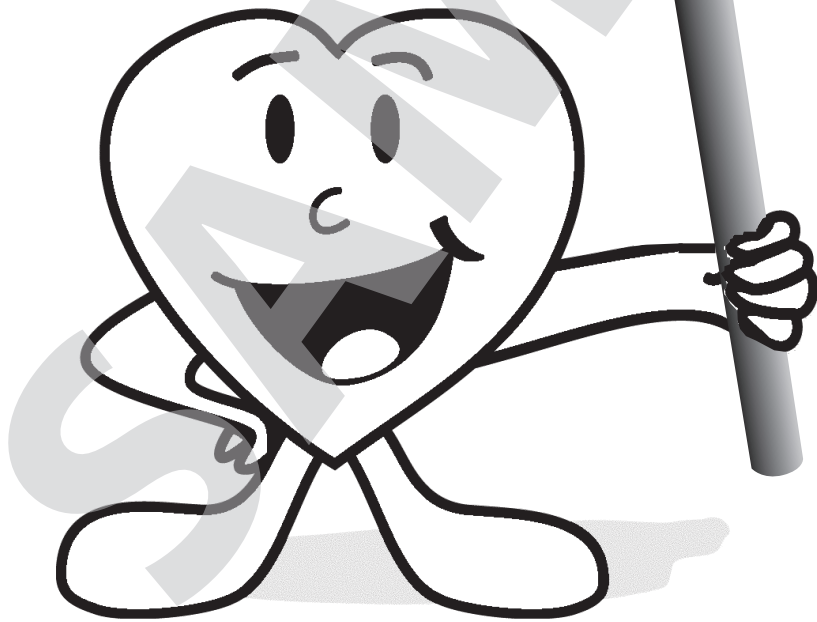


SESSION 2
GOD LOVES CHILDREN IN ALL
KINDS OF FAMILIES



Session 2

LEADER'S NOTES

Goal: To assist the children in realizing that everyone's family situation is different and to help each family develop a healthy single-parent home.

Scriptural Objective: To help the children discover that when their earthly parents disappoint them or leave them, they can ask God to become their heavenly parent.

Gospel Spotlight: All people are sinful and in need of forgiveness, including each child.

This Session Will Help the Children:

- Discover that there are other kids like them in similar situations and that they're not different
- Understand how all families are different and unique
- Realize it's okay to miss people and things

Leader Insights for This Week:

- **Changes Can Be Difficult**

When a divorce happens, children experience many changes, and they often don't know how to cope well with the stress that changes bring. Laurene Johnson and Georglyn Rosenfeld, authors of *Divorced Kids*, write, "To children, [however], the family unit is all they have ever known. It is their world, containing their earliest and most profound memories. The split in the marriage cracks the deepest foundation of their life, and suddenly everything is unstable. What can they depend on? Can anything be trusted?"⁵ Children become attached to their homes, belongings, pets, and other people in their homes, and much of that has now likely changed. Be sensitive to their grief, sadness, and anxiety over the recent changes they've experienced and remind them that God's love for them will never change.

- **Rituals Disappear**

Another element that often disappears is rituals. It has been said that rituals are the emotional glue that holds relationships together. Rituals connect people with people, parent with child, and other adults with children. Many of the children attending DC4K will have had their rituals disappear. Introducing the concept of rituals in DC4K will help the child develop healthy rituals with each parent. The Parent Page for this week encourages single parents to develop rituals in their own homes. (For a more detailed description on rituals, see page 96 in the Leader's Guide.)

- **Introduction of New Words**

Many times adults assume children understand words relating to divorce such as "judge" or "custody." These are words kids often hear for the first time during the divorce process, and they might cause anxiety or fear when children don't understand their meanings. In this week's Activity Book there is a Divorce Word Search (AB, p.11). Be prepared to explain what different words mean. For simple definitions of divorce words, see the downloadable answer keys for "Divorce Words Dictionary" and "Divorce Words Dictionary 2" (www.dc4k.org/leaderzone).

Session 2

TO DO – Before the Session Meeting:

- Pray for each child by name.
- Read the entire Lesson Plan.
- Download & make copies (from LeaderZone Library, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone).

