

VBS FOLLOW UP CONFERENCE PLAN (1 HOUR)

Purpose Statement

This teaching plan is designed to introduce VBS leaders to effective strategies for following up with individuals and families after VBS.

Needed Resources

- *VBS 2019 Administrative Guide*
- *VBS 2019 Adult Starter Kit*
- *VBS 2019 Parent Guide*
- *VBS 2019 Tablecloths*
- Item 1: Handout — Copy 1 per conferee.

Room Setup

Arrange chairs in a semi-circle facing the focal wall. Place a copy of Item 1: “Handout” in each chair. Cover a table with a *VBS 2019 Tablecloth* and display the curriculum items on the table. Decorate the room with In the Wild™ decorations.

Teaching Steps

1. Welcome and Intro Game (2 minutes)

- Welcome conferees. Mention that follow up is one of the most challenging aspects of Vacation Bible School, but it the most important aspect in trying to continue to reach families and kids who attended your VBS.
- Explain that today you will walk conferees through some steps to help make follow up “PAWS-ible.” Mention that other tips and strategies for follow up are included in the Administrative Guide (beginning on page 50).
- Invite conferees to take notes on the handout as desired.

2. Zoom In Strategy: Begin Now (5 minutes)

- Don't wait until the end of VBS—a successful follow-up strategy begins now.
- Evaluate who you are as a church.
 - Identify and describe the typical family that attends your church.
 - Identify and describe the typical family that has recently visited our church.
 - Describe your church in 10 words or less.
 - List the things your church currently offers.
 - Evaluate and start thinking of ways you can follow up.
- Enlist a separate team to help see follow up through from beginning to the end.
- Lead the follow up team to come up with a plan for how your church will follow up on families.
- Set attainable goals.
- Determine the dates when follow up will be implemented.
- Train your greeters for VBS.
 - Train them how to greet families in the parking lot.
 - Train them how to show families where to go when they come on campus.

2. Discover Strategy (10 minutes)

- Follow up begins before VBS even starts.
- Think through your registration process. What changes need to be implemented to maximize the effectiveness of your follow-up strategy?

- Consider having a period of pre-registration (online or written forms) ahead of VBS so that parents can pre-register their child to attend your VBS.
 - Note that LifeWay's KidEvent Pro[®] is a great online event management tool for managing online registration for both volunteers and kids.
- Be sure to collect detailed information on the VBS registration forms. At a minimum, try to collect the following information:
 - Does the family attend a local church?
 - Addresses, emails, and cell phone numbers
 - Parents'/guardians' names
 - Child's name
 - School child attends
- Host an open house before VBS begins. Invite parents to come and see where the kids will be during the week.
- Send welcome letters before VBS to each family, letting them know how excited the church is to have their child attend VBS.
 - Give logistics on where families can enter your campus and where to take children.
 - Send security passes along with the welcome letter and explain in the letter how drop off and pick up will be handled.
 - Invite parents to attend your worship services and Sunday School prior to VBS.

3. Encounter Strategy (10 minutes)

- Begin on Day 1 of VBS:
 - Follow up has already started when families enter your campus.
 - Kids and families are experiencing how to get around your church campus.
 - First impressions on how welcoming your church is will either help or hurt the follow up process.
 - Lead teachers/ volunteers to be ready to greet families as they drop off their kids.
 - Train volunteers to immediately begin learning names and talking to families when they pick up or drop kids off.
- During the week of VBS:
 - Send out a post card or letter thanking families for attending VBS.
 - Lead your registration team to work on these notes/letter during the week of VBS.
 - After each session, send home a newsletter, note, or Field Kit (learner piece) that tells parents what their kids did/learned that day and what is in store for the rest of the week.
 - Set up a coffee bar or dessert bar for parents to stop by and enjoy either after dropping off kids or before picking them up. Assign volunteers in this area to talk to these families and get to know them.
 - Offer a parenting class or adult Bible study during the week of VBS. This can be offered one day or multiple days. (NOTE: Call attention to the parenting conference plan outline on the CD-ROM included in the Adult VBS Starter Kit. Mention that Adult VBS materials offer both parenting seminars and Bible studies all in one package.)
 - Host a VBS Celebration Event. Whether in the middle or at the end of VBS, invite parents to attend a VBS celebration to see what their kids have done and learned during the week. Schedule a meet-and-greet time with the parents at this event.

4. Focus Strategy: After VBS (20 minutes)

- Try the following ideas for post-VBS follow-up strategies:
- Plan for a Connection Blitz (within 48 hours of the close of VBS) during which time the follow up team will have some kind of contact with families who visited:
 - Email
 - Letter/postcard
 - Phone call
 - Enlist VBS teachers, greeters, Sunday School leaders, or registration team member to help make contacts.
- Designate the Sunday after VBS as “VBS Sunday.”
 - Invite the kids to sing a VBS song during a worship service. Provide lunch for families and invite them to come back and participate in VBS Sunday.
 - Provide a small gift for each family who attends on that Sunday.
- Drop & Run: The Sunday after VBS.
 - Prepare some type of “goody bag” filled with a special gift and information from your church. Drop in or attach the names of a family who visited during VBS to each bag, along with an address and/or phone number. Encourage church members to pick up a bag after a worship service and stop by the guest’s home to deliver the gift.
- Letter from the Pastor
 - Mail at the beginning of the week after VBS.
- Host a New Believer’s Class for kids who made professions of faith during VBS. Lead parents to attend the class with them.
- Provide devotional materials to families who attended VBS.
 - Show the *VBS 2019 Parent Guide*. Mention that the guide is a wonderful resource for both devotions and fun family activities for families to do together at home.
- Invite parents to attend a Sunday School class or small group.
- Offer special discipleship studies for the parents.
- Host a “How to Become a Member” class or luncheon after church.
- Encourage parents to opt in to regular communication that allows you to “continue the connection” begun with a family during VBS. Some ideas include:
 - Add the family to the list to receive a church newsletter.
 - Add the family to all social media deliveries (emails, texting).
 - Invite families to upcoming events, Sunday School, and worship on a regular basis—not just once immediately after VBS.
- Hold a VBS Reunion event later in the summer or early fall. This could be a back to school party, summer splash party, or any other “Back to the Wild” event.
- Lead your follow up team to meet monthly to see which families have attended, to evaluate their efforts and results, and to make sure open communication with families is on-going.

5. Continue the Connection (10 minutes)

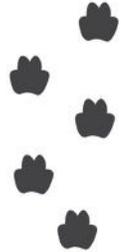
- Lead conferees to share their own ideas about ways to continue the connection in the following areas:
 - Social Connections
 - Spiritual Connections
 - Personal Connections
 - Helping Parents Make the VBS Connection

6. Wrap Up and Closing (5 minutes)

- Remind conferees of the In the Wild Motto: Zoom in! Focus on Jesus!
- Mention that following up with families who attended your VBS can be a wild adventure, but you can ...
 - Zoom In: Begin planning now and setting goals.
 - Encounter: Get to know the families as they register and attend VBS.
 - Focus: On making the connection and following up on families.
- Mention that with these tips, follow up can be “Paws-ible!”
- Pray and dismiss.

VBS Follow Up

Name the animal that you think made these tracks:



Strategies and Tips to help with follow up after VBS

Zoom In: Begin planning now and setting goals.

Discover: Unchurched Families.

Encounter: Get to know the families as they register and attend VBS.

Focus: On making connections and following up on families.