

Lesson Plans



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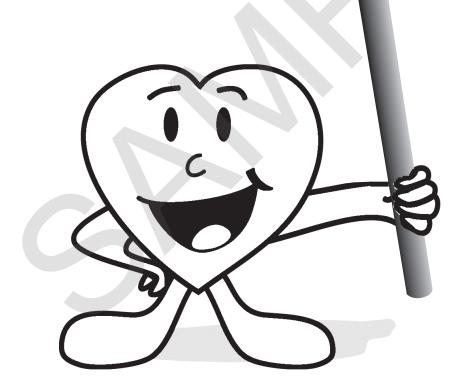
CONTENTS

How to Contact Usvii
Orientation/Registration Session1
Celebration Session5
Additional DC4K Activities7
Session 1 – What's Happening to My Family?9
Session 2 – God Loves Children in All Kinds of Families
Session 3 – Facing My Anger33
Session 4 – Journey from Anger to Sadness 45
Session 5 – I Am Not Alone 57
Session 6 – God's Plan for Me 69
Session 7 – Developing New Relationships 81
Session 8 – Developing Money Smarts91
Session 9 – It's Not My Fault 103
Session 10 – Telling My Parents How I Feel 115
Session 11 – Forgiveness 127
Session 12 – Loving My Parents 141
Session 13 – Moving On: Growing UP and Closer to God153
Order Activity Books and Supplies165
Notes 167

DC4K LeaderZone Library

The forms, worksheets, and activity pages needed for your weekly sessions are available for download from the LeaderZone Library, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.







LEADER'S NOTES

Goal: To help the children of divorce find comfort and relief from the anxiety of what's happening in their families.

Scriptural Objective: To demonstrate a Christlike image for the children as they enter the door and begin the DC4K journey of healing.

Gospel Spotlight: God loves each child.

This Session Will Help the Children:

- Know they're safe in this place
- Learn and understand what is going to happen each week at DC4K
- Have fun and connect with new friends

Talk with your church leadership for any church—specific direction when presenting the gospel to children.

Leader Insights for This Week:

Welcome the Family

Understand that the first week can be difficult for children coming to DC4K as they might not be familiar with your church, adult leaders, or other children. Look at every child entering the group as a hurting child. These children are hurting because of the breakup of their families. Be intentionally welcoming, friendly, and sensitive during this first session. Help the children feel as if they're being welcomed into a family atmosphere that will show them unconditional love and acceptance over the next 13 weeks.

Feeling Safe²

The main focus of this first session is to get acquainted with each child and help the children feel safe in this environment. Communicate that all of the leaders are Safekeepers. Tell the kids it is their job to help you keep things safe. During Opening Circle Time, you'll have a chance to remind them that DC4K is a safe place and talk about confidentiality within the group. You'll also help the children feel safe by establishing group guidelines, creating rituals, and following the weekly routine.

Flexibility

Remember that your first meeting will make it challenging to stay exactly on schedule as you might have to allow extra time for registration, introductions, questions, and helping children feel welcomed and comfortable. Practice grace and patience as you begin the journey of ministering to the hearts of these hurting children.

See your Leader's Guide for helpful hints and a detailed description of the weekly Lesson Plans.

Registration

Holding an Orientation/Registration Session (p. 1) prior to starting the actual 13-week cycle is a great way to get your registration information. If you opted not to have an Orientation/Registration Session prior to Session 1, then you need to make sure you have sufficient time and supplies to complete registration during this first session. Pass out Welcome Packets to each parent, which include the Registration and Child Information Forms downloadable from the LeaderZone Library, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone (see p. 1 for a list of items to include in the Welcome Packets). If you're holding registration on the first night, adjust the schedule as follows: Skip the song under "Scripture and Prayer" and skip the section entitled "Focusing Activity."



TO DO – Before the Session Meeting:

- Pray for children attending DC4K (if you have a list, pray individually by name).
 - Read the entire Lesson Plan.
- ☐ Download & make copies (from LeaderZone Library, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone).

