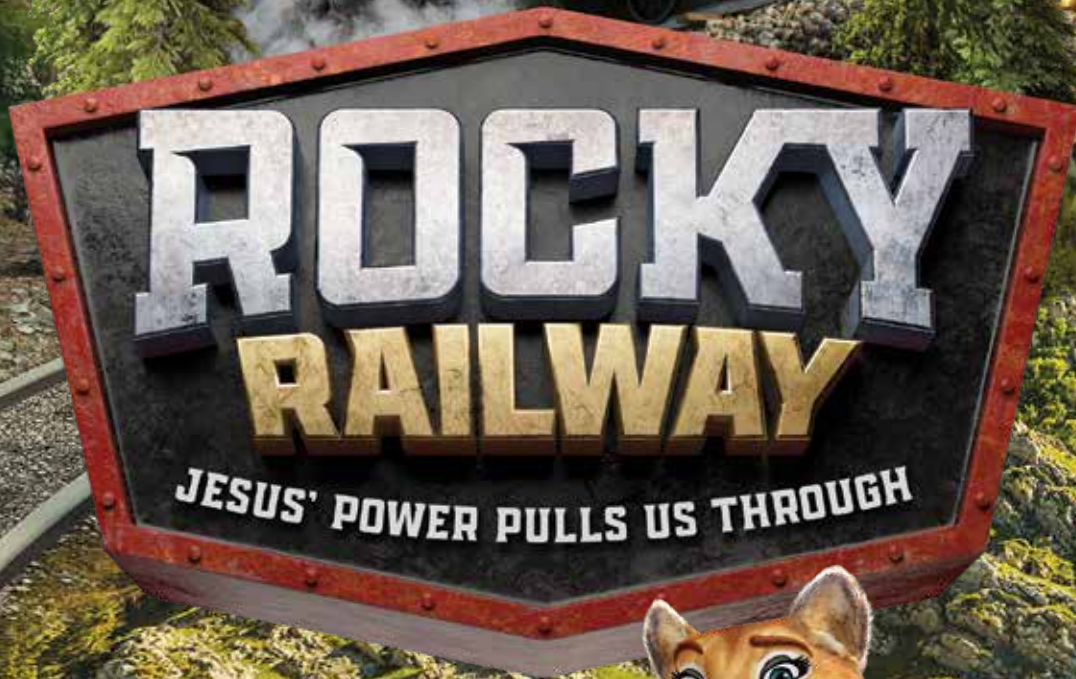


COVID-Friendly Station Modifications



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

VBS is on for summer of 2021! You can do in-person VBS with some simple modifications. We realize that every church has different comfort levels when it comes to gathering as a group. So if you're uncomfortable with a "higher-contact" experience, consider using these station specific modifications, in addition to the tips in the COVID-19 Protocol section below.

Adjusting how we do ministry will allow for ministry to keep happening! Your kids and families will thank you. You've got this!

COVID-19 Protocol

Always follow the CDC guidelines for your state and local government restrictions as well as any denominational directives.

For example, if your area is requiring masks, have volunteers and kids wear masks when physical distancing is not possible or if you're meeting inside.

When prepping supplies that will be distributed to kids, have a packing party. Volunteers can maintain physical distancing, respecting the 6-foot rule and wear gloves and masks as they get station supplies ready. Safety first!

Preregistration will allow for you to comply with COVID-19 in-person ratios. Plus, you'll know how many volunteers to recruit. VBS PRO is a great management tool option.

Space Crews 6 feet apart in station rotations, and use a one-way traffic flow, if possible.

Consider having a pool noodle for each child to use as a reminder to keep physical distance. Or have each child bring a beach towel to sit on as a visual reminder to spread out from Crew members.

Provide hand sanitizer and have participants use it before beginning each VBS station. Add a small bottle to each Crew Bag. Or supply multiple hand-washing stations.

Have wipes or disinfectant spray to frequently clean items.

For games, have multiple sets of the games supplies so each Crew gets its own clean set.

If you include Chew Chew Snacks, consider preparing the daily snack only using store-bought items. For instance, on Day 3, instead of making the "coal," purchase the Kellogg's® Cocoa Krispies® Treats (https://www.kelloggs.com/en_US/products/rkt-squares-cocoa-krispies-product.html).

Consider holding most of your VBS outside at your church. Use the Neighborhood Checklist as a guide.



<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Recruiting & Staffing

Flexibility is the key. Don't worry! We always make it as easy as possible for every Station Leader! Two people can co-lead activities, especially to help with sanitizing and reloading supplies for the next rotation.

Crew Leaders play an important role. During such a challenging season, these leaders matter! These individuals establish relationships with children, are listeners during discussion time, and show Jesus' love in tangible ways. Crew Leaders, are a key part of the VBS experience, especially if VBS may be your first in-person event.

And how cool for kids to know they have a Crew Leader praying for them every day of VBS. Next-level the relational aspect by having Crew Leaders reach out to parents at the end of each VBS day.