Make 1 copy of each, unless otherwise noted:

- About Me (have copies available each week for new children)
- Have You Ever...? (1 copy per child)
- Divorce Word Dominoes (copy on card stock, each child should have 1 domino)
- Divorce Word Search Answer Key (word search found in AB,* p. 11)
- Self-Serve Snack Instructions
- Breaking Bread Instructions
- Scripture Decoder (1 copy per child)
- Parent Page (1 copy per parent)
- My Routine (1 copy per child)
- Purchase/collect the following items for this session:
 - Self-Serve Snack
 - Peanut butter[†]
 - Bread and crackers
 - Fruit juice
 - Plastic knives
 - Small paper cups
 - Small paper plates
 - Breaking Bread
 - Banana pudding[†]
 - Sliced bananas (have a Safekeeper slice right before serving)
 - Water
 - Plastic spoons
 - Small paper cups
 - Art Supplies
 - Foam shaving cream
 - Cookie sheets (3–4)
 - Optional: Camera (if a child forgets his or her picture for the Families Tree, you could take a picture of the parent and child at arrival)

PREPARATION LIST

Make ahead:

- Laminate the name tags from the last session.
- Draw a tree on a large piece of paper or poster board. Label it “Families Tree.” Or you could secure a large tree branch in a coffee can and bring clothespins to attach pictures.
- Divorce Word Dominoes: Cut out dominoes.

TO DO – 30 Minutes Before Children Arrive:

- Take out the Weekly Art Tote (see list on p. 106 of Leader’s Guide).
- Post Job Sheet, Session Schedule, and Group Guidelines (made during last session).
- Post Herby’s Feelings Poster and place sticky notes and pencils beside it.
- Put on a DC4K CD as background music.
- Set up stations for Greeting time:
 - Name tags
 - Activity Book page
 - Families Tree
 - Self-Serve Snack with instructions
 - Herby Mail Station (optional)
- Set aside items for Small Group Interaction stations:
 - Activity Book and journaling
 - Shaving Cream Painting
 - Breaking Bread with instructions
 - Treasure Box Scripture Decoder
- Make sure Energy Ball is working.
- Make sure equipment is working:
 - TV/DVD player
 - CD player

* AB = Activity Book

† ALLERGY ALERT!

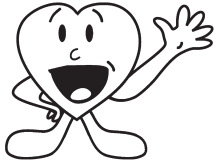

Session 2
SESSION OUTLINE

GOD LOVES CHILDREN IN ALL KINDS OF FAMILIES	2 HOURS	90 MIN
GREETING Music: "Kids Like Me" (Disc 1, Song 1) Greeting Activities: 1. Greet Children and Name Tags 2. Job Sheet 3. Herby's Feelings Poster Activity Book Station: Getting to Know You (AB,* p.9) Group Project Station: Families Tree Self-Serve Snack Station: Peanut butter [†] with bread (or crackers) and fruit juice Herby Mail Station: Optional	15 MIN	15 MIN
OPENING CIRCLE TIME Music: "Herby Rap" (Disc 1, Song 2); "If There Were Two of Me" (Disc 1, Song 4) Welcome: 1. Review Group Guidelines and Safekeeper concept 2. Herby Minute Alphabet Stretches: C & D on the flip chart Review: Diaphragm breathing and cross-lateral and cross-midline movements Game: Have You Ever...? Scripture and Prayer: 1. Romans 8:39 2. "Nothing Will Separate Us" (Disc 2, Song 2) Topic Introduction: Read This Week's Goals (AB, p. 8)	15 MIN	15 MIN
KIDS LIKE ME DVD DRAMA "The First Act" (Disc 1, Week 2) Drama Discussion Questions	15 MIN	15 MIN
STORYBOOK TIME Story 2 "I Wish There Were Two of Me"	15 MIN	10 MIN
BATHROOM BREAK	5 MIN	5 MIN
SMALL GROUP INTERACTION Activity Book Station: People in My Family (AB, p. 10) and Divorce Word Search (AB, p. 11) Project Station: Shaving Cream Painting Breaking Bread Station: Banana pudding [†] with bananas and water Journaling Station: The Journaling Page (AB, p. 12) Treasure Box Station: Treasure Box Scripture Decoder Herby Mail Station: Optional	20 MIN	15 MIN
FOCUSING ACTIVITY Group Activity: Divorce Word Dominoes Music: "Jesus Loves the Little Children" (Disc 1, Song 3)	10 MIN	0 MIN
STORIES FROM THE BIBLE ON DVD "The Woman at the Well and the Children" (Disc 1, Week 2) based on John 4:5–26 and Matthew 19:13–15 Discussion Questions Demonstration: Puppets on a string	15 MIN	10 MIN
CLOSING CONNECTION CIRCLE Devotion: Energy Ball and "I Love You" ritual Prayer Time Music: "United in Love" (Disc 1, Song 17) Parent Page and My Routine: Hand out	10 MIN	5 MIN

