



## Leading Children

Our aim is to bless, model, and help our kids experience Jesus each time we gather, not simply to have “adult” time and babysit the kids. Therefore, we need to cast a vision for the adults as to why blessing and equipping the children in Lifegroup is not only valuable but necessary. Here are a few key tenets we embrace:

1. **Every life counts.** As parents, it’s our responsibility to help our children embrace the significance of their identity in Christ. This occurs when we embrace our role and responsibility as spiritual leaders for our children. We are the primary source for them understanding God’s love, and we model this in the home and in Lifegroup.  
*Deuteronomy 6:4-9*
2. **We love who Jesus brings.** When every Lifegroup looks unique in terms of ages and stages, we look like the Church when we include every person who Jesus brings to us, including children. This can make the Lifegroup feel chaotic, loud, distracting, etc., but children belong and are a part of the Church as much as we are. This will require flexibility, patience, grace, and forgiveness.
3. **The Holy Spirit dwells in our children.** For children who have received Jesus as their Savior, we must recognize that they have the Holy Spirit too, and that there is no “junior” Holy Spirit. Can you imagine what the future generation will look like if there was a generation of kingdom shakers who started as children laying hands on the sick, praying for others, and sharing the gospel? Let’s partner with God in what He is already doing in raising up a generation of passionate followers of Christ.

## Lifegroup Flow Including Children

Each week choose a way to integrate them into the parts of the Flow and/or choose to host a Family Lifegroup to include kids into the whole gathering time once a month.

### 1. Fellowship

- Spend time talking to kids besides your own, asking about their interests, and getting to know them.

## 2. Vision

- If teens/children are in your Lifegroup time together, as a part of the Vision go around the group allowing each teen/child to share one thing they love about Lifegroup. Have children read the scriptures of Vision for Lifegroup.
- Use hand motions to recite the Acts 2:42-47 passage with the parents and kids together.

## 3. Worship

- Include children during worship. Sometimes this might be with all the families together, and other times they have their own worship time depending on the setup of the house, childcare, etc. Value that parents are modeling authentic worship for their kids.
- Options you can include that help engage the kids are:
  - Dancing or playing basic instruments.
  - Using a book to briefly share a story about Jesus before the music (*The Jesus Storybook Bible*),
  - Utilizing YouTube Kids dance/worship videos (Bethel, Hill Song),
  - Teaching them basic motions to the music.
  - Choosing songs with fewer words and repetitive phrases will make it easy for the kids to sing along.
  - Asking the kids to share what they love about Jesus.

## 4. The Core

- Family DBS: Break into smaller groups of two or three families with kids to participate in a DBS together. Model how to engage the text. Each person can share observations around the questions. Then provide a space to be still and listen to God and what He wants to say to them. (Be flexible to time, basing it on ages and attention span.)
- Family Core Experiences: Lead them into one of the Core Experiences helping them understand the relational nature of God, and how they can connect to God and others in this. (Shorter kid friendly time like 10 min.)
- Childcare Led: Kids can lead themselves or be led by an adult or teen. Disciple the Childcare leader to lead a mini DBS. Use *The Jesus Storybook Bible* and basic Bible stories.
- Use the Kids in LG Lesson: Each week the lesson is sent in the LG leader email.

\*\*\* After the Core time with the children, make sure you leave time for them to play or watch a RightNow Media video. We value children having fun and connecting with their friends too.

## Logistics

- Host Home Rules: Be consistent to cover house rules as you honor the host home. Parents, set the tone with the children that the sitters are in charge of the kids during this time and they are in charge of their own behavior to have:
  1. Good attitudes.

## 2. Obey right away!

- **Rotation Options:**
  - **Childcare Rotation:** Choose what works best for your Lifegroup to hire childcare: Every week, once a month, bi-weekly, etc. You can have a parent rotate in when the sitters aren't present.
  - **Teen Discipleship:** Equip your teens who want to disciple by investing into kids with the Children's Flow/Core. They will learn more by what's caught than taught.
  - **Parent Discipleship:** Rotate through a sign up for adults/couples who will do the Flow/Core with kids. Make sure this doesn't fall only on the moms, but husband/wife serving together for those that can.
- **Solo Parents:** Take special care of the single moms/dads, and those who have a traveling/working or an unbelieving spouse not in attendance. Make sure they don't feel isolated by only addressing people as "couples."
- **Size Factors:** For groups with fifteen kids or more, you need two babysitters depending on the ages of kids. If needed, break up younger and older. One group inside and the other outside and then switch or use rooms instead of outdoors.
- **Childcare Money:** Have someone regularly tracking and gathering childcare money to pay the sitters. This person will also communicate with guests the cost for childcare. Typically kids under twelve need childcare.
- **Food:** Have options for snacks/drinks for kids if you don't eat dinner together.