Consider shifting your staff training to online. Utilize platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or Google Meet for your volunteer meetings. These platforms allow you to share your screen easily with a PowerPoint or Keynote, so you can get everyone onboard. Be sure to address how station supplies will be gathered and content delivered. We've included two blank Rocky Railway slide images at group.com/VBSTools for you to easily create slides for your staff training. Just add a text box and type in your content or add images.



The graphic is a promotional poster for 'VBS Training Lab'. At the top center is the logo 'VBS Training Lab' with 'VBS' in small green letters above 'Training' in green and 'Lab' in large red letters. Below the logo are the words 'Learn and Belong' in blue, red, and orange respectively. The background is light blue with faint icons of a rocket, a heart, a gear, and a lightbulb. The main text 'Interactive! * Online! * Made for you!' is in green. Below this are two cloud-shaped callouts: a blue one on the left for 'You'll LEARN...' and an orange one on the right for 'and BELONG...'. At the bottom is a green rounded rectangle for 'Register your church...'. The footer text '(The latest innovation from the creators of VBS FunShops!)' is in small black letters.

VBS Training Lab
Learn and Belong

Interactive! * Online! * Made for you!

You'll LEARN...
how to plan, decorate, coordinate, and pull off an amazing VBS.

and BELONG...
Network with other people who share your passion for children's ministry. Befriend VBS leaders in your neighborhood or across the country!

Register your church...
for an innovative on-demand experience with live follow-up sessions.
Go to group.com/vbsTrainingLab for more info.

(The latest innovation from the creators of VBS FunShops!)

Content

Consider modifying your VBS schedule. You may want to do a full three-hour program, or trim the opening and closing so it's closer to 2 ½ hours. A shortened VBS schedule may allow you to skip the snack rotation, eliminating much COVID-19 worry. You have everything you need to lead a powerful, experiential, memorable, and life-changing VBS—no matter how many kids you have!

Make a few simple modifications.

Sing & Play Express and Rocky Wrap-Up

Create a “sing line” with a piece of masking tape. Encourage Crews to sit behind the line to create physical distance between kids, the station leader, and the skit person. The CDC recommends “at least 12 feet of distance when singing or musical instruments are involved, from performers to spectators.”

Refrain from having kids come up front to lead singing, unless you can space them out appropriately (from each other, as well as from those in the audience). Keep all singers facing the same direction, except for the station leader. This is the easiest solution for VBS worship time.

Space Crews 6 feet apart, if possible. If you have chairs or pews, leave an empty row in between Crews.

Lay out blankets for kids to sit around with their Crews. Sitting around the edge of a large blanket can encourage physical distancing.

Day 1:

Prep the “tricky train tracks” for Rocky Wrap-Up with gloves and masks on.

Day 2:

Prep the “panning packs” for Rocky Wrap-Up with gloves and masks on. Have Crews use hand sanitizer before they start the “search for gold” activity on page 36.

Day 3:

Prep the “freezer paper train tracks” for Rocky Wrap-Up with gloves and masks on.

Day 5

During Sing & Play Express, have kids use hand sanitizer before holding hands to the “Make an Intercontinental Railway” or have a few volunteers demonstrate it, or omit the experience.

Bible Adventures

Create a “drama line” with a piece of masking tape. Encourage Crews to sit behind the line to create physical distance between them, any actors, and station leader. Have Crews maintain 6 feet of distance, as much as possible.

Day 1:

Page 8: If you’re uncomfortable with kids practicing the trust fall with the Crew Leaders, simply omit this experience.

Page 9: When Ananias offer his hand to give a “low-five,” have him give an “air-five” instead.

Day 2:

Wear gloves and a mask when prepping the “sea biscuits.” Put the sea biscuit into a resealable bag for each Crew. Have 1 basket for each Crew or at least two sets so you can sanitize the baskets between rotations. Give kids a squirt of hand sanitizer on the way in, if you’re not already doing hand sanitizer at every station.

Day 3:

Page 23: If you’re uncomfortable with Crews holding hand for the “jail,” just have them create the circle. But, if you did hand sanitizer on the way in, you’re good-to -go!

Day 4:

Create a supply basket for each Crew or have at least two sets of supplies so you can sanitize the baskets, scissors, and markers between rotations.

Day 5

Give kids a squirt of hand sanitizer on the way in, if you’re not doing hand sanitizer at every station, since Crews will link arms or hands for the “party game” and Rocky Railway Signal Stick experience.

KidVid™ Cinema

Two Bibles are used every day for each Crew. Have enough Bibles so each Crew gets the same two Bibles each day—label the Crew number with a Post-it Note.

Day 1:

Create a supply basket for each Crew or have at least two sets of supplies so you can sanitize the baskets between rotations and reload the Watch for God Wristbands. Another idea is to put 5 Watch for God Wristbands into a resealable bag for each Crew.

Day 2:

Page 16: if you’re uncomfortable with Crews holding hands for the closing prayer, just have them bow their heads and fold their own hands. But, if you did hand sanitizer on the way in, you’re good-to-go!

Day 4:

Page 26: Have Crews give an air high-five instead of a Crew hug.