Make 1 copy of each, unless otherwise noted:

- Name Tags (1 name tag per child, copy on card stock or brightly colored paper, to be laminated after kids decorate this week)
- About Me (1 copy per child who didn't fill one out at the Registration Session)
- Session Schedule (enlarge & laminate)
- Job Descriptions
- Job Sheet (8 copies, 1 used per week for the first 8 sessions)
- Family Word Search Answer Key (Family Word Search found in AB,* p. 3)
- Self-Serve Snack Instructions
- Breaking Bread Instructions
- Scripture Decoder (1 copy per child)
- Welcome Packets pages (1 per parent who didn't receive one at Registration Session)
- ☐ Purchase/collect the following items:
 - Self-Serve Snack
 - Peanut butter[†]
 - Bread
 - Apple juice
 - Small paper plates
 - Plastic knives
 - Small paper cups
 - Breaking Bread
 - Applesauce
 - Water
 - Plastic spoons
 - Small paper cups
 - Game Supplies
 - 1 soft ball or stuffed animal
 - Journaling/Herby Mailbox Supplies
 - Writing utensils
 - Paper or stationery
 - Mailbox or box with lid or opening
 - Art Supplies
 - Markers, yarn, etc., to decorate Name Tags and to wear around neck or affixed to shirts (all 13 weeks). You might choose to use sticker tags this week and save the decorated tags until laminated.
 - Large paper for Group Guidelines
 - Boxes with no tops and low sides, e.g., a box that holds soda cans or a large

PREPARATION LIST

cereal box with the front cut off and sides taped (1 box per 5 children)

- 1 Ping-Pong® ball per box
- 1 set of tongs per box
- Disposable bowls for paint
- Stickers of treasures, fish, seashells, etc., to decorate Treasure Boxes
- Optional: Kids might enjoy making their own Storm in a Bottle (see instructions below). Use small plastic water bottles during Breaking Bread time: the children can recycle their empty bottles. Bring needed supplies (see below).
- Optional: A small ball or a wristband with a connecting latch (1 per child; see Devotion, p. 19)
- ☐ Make ahead:
 - 1 Storm in a Bottle: Fill a 2-liter soda bottle with water; add blue food coloring. Put Monopoly® houses or other small items, such as cars, trees, etc., in the bottle. Secure lid to bottle with duct tape. Shake to see funnel.

TO DO – 30 Minutes Before Children Arrive:

- ☐ Take out the Weekly Art Tote (see list on p. 106 of Leader's Guide).
- ☐ Post Job Sheet and Session Schedule.
- Post Herby's Feelings Poster and place sticky notes and pencils beside it.
- ☐ Put on a DC4K CD as background music.
- ☐ Set up stations for Greeting activities:
 - Name Tags
 - Activity Book page
 - About Me
 - Self-Serve Snack with instructions
 - Herby Mail Station (optional)
- ☐ Set aside items for Small Group Interaction stations:
 - Activity Book and journaling
 - Ping-Pong® Blow
 - · Breaking Bread with instructions
 - Treasure Box Scripture Decoder
- ☐ Have one Activity Book per child available.
- ☐ Make sure Energy Ball is working.
- ☐ Make sure equipment is working:
 - TV/DVD player
 - CD player



^{*} AB = Activity Book

[†] ALLERGY ALERT!



SESSION OUTLINE

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO MY FAMILY?	2 HOURS	90 MIN
GREETING	15 MIN	15 MIN
Music: "Kids Like Me" (Disc 1, Song 1)		
Greeting activities:		
1. Introduction and Name Tags		
2. Job Sheet		
3. Herby's Feelings Poster		
Activity Book Station: Family Word Search (AB,* p. 3)		
Additional Activity Station: About Me		
Self-Serve Snack Station: Peanut butter sandwiches [†] and apple juice		
Herby Mail Station: Optional		
PENING CIRCLE TIME	15 MIN	15 MIN
Music: "Herby Rap" (Disc 1, Song 2)		
Welcome:		
1. Session Schedule		
2. Herby Minute (and introduction)		
3. Safekeeper concept		
Alphabet Stretches: A & B on the flip chart, stress-reducing diaphragm breathing	ng,	
cross-lateral and cross-midline movements		
Scripture and Prayer:		
1. Psalm 32:7		
2."You Are My Hiding Place" (Disc 2, Song 1) (Skip if you hold registration		
on the first night)		
Creating Group Guidelines		
Topic Introduction: Read This Week's Goals (AB p. 2)		
KIDS LIKE ME DVD DRAMA	15 MIN	15 MIN
"The Kids Connect" (Disc 1, Week 1)		
Drama Discussion Questions		
STORYBOOK TIME	15 MIN	10 MIN
Story 1 "My Parents Are Getting a Divorce? Not My Parents!"		
ATHROOM BREAK	5 MIN	5 MIN
MALL GROUP INTERACTION	20 MIN	15 MIN
Activity Book Station: Storm in a Bottle (AB, p. 4)		
Project Station: Ping-Pong® Blow		
Breaking Bread Station: Applesauce and water		
Journaling Station: The Journaling Page (AB, p. 5)		
Treasure Box Station: Decorate Treasure Box; Treasure Box Scripture Decoder		
Herby Mail Station: Optional		
OCUSING ACTIVITY (Skip if you hold registration on the first night)	10 MIN	0 MIN
Group Activity: Name Game		
Music: "Jesus Loves the Little Children" (Disc 1, Song 3)		
TORIES FROM THE BIBLE ON DVD	15 MIN	10 MIN
"Jesus Calms the Storm" (Disc 1, Week 1) based on Mark 4:35–41		
Discussion Questions		
LOSING CONNECTION CIRCLE	10 MIN	5 MIN
Devotion: Energy Ball		
Prayer Time		
Music: "United in Love" (Disc 1, Song 17)		
	* AB = Activity Book	
	† ALLERGY ALERT!	



