

Session 9: Starting a StoryClub Logistics

But Jesus said, “Let the children come to me. Don’t stop them! The Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children.” And he placed his hands on their heads and blessed them before he left.
Matthew 19:14-15 (NLT)

StoryClubs are environments, like Jesus created, where children feel welcomed, loved, & blessed.

Jesus was really mad, some translations say He was indignant, with His disciples when they tried to turn away the parents and children from coming to Him. Jesus wants everyone to come to Him and His disciples should have been the last ones to stop the children. Potentially generations of families may have been without hope in Christ if the disciples had their way. But Jesus stepped in and created an environment where He could personally touch and bless the children.

We have been looking at what it takes to start an environment, a StoryClub, where children and their families can experience the love and hope found in Jesus. There are some logistics that can help you in creating this kind of environment. The following links provide some of the necessities to consider:



There are various factors to consider when starting a StoryClub in a community. You might need to start with a vision cast with the local pastors and ministry leaders. Who are the people whom you will need support and approval? Then there are other factors to consider:



PLACE

Here are some factors to consider in regards to space:

- Space needed for number of children during large/small group activities.
- Easy access for the children and leaders
- Does it need to meet indoors or can the StoryClub can be held outdoors?

TIME

Who will determine the amount of time wanted and needed to have the StoryClub? The time allotted for each of the activities can vary depending on your cultural context and age of the children. Outline the time given considering the various activities and adapt as necessary.

WELCOME

The welcoming actually starts even before the children arrive. Does the space look welcoming to children? Can some fun music be playing to create an atmosphere that engage the children and they have a desire to be there? How are the children greeted? Are leaders still preparing or are they ready to excitedly greet the children with smiles and appropriate physical touch? Will children know this is a time set apart for them?

KIDCONNECT

It is important for children to be recognized and feel like they belong. Have the children get into small groups or teams, the size dependent on how many leaders there are. If meeting weekly, try to have the children be in the same group each week so relationships can be developed with peers and leaders. In this KidConnect time, find out how their week went, some highs and lows, some answers to prayer and if the children were obedient to what the Lord had been asking of them in previous weeks. This would be a good opportunity to ask the **Opening** question, but it could wait till later if time does not permit.

GAMES

A wise teacher once said: “I don’t teach math, I teach children.” What will engage the children so they are having fun and want to participate? Games are one way which does not have to cost any money and involve the children in fun, energetic ways.

Games incorporate:

- Activities for all children to participate in
- Engaging – FUN – laughter
- Children are more apt to pay attention when they can get some “wiggles out”
- Time to engage and connect with leaders and peers

For games that require no, or easily accessible equipment, click on this link:

<https://bit.ly/KSgamebook>



LARGE GROUP

There are certain dynamics that happen in a larger group setting which allows for greater synergy and engagement leaving more personal things to happen in a small group setting. The Large Group might include:

- Worship
- Background of the Bible Story
- Telling of the Bible Story
- 1 Retell which each small group / team is doing the retell but being led from someone leading the large group time.

SMALL GROUP

- More retails based on age and time availability
- Head, Hand and Heart Questions
- Prayer and blessing

CLOSING

- Review of Story – maybe have a volunteer tell the story
- Closing words and announcements
- Greet parents – want to get them involved as much as possible – share what story is learned, what positive things you have noticed about their children, extend invitation to have them join next week

PEOPLE NEEDED

God has given each person unique gifts, talents and skills. Just like skilled craftsmen were called upon to build the temple, so it can be when forming your StoryClub. As a **person**, you are **influencing people to accomplish a purpose**. Here are some suggested people that can engage with the StoryClub:

- Leader - Host
- Administrator to facilitate communication, record keeping and other administrative tasks
- Greeter / Smiler: some people have the gift of hospitality and would make excellent greeters when the children and families arrive
- Storyteller
- Games / Retell activities
- Worship
- Small Group Leaders





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StoryClubs

Welcome:

- Greet children and create an environment where they are welcomed
- Formal opening to the club time
- Prayer

The Welcome is a time to gather the children together, have them feel welcomed and get connected with the leader and their friends.

Games:

- Have fun!!
- Children and leaders are engaged, where relationships are being built.
- Choose games where all the children can be involved.

You want to create a safe environment where children are having fun, everyone is involved and want to invite their friends.

Large Group:

- KidConnect: children gather in small groups with their leaders to share stories from the week which includes following-up on previous decisions from answering the Hand Questions. The **Opening** could be done here or in the Large Group.
- Worship: connecting with God.
- **Background** and creative **telling of the Bible story**
- Story Review and possibly one ReTell activity

Discipleship continues as personal interaction can happen with the KidConnect time and following-up on previous answers to Hand Questions. The Bible story is told in ways that children can imagine being there.

There is community through small group interaction and connecting with God through worship and His Word.

Small Group:

- **ReTell** the Bible Story using a variety of activities each week
- **Ask head, heart and hand questions**
- Close in prayer and give a blessing

This is a time to show love and care while discipling the children with God's Word and in response to the Spirit's leading.

Closing:

- Volunteer to retell the Bible story.
- Closing words, announcements, prayer
- Greet parents

Bring the club meeting to a close, creating enthusiasm to return with testimonies and friends.

Ask Yourself

1. In what ways can you make children feel welcomed, loved and blessed when they first come to your StoryClub?
2. Name 5 people you can ask to join you in this mission of reaching children for Jesus.

What does it take to cast a vision to ministry leaders and volunteers concerning God's heart for children and discipling them? Join us for this discussion in Session 10.

For more information on Kids Around the World, go to:

katw.org