Chew Chew Snacks

Have your snack team prepare the snack trays wearing gloves and masks. Simply modify the snack ideas in the Chew Chew Snacks Leader Manual so each child receives his or her own snack plate, rather than a Crew tray of snack supplies. Let kids gather outside for snack time—preceded and followed by hand-washing! If you want to be extra cautious, provide a store-bought snack for kids. If you are shortened VBS program, you could skip the snack rotation entirely.

Imagination Station

Gather kids outdoors if weather permits. Give kids a squirt of hand sanitizer at the very beginning of the rotation. Create a daily supply basket for each Crew or have at least two sets of supplies so you can sanitize the baskets between rotation and reload supplies. (On Day 1 you need two supply baskets per Crew.)

Omit having kids vote with the beads and fireboxes throughout the week. Instead, have them talk about the responses with their Crews.


Day 1:

Page 7: “Answer Talk-Starter Question,” omit reference to the Power Beads at this point (even though kids will make the bracelets later in the week).

Day 2:

This is a great day to take Imagination Station outside if you can!

Page 15: Purchase inexpensive bubbles for each child to experience to “Bubble Bonanza”

 Omit blowing bubbles over kids if you don't have access to a bubble machine.

Day 3:

Page 22: Have enough Mardi Gras beads, glue dots and paper cups for each child to create their own and take home or give a squirt of hand sanitizer before doing the bead chain experience.

Day 4:

Create a daily supply basket for each Crew, containing pens and colorful markers. Or have at least two sets of supplies so you can sanitize the baskets between rotations and reload the Perpetual Papers.

Day 5

Invite Crews to use hand sanitizer before digging into the supplies to create the Power Band. Or put individual supplies into a resealable bag.

Loco Motion Games

Determine if you'll include Operation Kid-to-Kid. Kids across the globe have been impacted by COVID-19, and the children in your community will gain a sense of empowerment at helping kids in Ecuador! One game option each day connects with Operation Kid-to-Kid, so if you're not incorporating this missions project, simply omit that option. Games modifications below allow for non-contact games.

Day 1:

In "Hold the Track Line," have kids hold pool noodles or ropes between Crew members.

Day 2:

For "H.O.P.E. Ball," simply have Crew members stand about 6 -feet apart in their circle.

If you choose "Tunnel Run," partners can hold large beach blankets overhead instead of joining hands.

Day 3:

For "Railway Waterway," change the game from a hand-to-hand relay to having players walk the pool noodle and cup all the way to the bucket. (You'll need to make the bucket a bit closer to the starting line.)

If you choose "Alpaca My Bags," just caution kids to keep their distance as they run.

Day 4:

⊘ Omit "Mumble Hum Message."

Day 5

During "Train of Thought," rather than have Crews gather around a piece of paper, have leaders write the words from the handout on a whiteboard or large sheet of paper so everyone can see.

⊘ Omit "Boxcar Bolt."

Little Kids Depot

Preschoolers learn with all their senses—that means by doing and touching! We recommend handwashing or kid-friendly hand sanitizer before each rotation so you can keep as many of these experiential activities as possible.

Exploration Stations

These are designed to be unstructured activities. Make them COVID-friendly by having an entire Crew rotate to each station together. Provide a sanitized set of supplies as a new Crew visits the station.

⊘ Omit the "Play Clay" options on Day 3 & 5.

Closing Circle

Remind Crews to sit at least 6 feet apart. A pool noodle is a great visual reminder for preschoolers.

Bible Adventure & Missions

Day 3:

Page 23: Have kids use hand sanitizer after they “hold the ice cube” to learn about Operation Kid-to-Kid.

Day 4:

Have kids use hand sanitizer after Bible Adventure, since they will have potentially touched the doll and the cross. It’s too disruptive to sanitize hands during this powerful story.

Day 5

Page 37: Modify the “Help our Friends” experience by providing a small paper cups of Chex for each child. Have a child “share” a cup by passing a cup to a friend.

KidVid Cinema

Day 4:

Modify the Finn Bible Memory Blessing by having Crew Leaders omit the hug.

Day 5

⊘ Omit the “Herd Hug” and do an air high-five instead.

Craft & Play

Create a daily supply basket for each Crew or have at least two sets so you can sanitize reusable supplies like crayons, glue sticks and markers between rotation and reload supplies. Games

Play the games outside if possible. Give kids a squirt of hand sanitizer before playing. Here are three options on how to handle supplies. Have one set of game supplies for each rotation, so each group gets a clean set. Have two complete sets so you can sanitize between rotations. Or use the additional modifications below.

Day 1:

Have kids hold the end of a pool noodle instead of hands for “Lead Me.”

Day 2:

Have enough foam balls for every rotation to have a clean set for “Tossed in a Storm.”

Day 3:

Have one small stuffed animal per Crew for “Help the Conductor.”

Day 4:

Sanitize the slide, tunnel and bean bags in-between rotations for the ‘Forever Obstacle Course.’ Have one small stuffed animal per Crew for “Power to Fly.”

Day 5

⊘ Omit “Hang On!”