



VBX 2013 Extras Conference

Purpose Statement

This 1 hour conference will prepare conferees to have a better understanding of preteens, language to use when discussing becoming a Christian, ways to prepare to teach, and ideas to engage preteens in serving before, during, and after VBS.

Resources to Collect

Step 1: 2 pieces of foam-board

Step 2: 7 pieces of brightly colored heavy weight paper, yarn, (optional book: *Wholly Kids: Guiding Kids to Life in Christ*)

Step 3: Small dry erase board or chalkboard

Step 4: 12, 9" balloons, 6 popcorn containers, 6 labels

Step 5: Masking or painters tape

Resources to Prepare

Step 1:

- Create a "sandwich board" by hinging two sheets of foam-board with clear packing tape. Print the following on one side of the sandwich board: *"Today's Specials: Getting to Know Your Preteens, Salvation Vocabulary, Salvation Strategies, and Ways to Serve."*

Step 2:

- Cut 2 ½ inches off the length of each sheet of brightly colored heavy weight paper to create 8 ½ x 8 ½ squares.
- On one square print: *Getting to Know Your Preteens.*
- On the remaining six squares print one of following titles: *Physically and Socially; Spiritually; Emotionally; Intellectually; Common Fears of Preteens; Applying What You Know*
- On the back of each titled square print the corresponding bullet points as described on attachment 1

- Place the “Getting to Know Your Preteens” square in the center of the wall, and attach 6 strands of yarn coming from the center, creating the look of a “Ferris wheel.” Make sure you have enough space to add all 6 “Ferris Wheel Carts” (the other prepared six brightly colored squares).
- Place prepared “Ferris Wheel Carts” underneath chairs or around the room.

Step 3:

- Print “Confusing Concessions” on the top of a poster board or small dry erase board. List the following words: *Asking Jesus into your heart, Sin, Savior, Lord, Repent, confess, soul.*

Step 4:

- Cut apart attachment 2.
- Roll up each strip and place inside a balloon before inflating. Inflate the balloons and attach 6 balloons to one wall and the other six to a different wall (balloons should be attached randomly but not higher than the average person’s height).
- Print two sets of the following words, each on a separate label: *Prepare, Share, and Witness.* Attach each label to a different popcorn container.

Step 5:

- Make 3 “Xs” on the floor using masking tape.
- Place one of each of the following terms in the center of each X: Before, During, and After (attachment 4).
- Cut apart the playing cards (attachment 3).

Resources to Copy

Step 1: Handout 1 (one for each conferee)

Focal Wall Description

Use the *VBS 2013 Quick Scene™ Super Sized Backdrop* for the focal wall.

Room Setup Description

Place chairs in a semi-circle. If tables are available, use them and place chairs around them to create a café-feel.

Decoration Suggestions

Because concessions and food are mentioned a few times in this conference, set up a few items to resemble a concession area, such as napkins, mustard, and ketchup, and a red checkered tablecloth. Preteens are not impressed by decorations, so don’t spend a lot of time decorating.

Audio Visual Needs

CD Player (Play the songs from the “Colossal Coaster World” CD as conferees work through the activities.)

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- Welcome conferees to “Navigating the Twist and Turns of Preteens at VBX.”
- Invite conferees to share some of their favorite foods to eat when they visit an amusement park. Share your favorite food, and provide an explanation for why. Help conferees to understand it’s good to get to know people better, and preteens love to know you care about them.
- Point out the prepared “Menu Board” and explain that today’s menu will include discussion about *Getting to Know Your Preteens*, *Salvation Vocabulary*, *Salvation Strategies*, and *Ways to Serve*.
- Encourage conferees to stop you and ask you to explain something or ask specific questions. The goal of the conference is for participants to walk away with confidence about teaching VBX.
- Distribute Handout 1 for conferees to make notes on during the conference.