Let the kids choose

stations they'd like to participate in. Place

a few chairs at each

station so all the kids

don't go to the same

place at once.

which Greeting

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO MY FAMILY?



of GREETING 15 minutes

Hand out Welcome Packets to any parents who did not receive one. Have parents fill out Registration and Child Information Forms.

Music: "Kids Like Me" (Disc 1, Song 1)

• Have playing in the background.

Greeting activities:

- Introduction and Name Tags Introduce yourself and ask the children their names. Have each child make and decorate a name tag that will be used for the next 13 weeks. Tell a little about what will happen this first session.
- Job Sheet Show Job Sheet and go through the Job Descriptions. Have the children sign up for a job for today. (Explain that not everyone will have a job each time.)
- Herby's Feelings Poster Have the children write their names on a sticky note or a sticker and then find a feeling picture on the chart that best describes how they feel right now. Have them stick the note by the feeling picture. Explain that this will be the attendance chart each week.

Activity Book Station: Family Word Search

- Have the children pick out Activity Books and write their names in their books.*
- Show the children that the first page of each week announces the session title and is a coloring page if they want to color it (AB, p. 1).*
- Have them do the Family Word Search (AB, p. 3). Explain that they're to stop and not proceed to the next page when they see Herby saying "Stop" at the bottom of the page.

Additional Activity Station: About Me

Have the children complete these forms. Help those who aren't able to write.

Self-Serve Snack Station: Peanut Butter Sandwiches[†] and Apple Juice

- Have snack items and corresponding instruction sheet at the station.
- The children can make peanut butter sandwiches. (For children with allergies, see alternative suggestions listed in sidebar.)
- Encourage each child to be in control of his or her own snack setup and cleanup.
- Make sure to have a trash container close by, wet wipes to clean their hands, and a small dustpan and broom so the children can clean up after themselves.

Peanut and dairy alleraies are common among children: Use these products as peanut butter substitutes: hummus, guacamole, fruit spreads, or almond butter. For dairy allergies: soy milk, almond milk, and gelatins.

Herby Mail Station:

Have the mailbox, stationery, and writing utensils available. (This is an optional station. For details on how to set up this station, see the corresponding article in the LeaderZone Library, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone * Reminder: Children's Activity Book pages are protected under U.S. copyright law and the Leader's Guide, p. 41.)



and may not be photocopied. Please provide an Activity Book for each child.



See the Herby

Puppet Face Guide in

feelings faces found

on the Herby mascot

puppet.

the LeaderZone Library for a guide to the six

OPENING CIRCLE TIME

15 minutes

Have the children bring their Activity Books.

Music: "Herby Rap" (Disc 1, Song 2)

Welcome:

- Session Schedule Show the children the posted Session Schedule and explain what's going to happen each week. Explain that each week you'll follow a similar schedule of activities.
- Herby Minute Introduce Herby and tell the kids Herby will be with them
 every time they meet and that they'll learn more about this friend next
 week. Go around the circle and have the kids say their names and something about themselves, such as their favorite color or subject in school.
- Safekeeper concept³ Tell the children that they'll be learning many things at DC4K and that this is a safe place.
- Say This

The first thing I want you to understand is that you'll always be safe here. I'm a Safekeeper, and it's my job to keep you safe. All of the adults in this room are Safekeepers. Your job is to help us keep things safe. When people don't feel safe, they can't learn; they can't concentrate or focus. Can anyone share about a time when you have been so scared you couldn't think?

