



IDEAS GUIDE

MOVING BACK INTO THE BUILDING FOR KIDS WORK

By Emma Bacon, October 2020

Topics

Using Resources
Session structures
Room set up
Teaching Content
Service Ideas
Team
Game ideas



Hello

My name is Emma Bacon and I am the full time children's worker at Elim Coventry Church and have recently stepped into overseeing Limitless kids nationally.

The question I have asked myself ALOT in this season and i'm sure most kids worker are probably asking at the moment is, "Should I be re opening Kids work yet?" and "how do we do kids work with so many restrictions, regulations and guidelines?" And I just want to let you know, its not impossible! There are ways to continue kids work in this season, and to begin inviting kids slowly back into the building. Our physical situation may be restricted, but the God we serve is not a God of restriction or limitation! And it's so important to remember this as we move forward. This is a guide to help you when thinking about 'next steps' for your children's ministry taken from my own personal experience and other people I have communicated with.

There is no one size fits all scheme. Every church is different. Every building is different. Every children's ministry is different. Some churches are ready to start introducing kids work back in in some way, and some churches are not, and thats ok! I pray that this document will help you to pull out some ideas that work for you! It's important to remember that anything you implement within kids work will need to be assessed on your main church risk assessment.



USING RESOURCES

Due to Covid, we need to be careful at how we share resources amongst the kids within our meetings.

Here are some ideas to help you ensure a covid secure environment whilst still using resources with the kids

1. Creating kids folders - For each of your bubbles, whether these are Sunday sessions or midweek sessions, create an activity folder which they use each week. In this folder you can have their own pens, writing pen, journal, scissors and glues (whatever resources they need for that lesson). Each week the children can then take this folder at the start of the session and at the end put back into the box. This way you can ensure the children have their own resources for activities without sharing amongst themselves. It is suggested that any resourced added to folders are put in 48 hours before children use them.
2. Bibles - have your bible box out and get the kids to pick up their own bible and put back, this way they are not being handed out and the kids are only touching the one they are using.
3. If you are re-opening toddler groups, one of the main issues is the sharing of toys and the inability to social distance with young children. One way to help with this is to provide families with their own individual play mat and bag of toys for the duration of the session (cleaning before and after). It would then be important to make sure the parent keeps their child on the mat and does not share toys with other parents attending.

SESSION STRUCTURES

Because we are limited on the amount of time that we can spend with the children in our sessions. (45 mins to 1 hour max) it may be that you need to rethink the structure of your time together.

For some of you it has been months since you have seen or even had contact with some of your children, so one thing I would suggest is to focus more on the connection than content when gathering back.

1. Focus on building up relationships with the kids, chatting with them, seeing how they are going, listening to them etc. and bring the content into that, into where they are at (see teaching materials for more info on content)
2. If you are looking to re-open toddler groups, you may want to think about creating more upfront led sessions to avoid contact between families (See resource ideas).

Stop and think...

"What is God saying to me at the moment about my ministry? Allow your plans to flow from that place."

DONT RUSH!

ROOM SET UP

Room Set up:

As you are aware group sizes currently are maximum of 15 children per bubble.

Here are some ways you could set up your room to ensure that social distance measures are applied

1. Use multiple rooms for bubbles - if you have the space and the team, you can use different rooms for different bubbles to ensure they are not interacting with each other
2. If you do not have multiple rooms to use and the team available to do this, if your main hall is big enough, you can divide this into 2 sections to create 2 bubbles in one room
3. Pre set the chairs in a social distanced circle - this gives a personal and intimate atmosphere in conversations and discussions rather than up front mic lead
4. Using tables is a great way to social distance...if you have long tables you can put a child on either side...that way there is distance but still interaction and socialising.
5. Split the room into squares so that each child has their own square. - you can make this fun by getting the children to name the squares they are in...or you can give the squares numbers and use this for points systems.
6. Depending on your building, you can use funky coloured tapes to make the social distance areas and coloured dots to make it a bit more exciting for the children - obviously this is harder if you have carpet/designated kids space

TEACHING CONTENT

With so much content online at the moment, it's hard to know the right resources to use with your children. Can I suggest that you go with where you are at as a church and a ministry? In session structures I mention about focusing on connection over content. In my experience when you gain that connection and begin to see where the kids are at, the content will flow. Ask God what it is you need to do right now...not the church next door, where you are at as a ministry.

This may be that you need to speak with leadership and find out the topics for the adult services and their heart for that to help you. or it may be simple chatting with the kids and finding out where they are at.

There are lots of places you can then draw material from in this discovery. Here are some ideas:

The Gospel in Color - Book by Curtis A. Woods and Jarvis J Williams - looking at Race, racism and reconciliation

Born to Roar Devotions for kids - Dianne Cory

The purpose driven life devotional for kids - Rick Warren

Limitless Kids - Feel Real

**"Connection
Over
Content"**





SERVICE IDEAS

If you are not yet at the point where you are able to start kids work up in person, here are some ideas to help you start thinking about possible ways to start including children who may come with their families for your adult services.

