CROSSROADS KIDS • CLUB™

2025-2026 HANDBOOK

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Welcome to the Crossroads Kids Club Family!

Congratulations!

You have just stepped into a vitally important role in which you will impact children's lives for eternity. We are praying for you and are here to walk with you as you begin this journey with Crossroads Kids Club.

Our mission is to help young people know and love Jesus. Your Crossroads Club is owned and operated by your church. You and your team are the representatives of your church to the children, their families, and the school community. Our Crossroads staff team provides you with curriculum, equipping, ongoing coaching and support for you and your church to lead a successful Crossroads Kids Club ministry. We are thankful for the privilege of partnering with you to establish a thriving school-based ministry!

You will find detailed information in this handbook about the different resources and support available to you. Please don't hesitate to reach out to our team with questions or doubts along the way. We are with you on this exciting journey!

The purpose of a Kids Club is to promote healthy relationships and spiritual growth. Let everything you do be aimed toward that goal, and trust that God will produce fruit both in the lives of the children in your club and in your team as you serve.

Thank you for your commitment to introduce children to a life-transforming relationship with Jesus!

Sincerely,

The Crossroads Staff Team

CROSSROADS KIDS • CLUB

Our Mission

The mission of Crossroads Kids Club is to help young people know and love Jesus.

Our Vision

Our vision is to bring the hope of Jesus to children and families and to connect them to the life of a local church.

crossroadskidsclub.com/core

Our Core Values

We have five core values expressed as an organization and at each club.

RELATIONSHIPS
Focusing on people over process or program

Kids don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.

We want every child to feel known, seen, and loved. That happens when leaders:

- Remember kids' names and stories.
- Check in about their week, their family, or their mood.
- Prioritize connection, even when things don't go perfectly.

Example: If a game isn't working, pause it and sit with a child who's upset. The connection is more important than the plan.

EVANGELISM
Sharing the Good News

This is central to everything we do. We believe that every child deserves the chance to hear that Jesus loves them, died for them, and wants a relationship with them.

We share the gospel:

- In large group lessons that point to Jesus.
- In small group discussions and questions.
- Through prayer prompts and the Salvation Prayer.
- Through our own stories and consistent love.

Tip for new leaders: You don't need to have all the answers. Just be ready to point kids to Jesus and help them know they can ask questions.

SERVICE
Adding Value to churches, schools, and families

We're here to serve, not be served. That means:

- Showing up early to help set up.
- Staying flexible when plans change.
- Offering support to school staff and encouraging other leaders.
- Thinking about how our presence blesses the whole school community.

Example: Helping clean up after club is just as much ministry as teaching a Bible story.

CONSISTENCY
Keeping our commitments to others

Kids thrive on stability. Many of them have chaotic or uncertain lives. When we show up week after week, we show them that they can trust us—and by extension, that they can trust God.

We stay consistent by:

- Showing up on time and prepared.
- Following through on what we say we'll do.
- Repeating patterns and routines so kids know what to expect.

Encouragement: You don't have to be perfect. Just be present and dependable.

FUN
Playing together builds trust and connection

Fun isn't just a break—it's part of how kids learn and build relationships. Laughter opens doors that words alone often can't.

We create fun by:

- Leading silly games with enthusiasm.
- Laughing with—not at—kids.
- Making space for joy, creativity, and shared experiences.

Encouragement: You don't have to be perfect. Just be present and dependable.

Ministry Agreement

We ask that a representative from each church signs our Ministry Agreement prior to launching your club.

The Ministry Agreement explains the relationship between Crossroads and the church. It explains that Crossroads will:

- Provide what is needed to equip your team
- Give your church permission to use the curriculum and branding
- Offer you support and coaching
- Give you full access to the mobile application

It explains that the chuch will:

- Make sure the club is run safely and follows the law and school district policies
- Screen, select, and train your volunteer leaders
- Report progress and feedback using the mobile app or website to help Crossroads gather feedback

The agreement also explains that the church agrees to the Statement of Faith (see page 10).

