



VBS 2015 JOTM Starting a Backyard Kids Club

Purpose Statement

This 45-minute plan is designed to introduce leaders to LifeWay's *Journey Off the Map* Backyard Kids Club, designed to help in taking VBS outside of their church and into their communities.

Resources to Collect, Prepare, & Copy

Resources to Collect

Step 1

- Circle Stickers in assorted colors (one per conferee)

Step 2

- 3 blindfolds
- Foam board or other heavyweight material for creating signs
- Markers

Step 3

- 9 small, brightly colored gift bags
- 9 labels

Resources to Prepare

Step 1

- *VBS 2015 Music for Kids*, CD Track 1, "Journey Off the Map"
- Using the letters *B*, *K*, *C*, print one letter on individual circle stickers (one letter per conferee).

Step 2

- Create 3 large signs, printing one of the following letters on one side of each sign: *B*, *K*, *C*. On the back of the signs, print one of the following questions: *What? Why? Where?* Use heavyweight material, such as foam board to make the signs so that you can lean the signs against stationary objects around the room.

Step 3

- Print two sets of the following words, each on a separate label: *Before*, *During*, and *After*. Attach each label to a different gift bag.
- Cut apart Item 2. Sort the cards into 3 sets of 7 cards each, being careful to include tips for each group that represent the areas: *Before*, *During*, and *After*.

Resources to Copy

- Handout 1 (one per conferee) (1a on the front; 1b on the back)

Room Setup Description

Place a large tarp under chairs for conferees. Set up the chairs in a large semicircle. Place camping chairs or a hard-case cooler at the front to use as a place to display the *Backyard Kids Club Kit* and the *VBS Directors Guide*. Use a card table or other portable table to create a sample registration area near the door. Cover the table with a *VBS 2015 Journey Off the Map Tablecloth* or a flat bed sheet in a bright color. Place pens, registration forms, name tags, markers, *BKC Attendance Record*, promotional fliers, and *Handout 1* on the table. Create a craft area by setting up a folding table covered with bright colored paper. Display craft materials and sample crafts on the table. If space allows, you might mark off an area with colored cones to designate as a recreation area. You could also create a snack area by placing a large blue tarp on the floor, using green flannel backed round tablecloths to create lily pads on top of the “water”.

Decoration Suggestions

Try to create an outdoor feel by using artificial trees and plants, if available. Refrain from attaching posters and other visuals to the wall. Instead, attach posters/visuals to foam board, Styrofoam ice chests, or the side of cardboard boxes to demonstrate how you can decorate an outdoor area where walls may not be an option.

Audio Visual Needs

- CD Player

Teaching Steps

1. **Welcome (5 minutes)** Have the VBS theme song playing as conferees arrive. Stand at the registration table, greeting conferees as they arrive and giving each conferee a letter sticker. Encourage conferees to place any items they may have brought with them in a chair and then gather in a group with other individuals with the same letter sticker.
2. **BKC Intro (10 minutes)** After groups are formed, provide a blindfold for each group. Ask groups to blindfold one of their group members. Quickly place the *B*, *K*, *C* posters at various locations around the room. Instruct the groups: “You’re about to embark on an expedition. When I give a signal to begin, use your voices to guide the blindfolded person in your group to your letter sign. When the sign is discovered, the blindfold can be removed.” (Tip for small number of conferees: Blindfold one conferee and have that person search for all three signs while other conferees offer guidance.) After all letter signs have been discovered, ask those holding the signs to move to stand in front of the chairs while the other group members find a seat. Ask: “Who knows what these letters represent?” (*Answer: Backyard Kids Club*)

Guide those holding the signs to flip their signs to discover three of the most common questions asked about BKC. Share the following questions and responses. 1. What is BKC? *BKC is an opportunity to take VBS off your church campus and to a location where people can be reached who would not normally come to a church building.* 2. Why should my church do BKC? *Acts 1:8 teaches that we are to share the Gospel everywhere and that begins in our own neighborhoods!* 3. Where can my church do BKC? *Someone’s yard, an apartment complex, a school, a park, an open field – Any of these can work if they are safe and easily accessible to children.*

Ask those holding the signs how it felt to set out on a journey to uncharted territory while hearing several different voices calling out to them. Share that today’s kids have all kinds of voices calling out to them. Read Isaiah 30:21. Say, “As kids experience *Journey Off the Map* at Backyard Kids Club, they will have the opportunity to discover that Jesus is the ultimate Guide on a journey uncharted by them, but known by Him.” Collect the signs and allow conferees to return to their seats.