- Service packs - in communication with your leader and those speaking in adult church, why not create activity sheets for the kids linking the sermon topic for the morning? You could also include some fiddle items to help concentrate during the session.
- Family services - This is a great opportunity to incorporate some of your services into family services to get the children back and involved. This can also work by adding an additional afternoon service especially for families.
- The weather is changing, but one thing you can think of is outdoor events, such as car park services. You may have some kind of outside space attached to your church which you can use to hold some kind of social distanced family service.
- Online Video services - If you haven't already, why not try creating some online kids church videos which go live online for your kids to watch in their homes. This is also a great way to get team involved, asking them to send in videos and idea for the online kids church videos.
- Online Videos to echo in person - If you have been creating online kids church videos for Sundays or you're thinking of doing this. One thing you can do is continue to release these online, but then also have watch parties within your church with a adult leading the interactive sections in person. You could do this with a book in system and create your kids bubbles within.
- Online Zoom Services - If your church is not in the place to begin thinking about inviting kids back into the buildin, this is ok. One thing I have found really useful on a sunday is doing kids work Zoom. I have slowly begun to introduce a rota system with my team and encouraging them to lead online. We are currently doing the born to Roar series online. I have 6 team members a week come onto zoom. We start of with the years 1-6 together in the main room and then after 2 worship songs break the team out with the children in age groups. Years 1&2, Years 3&4 and years 5&6. My team then lead these session according the weekly topic. This I have found to be a great way to begin slowly getting the team back into a place of leading again after such a long period of time, as well as getting them back into a rota system where they need to plan and be responsible for the date they are serving on and who they are serving with.



TEAMS

Team in this season is an interesting topic. With so much that has gone on and limited contact with some of our team members, team for a lot of us looks different.

I believe this is a season of reset and repositioning. During this pandemic we have all had different experiences. Within this we will find that some of our team are ready to continue the journey and for some it's time to step back and take a pit stop. And you know what...that's ok. even if your numbers are low...that's ok!

I believe kids ministry is going to go forward in ways that we have never experienced before, and in that we need to make sure the right people are with us. And that's what God is doing repositioning people so that you have the right ones on the journey ahead with you.

I would suggest contacting your team on an individual level to see how they are personally and where they are at in terms of serving. And then call together a team meeting, either in person or online. In this meeting I would suggest sharing your heart for what's next. And in that be totally honest. If you are not 100% sure it's ok to say that...and follow with your heart and what God is speaking over that.

Recruiting in this season is not easy...but it's not impossible. Here are some ways you could start to recruit new team:

- Create a vision video - what do you see your kids ministry looking like, and what should people get involved - vision over the need always works best
- Ask people you know, even people who you have approached before and said no...you never know this could be a new season where God is shifting their hearts towards kids work
- Use social media. If you have parents pages on Instagram or Facebook, create a post and encourage people to contact you about getting involved
- Speak to your pastor about the need, and ask if they will give a personal announcement about it up front
- Contact parents individually and find out if they are able to help out

The great thing about team in this season is that we are limited to the amount of kids who can meet, which means the need for numbers in team is smaller...sometimes it's not about quantity!!!!

- It's really important to remember as well, that everyone is in a different place. So if your team approach you and say they can't serve anymore, reassure them that it's ok, and that the door is there if they want to return.



GAME IDEAS

As we begin to look at starting back with our kids in person, our usual crazy games may have to change slightly. This does not mean the games have to stop. It does however mean we need to rethink the way that we do them

Circle games and upfront led games seem to work best in terms of maintaining social distance.

- Pictionary using a white boards
- Heads up on a mobile
- Signs - circle game
- Splat - circle game
- The logo game - using projection
- Zoomed in object game - using projection
- Simon says
- Musical statues
- Gargling water game (suggested that adult does the gargling)
- Charades
- Quizes
- Guess the song intro
- Anagrams
- Kahoot quizzes
- Name, Place, Animal, Thing - pick a letter - each player hats list a famous persons name, a place, an animal and a thing that begins with that letter.
- I went to the shops and I brought... Or when I went on holiday I took... memory game
- 21 - Go around each child and count up to 21, each child can say 1,2,3 numbers on top of the current number. The child who has to say 21 loses.
- Would you rather
- What is missing - through presentation - showing objects and removing one each time.
- Pre filmed games for example, what happens next...(it can be a scenario and the kids have to guess what happens next before it is revealed)

One final thing, Don't forget to share any ideas you have! These pages are just a few suggestions put together, but there may be other things you can add! We are all learning, so why not learn and move forward together as a Limitless family!

For more information on any of the above information please feel free to contact us at kids@limitlesselim.co.uk Or contact me directly at Emma@elim-coventry.org.uk