Session 2

LESSON PLAN

GOD LOVES CHILDREN IN ALL KINDS OF FAMILIES



GREETING

15 minutes

Music: "Kids Like Me" (Disc 1, Song 1)

- Have playing in the background.

Greeting Activities:

- Greet each child personally – Have the name tags laid out on the table.
- Job Sheet – The children sign up for jobs. Tell them how thankful you are to have them as helpers.
- Herby's Feelings Poster – Have the children write their names on a sticky note and then find a feeling picture on the chart that best describes how they feel right now. Have them stick the note by the feeling picture. Remind them that this will be the attendance chart each week.

Activity Book Station: Getting to Know You (AB, p. 9)*

- Remind the children they can color the title page for this session (AB, p. 7).

Group Project Station: Families Tree

- Purpose – To help the children have a visual representation of their family and discover that all families have similarities and uniqueness.
- Do This – Encourage the children to hang their family pictures on the "Families Tree." (For children who don't have a picture, they can draw one to hang on the tree, or the leaders could have a camera ready to take a picture of each child and parent when they arrive.)
- Ask This

1. *How are the families on our tree the same? How are they different?*
2. *If you could use one word to describe your family, what would it be and why?*

Helpful Hint

Assure parents that the family photos will be publicly displayed to the group only during DC4K.

Place photos in a secure and unseen place when you're not meeting. Return photos to families in the Exit Packet at the end of your last session.

Self-Serve Snack Station: Peanut Butter† with Bread (or Crackers) and Fruit Juice

- Have snack items and corresponding instruction sheet at the station.
- Children can make peanut butter sandwiches with bread or crackers. (For children with allergies, see alternative suggestions listed in sidebar on p. 13.)

Herby Mail Station: Optional



OPENING CIRCLE TIME

15 minutes

Have the children bring their Activity Books.

Music: "Herby Rap" (Disc 1, Song 2) and "If There Were Two of Me" (Disc 1, Song 4)

- Remind children that the Herby Rap song is a cue to gather for Circle Time.

* Reminder: Children's Activity Book pages are protected under U.S. copyright law and may not be photocopied. Please provide an Activity Book for each child.

† **ALLERGY ALERT!**

Session 2

LESSON PLAN

Welcome:

- Review Group Guidelines – Ask if anyone has other rules he or she would like to add. Remind the children they're safe at DC4K. Remind the kids that you and the other adults are Safekeepers and you're here to keep them safe. It's their responsibility to help you all keep things safe.
- Herby Minute – Introduce the Herby puppet again and explain how Herby can help kids express their feelings while attending DC4K. Show the children the different feelings faces and let a few kids volunteer to change Herby's face and give their description of the face they chose.

Alphabet Stretches: C & D

- Ask how many children remembered to stretch this week.
- Review last week's stretches.
- Have the children do the diaphragm breathing and cross-lateral and cross-midline movements introduced last week to help them release stress from the day and concentrate.
- Open the flip chart to this week's letters.

