

VBS IS ON: How to get started!

1 event,

5 days,

15 hours—

countless
lives changed!



Greetings, VBS Director!

Welcome! This guide is designed to help you and your VBS team jumpstart VBS planning!

This year, the church has an opportunity to reach families like never before. Our ultimate hope is that as the summer nears COVID-19 restrictions will be rolled back and VBS will happen much like it normally does with some minor adjustments. But even if that doesn't happen, there are still ways you can plan a great VBS experience!

Regardless of the circumstances you know parents will be looking for ways to engage their kids with meaningful experiences. And you know how much kids love VBS. We believe VBS has the potential to impact kids and families more than ever this year!

In this guide, you'll find an activity to complete with your team, giving you three easy-steps on how to plan VBS in 2021. It may need to look different, but we've given you some ideas on how to strategize and adapt. We know how creative you are, and you'll come up with even more ways!

We're thankful that this summer, you'll help kids explore Jesus' power and how we can trust Jesus to pull us through. These days, life may feel like a valley or a steep climb, but Jesus has strength when we don't. And remember the team at Group is with you every step of the way. Thank you for all the love and laughter you pour into kids at VBS. You are our everyday God Sightings!

Take a breath, pause, and pray. And don't give up.

Blessings!

The Group VBS Team

Focus on what matters most.

Gather your VBS Team at church (if you can,) on a phone call, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, or FaceTime. Take some time to discuss the questions below so you can focus on what matters most at your VBS. Remember to be as specific as possible, so you can make the most of the time you have with kids.

What lasting image do we want to leave with kids who attend our VBS?

What are some ways to stretch our budget so we can focus on what matters most?

How can we use our time most effectively for maximum impact?

How can we provide student resources to kids, as a way to help families stay connected with Jesus after VBS?

Relationships are the difference.

Crew Leaders are key in developing lasting relationships with the kids at your VBS.

How will you intentionally develop relationships with your VBS volunteers, kids and parents?



Be Ready to adapt!

No one knows what the coming months will look like, but with some planning, creativity, and faith you can make VBS happen—no matter what. Gather your VBS Team, for where two or three are gathered in Jesus' name (even virtually) he is there with them! (Matthew 18:20)

Here's why VBS is important:

- ▶ VBS is a time-tested, proven effective outreach strategy that reaches millions of kids and families.
- ▶ VBS provides the unique chance to connect with kids who may never set foot inside your church any other time.
- ▶ Typically, 29% of the kids who go to VBS are not regular attenders of the church hosting the program, and 22% don't attend church at all! VBS is a key opportunity to introduce kids to Jesus!
- ▶ With all the things that seem to be taking kids and families away from church, kids are still free in the summer, and parents need stuff for kids to do. Especially now!

- ▶ "VBS can be a critical way to reconnect with the kids and families in your church over the summer, after many months without face-to-face contact. Your relationships with kids and parents in your church need to be maintained."

"On the heels of Covid-19, VBS will be so important and timely to reflect on how Jesus sustains us in challenging times. This year's VBS will be important, not only for kids' spiritual growth, but also their emotional health. It will give kids an opportunity to express their feelings about the quarantine experience and to realize how God was with them in those difficult moments."

—Dr. Joseph D. White, Child Psychologist

Here's how to start planning:

1. PRAY
2. ADAPT
3. IMPLEMENT

Choose three options or add your own creative ideas. **Pray**, then decide on target dates for **implementation**. Begin by communicating to families and your community. **Adapt** plans as needed based on the current situation.

| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> We Want to Stick with a Traditional VBS Schedule | | |
|---|---|-------|
| | Stick with our current VBS date. | Date: |
| | Plan B Date (a future VBS date, still as a traditional week-long program) | Date: |
| | Plan C Date (multiple sites with smaller numbers of kids) | Date: |
| | We'll decide about moving to Plan B or Plan C by | Date: |

| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Let's Explore Some Alternative Schedules | | |
|---|---|-------|
| | 1-day for 5 weeks | Date: |
| | Weekend VBS | Date: |
| | Back to School VBS | Date: |
| | Evening VBS | Date: |
| | Multi-week VBS options (to accomodate small groups) | Date: |
| | VBS Day Camp | Date: |
| | Use VBS material on Sunday mornings, evenings or mid-week | Date: |

| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Options Using Student Materials (Bible Buddies, Student Books, Sciency Fun Gizmos, Preschool Crafts and Music CDs) | | |
|---|--|-------|
| | Drive-Thru VBS (families pick up packet, parents lead the activities with student resources) | Date: |
| | Drive-In VBS (church led with families in cars, physically distanced by parking spaces) | Date: |
| | Backyard VBS (small groups of neighborhood kids led by key VBS volunteers or parent) | Date: |
| | Online VBS (live stream led by VBS church leaders) | Date: |
| | Other | Date: |

| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implementing Our VBS Plan | | |
|--|--------|--|
| | Plan A | |
| | Plan B | |
| | Plan C | |

Trust Jesus to Make VBS Happen in 2021

While we don't have clear direction at this time, with Jesus' power, we can rise to the challenge and reach families like never before!

"For I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength."
—Philippians 4:13