2. Ferris Wheel Fun (20 minutes)

- Invite conferees to search under their chairs for the prepared brightly colored squares (Ferris wheel Carts).
- Call attention to the center piece of the Ferris wheel already displayed on the focal wall. Explain that different conferees will share important information that is helpful to know about preteens. Place the Ferris wheel carts around the center as they are read and the bulleted pointed tips listed on the back are discussed. Provide examples of times each item will be important to leading VBX. Use the following suggestions as a guide:
 - Physically and Socially: *Preteens love to talk! While being quiet and orderly is appropriate at times, recognize preteens love to talk with one another and give opportunities for them to do so. Remind conferees how many physical changes preteens undergo during this period of their lives. Sometimes their actions may not make sense!*
 - Spiritually: *Recognize that preteens may have some tough questions about life and things that have happened to them. Pray and ask God for help and wisdom in answering tough questions. Share appropriate stories of times you have struggled with spiritual questions and how God has helped you during those times. Help preteens see you are a real person with real problems, too.*
 - Emotionally: *Watch your words. Preteens, especially girls, are super sensitive about their looks, clothes, and others’ opinions of them. Choose your words wisely. Recognize everything you*

say has the potential to have a negative impact on preteens. Focus on speaking in a positive manner.

- *Intellectually: As preteens, they will be on a variety of different levels of learning and thinking skills. Don't underestimate preteens abilities to finish an activity quickly or take a long time on an activity that seems simplistic to you. Be prepared to be flexible with your schedule, and do not move to another activity just because the clocks says to do so. Take advantage of learning opportunities when it is clear the Lord is working in preteens' hearts and minds.*
- *Common Fears of Preteens: Familiarize yourself with the list of fears. Be prepared to answer tough questions surrounding these fears. Ask God to show you ways to share how you've dealt with these fears in a way that gave God glory. Be ready to validate these fears when preteens express them and offer to pray for strength to deal with fears that are voiced.*
- *Applying What You Know: Focus on creating relationships and building trust. Allow preteens input in activities when possible. Be sure to depend on and refer to the Bible when answering tough questions. Make the connection for preteens to know the Bible is the go-to book.*
- Share that preteens work with a "Ferris Wheel Fun Facts" activity during VBX.
- Invite conferees to check out the book *Wholly Kids: Guiding Kids to Life in Christ* for more information on preteens and their spiritual, social and emotional, physical, and intellectual characteristics.

3. Confusing Concessions (10 minutes)

- Explain that during VBX, the opportunity will be presented for preteens to hear how to become a Christian. As a leader, it is important to be prepared and ready to answer questions.
- Say: "Often times, words are used that preteens may not understand, but they might be too afraid to ask questions that would help to clarify the statements."
- Point out the "Confusing Concessions" poster and lead conferees in discussing the different terms. Ask conferees to share why some of these words might be confusing for preteens.
- Review the following terms/confusing sayings and make sure conferees know the correct definitions for them. Consider these definitions as you prepare:
 - *Asking Jesus into your heart: This is tricky, because some preteens may envision Jesus actually in a physical heart. Rather than use this term, consider talking about receiving Jesus. More information will be covered in the next activity.*
 - *Sin: Actions, attitudes, words, or thoughts that do not please God.*

- Savior: 1. *In the Old Testament, God is identified as the only true Savior.* 2. *In the New Testament, Jesus is the Savior. By dying on the cross, Jesus took the penalty for sin and offers salvation from eternal separation from God.*
- Lord: *A name for God that means “God is the owner of the earth.” It can mean “Master” or “one to whom all things belong.”*
- Repent: *To turn or change from disobeying God to obeying Him.*
- Confess: *To tell something that is true.*
- Soul: 1. *Total person.* 2. *Emotional part of a person* 3. *Spiritual part of a person that lives after the body dies.*
- Review the importance of explaining confusing terminology fully.

4. Human Dart Game (15 minutes)

- Form two teams. Explain that each team will play a game of “Human Darts.” Conferees will work quickly to use their bodies to pop the balloons on their team’s assigned wall. Instruct teams to be careful to retrieve all the slips of paper that were placed in the balloons.
- Guide teams to sort the slips into three categories: *Prepare*, *Witness*, or *Sharing* and place the items in the appropriate containers.
- Review the information found on the slips of paper. Don’t spend too much time trying to correct items placed in the wrong containers. Focus on getting the information to the conferees and helping them apply it. Use the inside front cover of the *VBS 2013 Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide* for additional information.
- Emphasize the importance of being prepared for sharing about Christ, developing good relationships with the kids to be able to share, and being aware of tips for sharing your testimony and how to share Christ with preteens.
- Pray. Lead the group in prayer asking God to prepare the hearts of leaders and preteens who will be hearing about the opportunity to become a Christian

5. The Scrambler (10 minutes)

- Share: “Preteens are in a difficult position. They don’t feel like they are children anymore, and yet they aren’t quite into their teenage years. Opportunities exist that allow preteens to become more engaged with VBS *before*, *during* and *after* VBS has occurred.
- Distribute the “Scrambler Playing Cards” (attachment 3) and challenge conferees to create three “scrambler rides” by grouping the cards according to when the ideas would be good to be used – before, during, or after VBS.
- Call attention to the prepared areas for each. Explain the cards should be placed in the appropriate areas to create three complete scrambler rotations with four cards each.

- Review the different ideas presented using the article found on page 6 of the *VBS 2013 Preteen Bible study Leader Guide* for help. Invite conferees to add their ideas and thoughts to what is presented.

6. Closing (5 minutes)

- Invite conferees to ask any closing questions they may have.
- Remind conferees that you asked them their favorite food to eat at a theme park. Explain you used that information to get to know them better.
- Encourage conferees to use the same tactics with preteens. Say: *“Make it a goal for preteens who attend VBX to be excited to share their favorite things from their experiences in VBX with others.”*
- Challenge conferees to use the information learned during this time and apply it when they prepare and teach.
- Close in prayer, asking God to provide excellent experiences for both preteens and leaders as they take a ride on Colossal Coaster World.

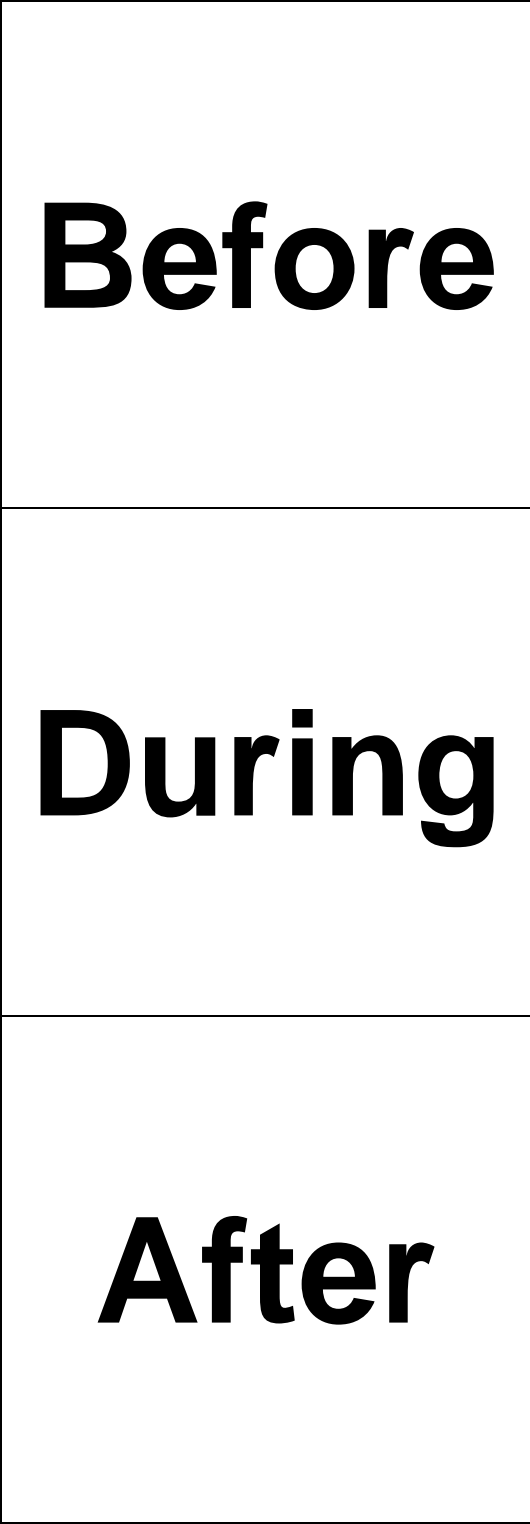
Title	Bullet Points
Getting to Know Preteens	<i>(none)</i>
Physically and Socially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appear to be constantly on the go • Are experiencing growth spurts • Enjoy sports, competition, and active games
Spiritually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are sensitive to conviction from the Holy Spirit • Are developing a value system based on their own understanding of biblical principles • Are beginning to apply biblical principles to their lives
Emotionally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are experiencing emotional roller-coasters • May exhibit oppositional behaviors at times • Are critical of themselves and others
Intellectually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seem slow to respond but are imaginative, creative, and curious • Can memorize easily, think quickly, and solve problems for themselves • Try to avoid tasks that appear difficult to learn
Common Fears of Preteens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divorce of parents • Public speaking • Personal danger • Being left alone • Storms/natural disasters • Rejection/embarrassment • Bullies • War • Death
Applying What You Know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen and respect the ideas of the preteens you teach • Give preteens choices whenever possible • Help preteens feel needed, accepted, and loved at church in order to foster long-term church involvement • Openly answer spiritual questions using the Bible as your guide