Game: Have You Ever...?⁶

- Purpose – To help the children discover that their new DC4K friends have a lot of things in common.
- Do This
 1. Place enough chairs for every child in a circle. Tape a "Have You Ever...?" house pattern to each chair.
 2. Explain that for the time being this is their humble home. This home is located on "Have-You-Ever Avenue."
 3. Tell them to take one minute to introduce themselves to the person on their right and their left by shaking their hands. After meeting each other, you're ready to play.
 4. Step into the middle of the circle and ask your best "Have you ever" question (e.g., Have you ever been to the zoo? Have you ever had pizza for breakfast?). Everyone will either answer "no" or "yes."
 5. Those answering "yes" have to look for a new home on another part of the street, not just next door. (They'll need to get out of their chairs and quickly find another chair to sit in, but not the chair next to them.) You, the leader, should also find a chair to sit in.
 6. This will leave one child without a home. That child then stands in the middle of the circle and asks a "Have you ever" question.*
- Ask This – After playing several rounds, ask the following questions:
 1. *What surprised you about this game?*
 2. *How does it make you feel to see that others have experienced some of the same things you have?*
 3. *Why do you think experiencing things is easier when you know you're not going through it alone?*

Scripture and Prayer:

- Have the flip chart open with the weekly Scripture displayed, and read aloud Romans 8:39, "Nothing will ever be able to separate us from the love of God." Explain to the children that God's love is shown to us in Christ Jesus.

For Sessions 1 & 2, have your Bible open and explain to the children that the Bible is the Word of God and all the Scriptures you will read in DC4K come directly from the Bible.

* Have you Ever...? game adapted with permission from *School-Age Adventures in Peacemaking* by William J. Kreidler and Lisa Furlong © 1995 Educators for Social Responsibility and Work/Family Directions.

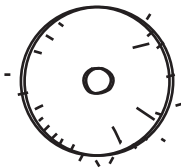
Session 2

LESSON PLAN

- Listen to this week's Scripture song – "Nothing Will Separate Us" (Disc 2, Song 2).
- Give thanks for each child and lift up the session's activities.

Topic Introduction: This Week's Goals (AB, p. 8)

- Read through with the children.
- Do a quick overview of all the Activity Book components to make sure the children are familiar with it.



KIDS LIKE ME DVD DRAMA

15 minutes

"The First Act" (Disc 1, Week 2)

Primary Questions:

- *What character or situation from the video can you relate to this week?*
- *Who lives in your home?*
- *When have you felt out of place? What is one thing you do to help yourself feel better?*

Additional Questions:

- *If you were to do a play with your friends about your lives, what would it look like?*
- *Name people in your life who are like Moses (people who rescue you).*



STORYBOOK TIME

15 minutes

Read from the book *Stories for Kids in Divorce*, "I Wish There Were Two of Me" (Story 2).

- Say This

In the story, Kristi and her parents developed rituals and routines at both homes. Rituals help people connect with each other. A healthy ritual is any positive word or action that people do together regularly to connect with each other. We can develop a ritual at DC4K. Each time you come in the door, we could have a DC4K handshake. We could also have a good-bye ritual.

- Take suggestions or ask them to form a "handshake committee" and a "good-bye ritual committee" and present some ideas during Focusing Activity time.

- Say This

Some families also have rituals. For example, there was a boy named Brian whose parents got a divorce. He lived with his mom. Each morning when it was time to get up, his mom would say to their little dog, "Snickers, it's time to go get Brian out of bed." Snickers would jump up on Brian's bed and start digging under Brian's covers. Brian would hide under the covers, while Snickers tried to find him. Every morning Mom and Brian would end up laughing together. This ritual helped Brian get out of bed, and it helped his mom and him to be connected every day.

Session 2

LESSON PLAN

Primary Questions:

- What are some rituals you have in your family?
- What's a ritual you'd like to start?
- When have you felt like you wished there were two of you?

Additional Questions:

- What are some of your responsibilities at your mom's? At your dad's?
- Why do you think Kristi was worried about her mom and dad being together in the same room? Have you ever felt like Kristi?
- Say This

This week I want you to think about your routine (that is, your daily schedule) at home. Just like we have a routine here at DC4K, you need a routine at home. We're going to give you a "My Routine" handout to take home with you this week, so you can have your parent(s) help you write out your weekly routine.



BATHROOM BREAK

5 minutes



SMALL GROUP INTERACTION

20 minutes

Divide the large group into smaller groups of 3–5 children. Have the children move from station to station.