You can read, print and sign the Crossroads Ministry Agreement at by scanning this code or going to the link below, or we will send you an electronic version to e-sign.

crossroadskidsclub.com/ministry-agreement

Guiding Principles for Club

- We will treat all people with dignity and respect because we believe they are made in God's image and have intrinsic worth.
- We will create a healthy and safe environment for students by selecting, screening, and equipping well-qualified team members who are excellent role models and who work well with children. They will be positive, committed, trustworthy, and enthusiastic.
- We will work for our club to be open, fair and accepting. We will not tolerate discrimination against students or parents based upon race, gender, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, church participation, or disability.
- We aim to shape the character of students according to biblical values, inspiring them by our example, teaching them God's ways and continuously challenging them to grow in their love for God and others.
- We will cultivate the best possible relationships with students, parents, school leaders, members of our team, and the community at large.
- We seek to earn the trust of parents, educational leaders, and the broader school community by demonstrating integrity in everything we do.

Statement of Faith

Being organized for religious purposes, the Corporation's operations, leaders and staff shall abide and agree with the following statements of truths and doctrine.

THE BIBLE

We believe that the Scriptures as contained in the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God and are the final authority for the Christian faith and practice. We strive to live out our Christian faith in light of God's revelation in the Holy Scriptures.

GOD

We believe that there is but one living and true God and that he exists eternally as three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each equal in glory and power. This triune God created all, sustains all and rules all.

HUMANITY

We believe that humans possess dignity and value because they are formed in the very image of God. We will affirm this God-given dignity by respecting and caring for human life.

SIN

We believe that the first humans, Adam and Eve, sinned against God. Because of their sin, we have all inherited a sinful nature. This nature leads us to rebel against God, and we receive the penalty of this rebellion—separation from a living God.

PUNISHMENT

We believe that in our natural state, we are destined for eternal separation from God and punishment in a place of unending torment.

THE SAVIOR

We believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God. He is one person with both human and divine natures—fully God and fully man. Jesus came to earth, lived a perfect life, and died a substitutionary death. No one took his life, but he gave it freely for the sins of the world. Because of this sacrifice, humans can be made right with God and receive the gift of eternal life, which is both a new quality and length of life.

REPENTANCE AND FAITH

We believe that repentance from sin and personally accepting the sacrifice of Jesus' death in faith is the only way to be delivered from sin and its consequences and to be set free to glorify God and enjoy him forever. This repentance and faith is a gift from God and is only possible because of his immeasurable grace.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the one who brings people to repentance and faith. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells all true believers. The Holy Spirit is the Counselor and Comforter of Christians and he guides us into all truth.

THE UNITY OF THE BODY

We believe the truths contained in the creed commonly known as the "Apostles' Creed," and we seek to promote unity among the body of Christ by accepting and loving those who both love Jesus and affirm the truths of this creed.

MARRIAGE AND GENDER

We believe that man and woman are special creations of God, made in his own image, and endowed with a gender that is genetically encoded and manifested physiologically prior to birth. We believe that marriage is the union of one man and one woman, and that marriage and the family are the foundation of civil society.

SMALL GROUP LEADER CHEAT SHEET

Preparation

PURPOSE:
Prepare for the lesson

LOOKS LIKE:
- Prepare your heart to teach.
- Plan for the lesson.
- Gather materials.
- Pray for the kids.

Connect
Small Group Session 1

PURPOSE:
Connect with the kids and make them feel heard and cared for.

LOOKS LIKE:
- Check in your kids.
- Serve a snack.
- Share "highs" and "lows," or complete the "How Are You Feeling?" chart.
- Play a structured game (Games Bag, card/board game, relays).
- Optional: Introduce the topic of the day.

15-20 MINUTES

Games

PURPOSE:
Provide a safe, structured activity that is fun for kids and teaches them valuable skills like teamwork and cooperation.

LOOKS LIKE:
- Play the games with the kids.
- If you cannot play, actively watch and cheer them on.
- Help monitor safety of all kids.

20-25 MINUTES

Head
Large Group

PURPOSE:
Briefly introduce kids to the story of the gospel in an engaging way.