Pray for specific needs shared by your VBS director.
Pray for the preteens you will teach and serve.
Pray for the right words when you have an opportunity to witness.
Learn and use the names of preteens.
Give appropriate hugs and touches.
Learn about each preteen's family, interests, likes, and dislikes.
Practice sharing the plan of salvation aloud.
Choose your words carefully.
Jot down definitions that will make sense to preteens.
Avoid high pressure group appeals.
Reassure preteens it's okay if they don't feel God's Holy Spirit leading them to accept Jesus right now.
Be ready to suspend or interrupt your plans to talk to a preteen who has questions about becoming a Christian.

<p>Enlist preteens who are gifted artists to help with sets and decorations for the Worship Rally or VBX Classroom.</p>	<p>Host a “Craft Supply Party.” Invite preteens to come one Saturday before VBS starts to help the crafts rotation leaders cut out and prepare craft supplies. Serve pizza and cookies to thank them for their help.</p>
<p>Ask interested preteens to help the leaders in the snack area prepare the snacks each day before VBS starts.</p>	<p>Encourage preteens to arrive early and help with childcare for leaders to make last minute preparations. Be sure an adult is with them to supervise.</p>

<p>Ask those who are musically included to assist with helping younger children learn VBS songs or lead during Worship Rally.</p>	<p>Enlist preteens to take pictures or videos and put together a presentation or short video to show at the beginning of the next day's Worship Rally.</p>
<p>Allow preteens to help preschoolers during their craft or recreation time.</p>	<p>Gather preteens to help serve snacks. They could sit at the table with younger children and lead discussions about the day's Bible Story.</p>

<p>Host a “Follow Up” Party. Invite preteens to help prepare small care packages to be delivered to children who visited during VBS.</p>	<p>Help preteens write and perform a skit related to what they learned during VBX to perform during Family Night or at the Sunday morning worship service following VBS.</p>
<p>Encourage preteens who are outgoing to go on follow-up visits with the adults on the follow-up team.</p>	<p>Enlist preteens to create leader appreciation cards or treats to be delivered to volunteers who had a part in leading VBS.</p>



Navigating the Twist and Turns of Preteens During VBX



Getting to Know Your Preteens (Ferris Wheel Fun)

- Physically and Socially
- Spiritually
- Emotionally
- Intellectually
- Common Fears of Preteens

- Applying What You Know

Confusion Concessions

- Into your heart
- Sin
- Savior
- Lord
- Repent
- Confess
- Soul

Leading Kids to Christ (Human Dart Game)

Prepare

Witness

Share

Serving During VBX (The Scrambler)

Before

During

After