Activity Book Station: People in My Family (AB, p. 10) and Divorce Word Search (AB, p. 11)

Project Station: Shaving Cream Painting

- Purpose – To help the kids identify things they might miss and recognize new things they can enjoy.
- Do This
 1. Spray a blob of shaving cream onto a cookie sheet.
 2. Have the children spread it out flat in front of them and write in it with their fingers.
 3. Tell the kids to start by drawing or writing their favorite toy, game, book, or sports team in the shaving cream. They can use their hands to erase the word or picture by smoothing out the cream.
 4. Then have the kids draw or write something they might miss, such as eating a meal together with mom and dad or going on vacation with the whole family.
 5. Finally, have them draw or write something new they enjoy, such as going to the movies with dad or gardening with mom.

Helpful Hint

For easy cleanup, lay a plastic tablecloth on the table before this activity.

Have wet wipes nearby for quick hand cleanup.

Ask This

1. What can be exciting about starting something new or different?
2. Why is change hard sometimes?
3. What is something new you'd like to start doing with one of your parents?

Session 2

LESSON PLAN

Breaking Bread Station: Banana Pudding* with Bananas and Water

- Have snack items and corresponding instruction sheet at the station.
- Have a Safekeeper slice the bananas with a plastic knife right before serving. The children can add banana slices to their pudding.

Journaling Station: The Journaling Page (AB, p. 12)

- Have the children read and complete this week's journaling page.

Treasure Box Station:

- Distribute copies of the Treasure Box Scripture Decoder.
- Have the children decode the Scripture, cut out the heart, and place it in their Treasure Boxes.

Herby Mail Station: Optional



FOCUSING ACTIVITY

10 minutes

If you had committees think of a hello handshake and a good-bye ritual, now is the time for them to give their reports and let the group vote.

Group Activity: Divorce Word Dominoes⁷

- Have the children stand in a circle.
- Give each child a Divorce Word Dominoes card, and tell the children not to show it to anyone.
- Ask This

What do you think the word "divorce" means?

- Explain the word "divorce" – a legal judgment from a court that ends the marriage of two people.
- Say This

Sometimes adults might use words that children don't understand. Words can be scary when we don't understand them. A divorce can bring a lot of new words into your family. We'll be talking about these divorce words over the next few weeks, and we'll learn what they mean. Right now we're going to play a game with these domino cards.

- Tell the children that when you say "Start," they're to look at their dominoes and find a person whose card has a picture that matches one of the pictures on their card.
- Say This

For example, if my domino has a picture of a judge on one end and a picture of a house on the other end, I want to find someone who has one of the same pictures that I have. When you find a person whose card matches one side of your card, stand beside that person.

- Make sure every child can stand next to someone, even if you have to give the child a new card.
- After the children have moved around trying to find a match, Say This

Our circle has become a mess. That's similar to what it feels like to live in a divorced home—our feelings get all jumbled up. Some of you have had to move, and some of you now have two homes to live in. We all live in different situations. But we're all here, and we're safe and making new friends.

* ALLERGY ALERT!

Session 2

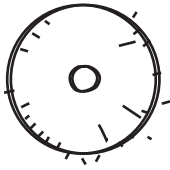
LESSON PLAN

- Move back to the original circle and explain that each week they'll get to talk about their parents' divorce and learn the meanings of all the words on the domino cards.
- Say This

We've talked about the different kinds of homes you live in and the people who live with you. What we haven't talked about is the fact that some of you miss the parent you don't live with. If you have times when you feel lonely or you miss one of your parents, know that God is always with you. You can ask God to be your heavenly parent.

Music: "Jesus Loves the Little Children" (Disc 1, Song 3)

- Make up movements or actions to go with this song.



STORIES FROM THE BIBLE ON DVD

15 minutes

"The Woman at the Well and the Children" (Disc 1, Week 2) based on John 4:5–26 and Matthew 19:13–15. After the children watch the drama, show the children where the corresponding Bible story is found in their Activity Books (AB, p. 13).

Primary Questions:

- *Uncle Bill talked about how special children are to God—why do you think that is?*
- *What is something that cheers you up when you're sad?*
- *What are some of your "needs" that you can take to Jesus so He can care for you?*

Additional Questions:

- *Jesus forgives us. Why do you think it's important for us to also forgive those who hurt us?*
- *What are some ways you see God caring for or protecting you?*
- Say This

We learned that Jesus loves each of us very much, even when we make mistakes. He wants to forgive us and give us a new life in Him. Jesus especially loves the children of divorce and single-parent families. He provided for them many times in the Bible. We'll learn more each week about how much Jesus loves us and about people in the Bible who lived in different kinds of families.

We also heard in the DVD drama that God doesn't like divorce. It makes Him sad just like it makes us sad. God knows that divorce hurts all the people around those who get divorced. But God allows each of us to make our own choices, even our parents. He didn't create us to be puppets or marionettes where God would operate our strings.

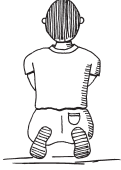
Put your arms out and let's pretend someone operates strings that control your arms. What if you needed to scratch your nose and the person operating your string didn't want you to? What would happen?

- Demonstrate – Have fun with this activity.



Session 2

LESSON PLAN



CLOSING CONNECTION CIRCLE

10 minutes

Devotion: Energy Ball and “I Love You” Ritual

- Energy Ball
 1. Bring out the Energy Ball and review what was learned last week about staying connected to each other and to God.
 2. You can vary this activity by whispering a number to every child. Whisper the numbers out of order, and then call out a number.
 - The child who has that number has to drop hands with the people on both sides. That child becomes the leader who touches the Energy Ball and calls out a new number.
- The “I Love You” Ritual⁸ – Have the children imitate your motions and repeat after you. (Say the words while doing the corresponding motions.)
 - Say This

There was a single mom who lived in a shoe.

 - Hold up right hand with fingers straight.

She had some children, and she knew exactly what to do.

 - Wave left hand over fingers.

Each night she fed them and hugged them and sent them to bed.

 - Use left index finger to trace fingers on the right hand.

“I love you, and Jesus does, too,” she said.

 - Wrap your left hand over your right hand, while balling right hand in a fist.
- Connection Circle
 1. Ask the children to sit in a circle.
 2. Take a ball of yarn and loosely wrap the yarn around the pointer finger of each child as you move around the circle.
 3. As you wrap the yarn around the finger, say the child’s name and something positive you have learned about that child. (Have the child hold on to the yarn so that it doesn’t get pulled too tightly.) Continue around the circle.
 4. After you’ve gone around the entire circle, Say This

I’ve called you each by name.⁹ You’re accepted and valued here. What’s even better, we know that God has also called you by name. Remember as you go to school or play with your friends or spend time with your family that you’re accepted and valued. Also remember that we’re connected to each other with this yarn. We’ve created a circle of friends tonight at DC4K. Let’s take time to thank God for our new friends.

Helpful Hint

Repeat the “I Love You” Ritual, inserting “dad” in the first stanza. You might also use “grandparent,” “aunt,” or “uncle,” depending on the living situations of your group.

Session 2

LESSON PLAN

Prayer Time:

- Read aloud Romans 8:39, *"Nothing can ever separate us from his love."* Remind the children that God's love is shown to us in Christ Jesus.
- Pray for each child by name.

Music: "United in Love" (Disc 1, Song 17)

- Encourage the children to hold hands and sway with the music.

Good-Bye Ritual:

- Be sure to do the good-bye ritual the group has developed.

Wrap Up:

- Have the kids help with cleanup. Children can stack Activity Books, put items in the garbage, wipe tables, pick up art supplies, etc. (Make sure Safekeepers or Teen Helpers put all the DVDs and CDs back in their boxes.)
- Have the children turn in their name tags and Activity Books before leaving.
- Make an announcement for "last chance to turn in Herby Mail letters."
- Encourage the children to invite a friend whose parents are separated or divorced to come with them to the next session.
- Make sure the children have everything they came with (coat, shoes, toys, etc.).
- Throughout the night create a stack for each child of items to take home (completed art projects, etc.).
- Distribute the Parent Page and the My Routine handout.
 - Explain to parents: The child's assignment this week is to develop a written routine using the My Routine handout and to develop a new ritual for your family. Have the children bring back their handout next week to share.

Gospel Spotlight

REMEMBER to share the gospel with the children. Go to page vi in the Activity Book, answer their questions, and pray with them.