LOOKS LIKE:
- Sit with your small group and monitor behavior.
- Listen to an interactive telling of the Bible story.
- Encourage responses and involvement.

15-20 MINUTES

Heart
Small Group Session 2

PURPOSE:
Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus.

LOOKS LIKE:
- Help kids to explore life's profound questions and matters of faith through exploration of the scriptures. Every week, a new question will prompt kids to delve into the Bible for answers.
- Lead conversations that feature diverse object lessons and activities. The lessons are designed to facilitate comprehension and insight into the kid's questions.
- Help kids discover the reality of God's presence, his boundless love for them, and the pivotal role of Jesus as the only way to salvation through faith in him.
- Help kids understand and feel God's love for them through time in his Word.
- Share with kids how to love the God of the Gospel.

20-25 MINUTES

Hands
Application / Wrap Up

PURPOSE:
Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel.

LOOKS LIKE:
- Discuss ways to practice what kids learned.
- Give practical acts to share and show the love of Jesus.
- Share take home verse cards or handouts.

5-10 MINUTES

Check-Out

PURPOSE:
Create routines for kids to be safely and efficiently dismissed.

LOOKS LIKE:
- Have a sign out sheet ready for parents who pick up.
- Play a game to keep kids contained and engaged while they wait.
- Ensure kids are safely released to walk or to go to other after school programs.

5-10 MINUTES

CROSSROADS KIDS • CLUB™

Philosophy of Curriculum

Purpose

The purpose of Crossroads Kids Club curriculum is to equip church teams to carry out fun, Bible-based Kids Clubs in public schools. The Crossroads team has chosen to develop curriculum as a tool to serve and support churches in their Kids Club ministry. Our aim is to design lessons that are relevant and adaptable for teams to use in different school contexts.

Principles

In addition to being in line with our Statement of Faith, our curriculum is based on the following foundational principles. Lessons are:

- **Bible-focused.** We believe the Bible is God's inspired Word, and teaching Scripture is essential to the church's mission to evangelize and disciple people. We believe that God's Word is truth and has transformative power.
- **Christ-centered.** The whole of Scripture centers on the life, death and resurrection of Christ. We believe salvation comes only through trusting and following Jesus. Each curriculum series points children to Jesus, and the gospel is presented multiple times throughout the year.
- **Story-based.** We believe God created people to connect with stories. We recognize he gave his Word primarily in the form of stories, which belong to the overarching story of God's redemptive work in the world. We teach Bible stories in connection to this biblical narrative. We believe God's Word is relevant to the stories of our lives today. Through the stories of Scripture, children can learn to make sense of their God-given identity and purpose.

Goals

The purpose of a Crossroads Kids Club is to promote spiritual transformation and healthy relationships. Our curriculum is developed with these goals in mind.

- **Spiritual Transformation.** We teach character formation in the context of biblical teaching. We understand spiritual transformation as an outcome of salvation. It is God's grace and the Holy Spirit working in a believer to produce godly fruit. We believe this understanding is foundational and essential to Christian character formation education.
- **Healthy Relationships.** We believe healthy, growing relationships (both with leaders and with other students) are a necessary key to student engagement and learning. Lessons incorporate fun, high-quality learning activities that support the teaching objectives. Lessons include discussion and inquiry that encourage a love for God's Word and a desire to know him more.

Contextualization

Our curriculum is distinctively designed for an after-school context with mixed-age elementary children. At the same time, we develop lessons that are adaptable for diverse contexts. We carefully consider various learning needs, language accessibility, cultural and geographical differences, as well as situational challenges that may arise due to space and resource availability. We celebrate diversity and strive to make our lessons relevant and meaningful for all children.

However, we recognize that there is no "one-size-fits-all" model for curriculum. We encourage our team leaders to exercise freedom and ownership of the implementation based on their understanding of their specific teams and contexts. The Crossroads staff works with the team leader and volunteers on an ongoing basis to provide curriculum support, coaching and training.

Leader Roles

You will need at least five team members to have a complete team.
A healthy club should have ratios of five to seven students per small-group leader.