Alphabet Stretches: A & B

Say This

Another thing I want to explain to you is what often happens to your body when you feel scared or stressed. When you feel this way, your muscles might feel tight or hurt. You might even feel clumsy and awkward. When you feel this way, it means you need to breathe deeply and stretch. Stretching helps you release tension from your tight muscles. At DC4K we'll do "Alphabet Stretches" each week to help you release tension and help your brains to focus.

• Show the children the Alphabet Stretches Poster for this week (located on the flip chart). This week's letters are A and B. Demonstrate the following exercises, which you'll be using throughout your 13-week program.

Stress-Reducing Diaphragm Breathing

- 1. Have the children put their hands above their belly buttons with fingers just barely interlaced.
- 2. Demonstrate how to take a deep breath (using your diaphragm) so your fingers move apart slightly.
- 3. Hold for a moment, then release your breath and let your fingers go back together and relax.

Cross-Lateral and Cross-Midline Movements⁴

- 1. Show the children how to cross their right arms over their bodies and over their waists.
- 2. Then do the same movement with the left arm. This could be right arm to left knee or left foot, and then left arm to right knee and so forth.
- 3. This helps their brains to focus. (See article in the LeaderZone Library, www.dc4k/leaderzone, for an explanation of cross-lateral and cross-midline movements.)



Scripture and Prayer:

- Have the flip chart open with the weekly Scripture displayed, and read aloud Psalm 32:7, "You are my hiding place from every storm of life."
- Explain that when parents divorce, it can feel like a storm has come into the children's lives. God promises that they can go to Him, and He will be their hiding place and protection during a storm.
- Listen to this week's Scripture song "You Are My Hiding Place" (Disc 2, Song 1).
- Give thanks for each child and lift up the session's activities.

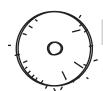
Create Group Guidelines:

- · Keep the guidelines simple and few.
- Let the children have input, but the leader has final say.
- List the rules in positive terms rather than starting each rule with "don't."
- Write the guidelines they suggest on a large paper.
- This is a good time to address *confidentiality* (see Leader's Guide, p. 91). Explain that things said in this group are *private*. They can share with their parents what they said if they want to, but not what the other children said.

For Sessions 1 and 2, have your Bible open and explain to the children that the Bible is the Word of God and all the Scriptures you will read in DC4K come directly from the Bible.

Topic Introduction: This Week's Goals (AB, p. 2)

· Read through with the children.



KIDS LIKE ME DVD DRAMA

15 minutes

"The Kids Connect" (Disc 1, Week 1).

Primary Questions:

Review the characters and talk a little about their situations. Have the children refer to the pictures of the *Kids Like Me* stars in their Activity Book (AB, p. viii).

- Did you meet someone in the drama who was like you? How was he or she like you?
- What kinds of things do you do to keep busy?
- How can friends and activities help you when life is hard?

Additional Questions:

- How has your routine changed over the past year?
- Why do you think change can be difficult sometimes?
- Say This

We're sort of like the kids in the drama—a group of friends who have things in common and are going to have fun learning and spending time together each week.







STORYBOOK TIME

15 minutes

Read from *Stories for Kids in Divorce*, "My Parents Are Getting a Divorce? Not My Parents!" (Story 1).

Primary Questions:

- Why do you think Jamie thought the divorce was her fault?
- What does it mean when parents get a divorce?
- Why do you think Jamie felt scared after she heard the argument? What was she afraid of?

Additional Questions:

- Why wasn't Jeremy worried like Jamie?
- What do you think will happen next summer with the vacation Jamie and Jeremy planned?



BATHROOM BREAK

5 minutes



SMALL GROUP INTERACTION

20 minutes

- Divide the large group into smaller groups of 3–5 children.
- · Have stations set up for these next activities.
- Adults remain at one station while the children move.
- Have at least three stations Activity Book activities, Projects, and Breaking Bread.
- The number of children you have registered will drive how many stations you need. For 20 children, try to have five stations (e.g., two or three Activity Book Stations, one or two Project Stations, and a Breaking Bread Station).

Activity Book Station: Storm in a Bottle

- Provide a Storm in a Bottle. Shake it up and watch the storm inside.
- Have the children pass it around and then complete the corresponding Activity Book page (AB, p. 4).
- Optional: Have the children make their own Storm in a Bottle, using small water bottles.

For more information on the Small Group Interaction time, see the Leader's Guide, pp. 47–48.