3. Now what? (25 minutes) Ask for a show of hands as to where conferees are in the BKC journey:

- You attended a Backyard Kids Club as a child.
- This is your church's first year to consider offering Backyard Kids Club.
- This is your first year to host a Backyard Kids Club.
- This is not your first year, but you've never been to a training event.
- You saw Backyard Kids Club on the elective list and wanted to check it out.

Say, "If you've never been a part of leading a Backyard Kids Club, you may be excited about the possibilities of taking VBS into your community, but you may also be anxious about trying something different." Share that when making plans to take a trip, it is always a good idea to talk to others who have made the trip before you. Experienced travelers can offer expert tips on the best things to do as well as things to avoid. Hosting or teaching in a Backyard Kids Club is more than loving kids and having fun with them. Experts on the BKC journey will be the first to tell you that Backyard Kids Club takes planning and preparation **if** you want kids to connect to God's Word and His plan for their lives. In this session, we're going to look at some tips from experienced travelers who have invested several years in taking VBS outside the walls of their churches through Backyard Kids Club.

Encourage the conferees to form three teams. Explain that much like VBS, Backyard Kids Club requires investing time beyond the actual time spent with kids. Distribute one set of cards (Item 2) to each group. (Tip for less than 6 conferees: Guide conferees to work together to complete the assignment, using only one set of gift bags and the complete set of playing cards.) Guide teams to sort the cards into three categories: *Before*, *During*, or *After* and place the items in the appropriate gift bags. Review the information found on the cards. As leadership roles are discussed, call attention to the individual folders in the kit that are provided for the various members of the BKC team. Refer conferees to the *Backyard Kids Club Directors Guide* and the *Host/Team Leader* folder for additional tips from BKC experts.

4. **Challenges/Benefits (4 minutes)** Ask the conferees to share challenges and benefits they might anticipate in launching a Backyard Kids Club model in their church. Be prepared to add challenges and benefits that may not be mentioned, reminding conferees of the importance of prayer and flexibility before, during and after Backyard Kids Clubs.
5. **Closing (1 minute)** Challenge the conferees to memorize Isaiah 30:21 and to keep their focus on the ultimate Guide on this journey that may be unfamiliar to them, but known by Him! Pray for conferees, their churches, and neighborhood families who will be touched in some way through Backyard Kids Club in 2015.

<p>Secure one <i>Backyard Kids Club Kit</i> for each club.</p>	<p>Select locations for Backyard Kids Clubs that are safe for children and have easy access to restrooms.</p>
<p>Organize leadership teams for each location. Do background checks on each team member.</p>	<p>Determine the dates for Backyard Kids Club and the daily schedule.</p>

<p>Establish a plan for drop off and pick up that verifies who is and is not allowed to pick up a child.</p>	<p>Walk through the BKC site, looking for hazards like ant hills, bee hives, and other potential dangers. Make sure all team members are aware of safety issues and the location of the first aid kit.</p>
<p>Train leaders in how to lead a child to Christ.</p>	<p>Develop a contingency plan in case of unexpected numbers, weather, or distractions.</p>

<p>Conduct a BKC Kickoff Event to pre-enroll neighborhood kids and to build excitement for BKC.</p>	<p>Promote Backyard Kids Club in the neighborhood or in the area around the venue where you'll be holding BKC.</p>
<p>Pray for children and families to come to know Jesus as Savior and Lord.</p>	<p>Lead kids on the expedition of a lifetime as they journey through exciting Music, Bible Study, Recreation, Snacks, and Crafts!</p>

<p>Know the number of kids attending your BKC and count them often!</p>	<p>Lead early arrivers in games that easily include kids as they arrive.</p>
<p>Build relationships with children and their families.</p>	<p>Share lots of smiles and high fives!</p>

<p>Take pictures or videos and put together a presentation or short video to show at the Family Night Celebration.</p>	<p>Host a BKC Celebration to provide an opportunity for parents to share the excitement of Backyard Kids Club.</p>
<p>Plan one or more simple events during the year.</p>	<p>Connect with kids who made a decision to accept Christ.</p>

<p>Follow up with kids and their families, sharing information about your church, including upcoming events.</p>	
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WHICH WAY DO I GO?

BKC SCRIPTURE: And whenever you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear this command behind you: "This is the way. Walk in it." Isaiah 30:21 (HCSB)

BKC MOTTO: This is the way. Walk in it.

What is BKC?

Why should my church do BKC?

Where can my church do BKC?

TIPS FROM BKC EXPERTS

Before:

During:

After: