've completed their "last" VBS? Did they age out this year? Invite them to the youth group, introduce them to the youth leader, provide info on upcoming youth events.

2023 VBS TRAINING

Those already attending church somewhere:

- Less “intense” follow-up tactics
- Check-ins, encouragement
- Future programs and events
- Acknowledge birthdays
- If you notice several kids from one local church attended, it might be worth reaching out to that church and seeing how you could create a partnership or collaborate on future events together.

ADDITIONAL FOLLOW-UP IDEAS:

- Use your VBS missions activity as a follow-up.
- Operation Christmas Child (OCC)? -Send home an empty box, check in during Collection Week, check in early January - thank you, boxes are getting delivered, where the boxes went.
- Missionary - provide a few updates throughout the year.
- Collected school supplies? Send a thank you when school starts.
- Host an end of summer ice cream social at a local ice cream place - open call for everyone to meet there, church buys ice cream.
- Consider recording a short video from a popular VBS skit character and email it.
- Follow-Up Sunday? “Replay Sunday” “Roll Again Sunday”
- How will VBS volunteers be involved? Kids will want to see those they created a relationship with at VBS.
- Back to Church Sunday? invite VBS kids, have VBS volunteers there in Sunday School or kid’s church as familiar faces.
- Host a family trivia night.
- Go ahead and set your VBS date and theme for next year!