Project Station: Ping-Pong® Blow

- Purpose To help the kids discover that even when their lives seem out of control, God is always in control.
- Do This
 - 1. Place a piece of white paper inside a box (see Preparation List for box ideas).
 - 2. Have the children roll a Ping-Pong® ball in paint; then, using tongs, place the ball on the paper.
 - 3. The children can blow the ball across the paper. They can pretend their breaths are a soft wind or a violent storm.



- Ask This
 - 1. Do you feel you are more like the blowing wind or the Ping-Pong® ball?
 - 2. What do you do when things in your life seem out of control?
 - 3. What can you say to God when things in your life seem stormy or out of control?

Breaking Bread Station: Applesauce and Water

- Have snack items and the instruction sheet at the station.
- Explain that children going through a divorce need comfort foods that feel soft and comforting in their mouths. They also need a lot of water to help their brains focus.

Journaling Station:

- Introduce the idea of writing in their journals.
- Have the children read and complete the Journaling Page in their Activity Books (AB, p. 5).
 - 1. Younger children might need help from a leader or the older children to write their words.
 - Encourage younger children to draw their journal entries.
 - 2. You might want to provide a separate, quiet area for older children to journal and reflect more on their writing.

Treasure Box Station:

- Provide stickers depicting treasures, fish, seashells, etc., to stick on the outside of their Treasure Boxes (see inside back cover of Activity Books).
- Distribute copies of this week's Treasure Box Scripture Decoder.
- Have the children decode the Scripture. This week's Scripture will be written on the shape of a house.
- Have them cut out the house and place it in their Treasure Boxes.

Herby Mail Station: (Optional; see the Leader's Guide, p. 41, for more information)

• Have the mailbox, stationery, and writing utensils available.



FOCUSING ACTIVITY

10 minutes

Group Activity: Name Game

- Purpose To help the children get to know their DC4K family.
- Do This You'll need a soft object that can be passed from person to person.
 - 1. Sit in a circle and have everyone say his or her name.
 - 2. Give the soft object to an adult first. The person with the soft object must say three names: the name of the person to the right, the person to the left, and his or her own name.
 - 3. Then pass the object to the right. The next person must say the name of the person on the right, on the left, and his or her own name. The game continues until everyone has had a turn. (For variation, the object can be tossed to someone other than the person next to you.)
- Ask This
 - 1. Was it easy or difficult to remember the names around the circle?
 - 2. What are some scary things and some fun things about meeting new people?
 - 3. What's something unique about yourself that might help others remember you?



Helpful Hint

Questions after the station activities are optional and should be used as conversation starters.



Music: "Jesus Loves the Little Children" (Disc 1, Song 3)

- Allow the children to listen to the song.
- Then assign each child a partner. One child is the mirror, and the other child faces the "mirror" and copies his or her movements while the song is playing.
 - If you need some ideas on movements for this song, watch the bonus material on DVD Disc 3. At the end of the *Kids Like Me* drama, the kids perform "Jesus Loves the Little Children."
- Partway through the song, have the children switch roles.

Helpful Hint

If time is tight, skip singing the song and have the CD playing softly as background music instead.



STORIES FROM THE BIBLE ON DVD

15 minutes

As you get ready to watch the *Stories from the Bible* dramas, take the children to their Activity Books (AB, p. ix) and show them the pictures of Uncle Bill and the cast for these dramas.

Watch "Jesus Calms the Storm" (Disc 1, Week 1) based on Mark 4:35–41. After the children watch the drama, show the children where the corresponding Bible story is found in their Activity Books (AB, p. 6).

Important to Note: The "Jesus Calms the Storm" (Disc 1, Week 1) Bible story drama will also be repeated and used in Session 13 (see page 161). This will be a good way for children in your group to think about how far they've come in dealing with their parents' divorce since Session 1.

Primary Questions:

- What can we learn from the Bible story to help us when we're afraid?
- Describe a time when you've felt sad, alone, or afraid?
- Taylor told Jamal it's good to talk about things when you're sad. Whom can you go to when you need to talk?

See the Leader's Guide
(p. 94–95) for ideas on
presenting the
gospel. If a child would
like to talk more about
this, have a leader
take the child aside.
You can also walk the
child through the gospel presentation in the
Activity Book (p. vi).

Additional Questions:

- Why do you think the disciples became so afraid, even though Jesus was with them during the storm?
- Why can it be difficult to trust God sometimes?
- Say This

During this session we've discussed when the "divorce storm" hits your life. You learned that different things happen that seem like a storm is in your life and can cause you to feel unsafe. You might feel scared or unsure of what to do. But you know from this DVD drama that even the disciples in the Bible had to face storms. Jesus provided for them just as He can provide for you. He will never leave you or forsake you—He wants to be your forever friend.