Each leader should choose up to **two roles** to fill in the club. Leaders should NOT have more than two roles.

Captain

The captain casts vision, builds a team, and provides leadership to complete the ministry most effectively.

Small-Group Leaders

Small-group leaders build relationships with their group of students and show the love of Jesus through their attitudes, actions, and words. They help the students discover Jesus through reading, and understanding the Bible.

Large-Group Teacher

The large-group teacher is responsible for teaching the large group lesson, and making the Bible story fun and interactive.

Games Leader

The games leader plans and prepares games for the club using the curriculum, eCrossroads application, the Games Hub on the website or other ideas.

Prayer Champion

A prayer champion may or may not be someone who is present at club each week. This could be an individual or group of people from your church who have committed to support the team and the children in prayer. A prayer champion also encourages others in the church to pray for the ministry and support the vision.

Materials Coordinator

This person coordinates the weekly snacks, and monitors any specific food allergies or dietary restrictions to ensure that children are provided a safe snack.
The materials coordinator may also help gather and organize supplies for crafts or games as needed.

**When considering the ratios of students to small group leaders, do not count team members who do NOT lead small groups. For example a team of ten people with five small group leaders should cap their enrollment around 35 students.*

crossroadskidsclub.com/leader-roles

Five Steps to Recruit Your Team

1 Pray

Invite 3-5 other people to commit to praying daily for the right volunteers for your Kids Club. Ask God to give you names of people he wants you to invite.

2 Namestorm

Invite those 3-5 people plus anyone else who is well connected to the congregation at your church or in your community to come to a meeting to come up with as many names of potential volunteers. The key to this exercise is do not say no for anyone. Someone may have had changes in their life to allow them space to participate in the Kids Club. In the meeting write down as many names as possible with a goal of getting 25-30 names on your list. Use the club roles on page 40 to think of different types of people.

We've seen many different types of volunteers. Here are some examples:

- College Students
- Retired Teachers
- Realtors
- Business Professionals with flexibility in their schedule
- Shift workers

3 Personal Invitations

The best way to invite people to participate as a volunteer in your Kids Club is through a personal invitation. In-person is always best, but a phone call can work if you are not seeing them in time. We would recommend using your own words, but this is an example for how to invite someone to be a volunteer.

"Our church is really excited to start a Kids Club at _____ Elementary School this fall. It will meet once a week right after school for an hour and a half. We partnered with Crossroads Kids Club, who is providing the curriculum, coaching for our team and helping us connect with the school. The kids would meet in small groups, play games and hear a Bible story. This is a great opportunity to bring Jesus to kids and families we may not have the opportunity to connect with in another way. When we were talking about who would be a great volunteer for this program, your name came up. You don't have to answer right now, but would you consider praying about being a volunteer for this?"

This explains the program to the potential volunteer, while hopefully making them feel flattered that you thought of them for this position. It allows them time to consider. If you asked someone for an answer on the spot, it would likely be no, but inviting them to pray about it allows them space to truly pray about it and for God to show them if he wants them to participate.

4 Follow up

After a couple days, give the potential volunteer a call to see if they were interested in volunteering for your club. Answer any questions they have and continue to follow up until they give you an answer.

5 Repeat this process as necessary

If you don't find enough volunteers for your team. Try this process again! New names might come to mind that you didn't think of the first time around.

Casting Vision to Your Church

Crossroads clubs that have buy-in from the entire church congregation are more successful with starting and running a thriving club. The best way to recruit volunteers is through personal invitation, however, sharing about the program in front of the whole congregation can help build awareness of the program.

Why Crossroads?

Share about why you think a Kids Club is so important.

Example: *Did you know that 91% of kids in America are in public schools? We are excited to share that we are starting a Kids Club at _____ Elementary School this fall. We know that there are many families who will never come to this church without a relationship with someone here. We are going where they are and bringing the gospel to them!*

Why you?

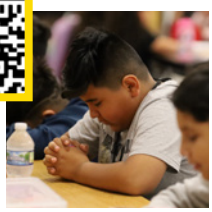
Invite the congregation to participate.