CLOSING CONNECTION CIRCLE

10 minutes

Devotion: Energy Ball

• Explain that you want to end each session in a special Closing Connection Circle where everyone can come together in a circle and connect with each other.

Say This

Sometimes when you talk about what's happening in your family, you'll get sad and discouraged. You might wish you could make it all go away. The adults and your new friends in DC4K are here to help you. Sometimes you have to lean on other people. We'll talk about things together, and you might feel worse before you get better, but you will get better. Together we'll learn to lean on Jesus.

Let's end the session thinking about the good things in life. Sometimes you might think there's just nothing good, but when you really look around, you can find some good things in your life. Would someone like to share during this session about something good that happened to you?

- Energy Ball Demonstration
 - Show the children the Energy Ball.
 Have the kids hold hands, and make
 sure their legs, feet, and other body
 parts aren't touching anyone or
 anything else.
 - 2. Take the hand of the child to your left.
 Have the child to your right put his or her thumb on the metal strip on the bottom side of the ball and index finger on the top of the ball, while you place your thumb on the metal strip and your index finger on the top. (Make sure that

Helpful Hint

Provide the children with a take—home reminder that it's important to stay connected to each other and to God—a small ball or a wristband with connecting latch.

Explain to the children that every time they bounce the ball or wear the wristband, they can remember their connection to God and to other people—especially their new friends at DC4K.

- your fingers or thumbs don't touch each other.) The ball will light up and twinkle.
- 3. Have two children across the circle drop hands. When this happens, the ball will stop lighting and sounding. Experiment several more times.
- 4. Say This
 - It seems like this ball has special powers. But it doesn't. There's an electrical circuit traveling through us, and when two of us drop our hands, we break the connection. When we break the connection, the electricity to the ball is shut off, and it stops working. Isn't that amazing?
- 5. Explain that when they're feeling down or discouraged, they need to stay connected to God (point up) and to each other (spread arms out).
- 6. Say This

When we break the connection, we cut ourselves off from each other and from God. Repeat after me, "When I feel discouraged, I need to stay connected to God [point up] and to other people [arms out]."





Prayer Time:

- Thank God for the children and their parents.
- Ask Jesus to be with them this week and to help them all feel safe and comforted.
- After prayer, tell the kids that next time they meet they'll learn a special handshake.
- Ask them to think of ideas for the special handshake because you'll be asking for their help. For this session though, have them shake hands with a regular handshake.

Music: "United in Love" (Disc 1, Song 17)

• Listen quietly and sway to the music. Explain to the children that this will be the ending ritual every week at DC4K.

Wrap Up:

- Have the kids help with cleanup. Children can stack Activity Books, put items in the garbage, wipe tables, pick up art supplies, etc. (Make sure Safekeepers or Teen Helpers put all the DVDs and CDs back in their boxes.)
- Have the children turn in their name tags and Activity Books before leaving.
- Make an announcement for "last chance to turn in Herby Mail letters."
- Make sure the children have everything they came with (coat, shoes, toys, etc.).
- Throughout the night create a stack for each child of items to take home (completed art projects, etc.).
- Parent Page: Distribute each week as kids leave. (Note: If a parent is attending DivorceCare, the weekly Parent Pages are found in the DivorceCare workbook.)
- Tell the children to bring a picture next week of themselves with their families. It would be best if the picture is of the family or parent the child is living with. We want the children to become comfortable with their current family arrangement. But if they don't have a picture of the people in their current living arrangement, they could choose to draw a picture.
 - 1. Communicate to the parents that the photos are to assist with a project during next week's lesson where the kids will discover that their family is the people they live with.
 - 2. Assure parents that the photos will only be used on the Family Tree during group time and will be stored each week in a secure, non-public location. Pictures will be returned in the Exit Packet at the end of the cycle.

Helpful Hint

Have Safekeepers ask the children for special prayer requests and then, during prayer, lift up all of the requests spoken in a general request.

Gospel Spotlight

REMEMBER to share the gospel with the children. Go to page vi in the Activity Book, answer their questions, and pray with them. As you go through each point in this section, PAUSE to give children time to reflect and pray silently. (Talk to your children's ministry leader or pastor about how your church prefers to approach the question of salvation with children.)