Example: *You can be a part of this! We are looking for people who are willing to take the Great Commission seriously and bring the Good News of Jesus to children and familes at _____ Elementary School.*

Why now?

Share the impact it can have on kids and families. Here are a few videos that can help cast the vision:

Madanat's story
crossroadskidsclub.com/madanats



Luiz's story
crossroadskidsclub.com/Luiz

Pharell's story
crossroadskidsclub.com/pharell

Learn more.

Share an action step for the congregation. You can have an informational meeting, or just meeting with people in the lobby after service. Just make sure to share how they can learn more and how they can sign up.

Walkthrough Plan

The walkthrough should be **one week prior** to your club launch during your future club time. You will bring your whole team to the school to see the space and talk through the discussion points below. This will set you up well for a success first week of club.

School and Safety Procedures

- Introduce yourselves to the secretary and custodian.
- What are the school rules? Are there certain cues or signals they use with students? (e.g. 1, 2, 3, eyes on me).
- Locate the restrooms. Decide how and when will kids be allowed to go to use the restrooms.
- Where are the nearest emergency exits? What procedures should be followed in case of fire or lockdown?
- Discuss what to do if a child gets injured at club.

Space

- Where will kids enter? How will we greet them?
- Where and how will kids be checked in? How does dismissal work from class?
- How will we use the space for small groups/large groups/games?
- How will we transition from one activity to another?
- Are there any particular challenges with the space (acoustics, size or set up of space, breakables, etc.) How can we deal with those challenges?
- How will we handle checkout? Will parents come pick up their kids in the school or will we take them out? How should we communicate that to parents ahead of time?
- Do we have access to a space to store materials?

Small Group Leaders

- What is our policy for dealing with discipline issues?
- How will we communicate the policy to the students? To the parents?

Students

- Share any particular concerns you have at the moment regarding your Kids Club launch. Pray for those concerns specifically.
- Begin praying for the kids on your small-group roster. Write and mail a short note to each parent in your group reminding them that club starts next week and saying that you are excited to be their child's small-group leader.

4 R's of Behavior

The four R's of behavior create a framework for reacting to challenging behaviors as they come up. It is important to clearly state what the expectations are and the consequences for not behaving appropriately, as well as make sure all the leaders are consistent and fair when implementing rewards and consequences.

Below are recommended principles to follow when dealing with difficult behaviors in your club.

Principles of Behavior: The 4 R's (Remind, Relate, Remove, Reconcile)

REMIND

When a child isn't following the expected behavior, the first step is to remind them what the expected behavior is. Sometimes kids don't realize that they are "misbehaving" and need to be retaught the expectation. Many minor issues can be dealt with simply by reminding a child what you want them to be doing in that moment.

RELATE

If the behavior continues after a reminder, take steps to engage relationally with the child. This is often a one on one conversation to the side immediately or later when you are free to do so. This is not a punishment, but a chance for you to show the child that you care about them and you want to understand the deeper issues going on. Ask questions to try and understand the underlying causes of the behavior. Engage the child in trying to solve the problem with you if possible. Behavior issues, when approached this way, can be a key opportunity to take your relationships deeper.

REMOVE

Once you've reminded a child and taken steps to reinforce the relationship, the next step is to remove. For example, if a child is being disruptive in the group, they might be removed from the group for a period of time. You may remove them from participation in games if they are not playing safe or following the rules. A ticket taken away is a type of removal of privilege that can be for a variety of more minor misbehaviors. For chronic misbehavior or severe issues, removing them from participation in club for a number of weeks can be an option.

RECONCILE

This is the most important step and the easiest to overlook. However, reconciling is a crucial step for maintaining a healthy relationship and fostering growth. Not only should a child experience consequences, but they should also be restored back into relationship with their group, with their leader, or whoever was involved.

Three respects of Crossroads

The three respects of Crossroads is a great tool to share with your kids at the beginning of each large group lesson. This helps lay the foundation that Crossroads is a safe place.

Respect God and his Word.

Point one finger up and then make a book out of your hands.

Respect others and this place.

Point two fingers out pointing to the group and the room.

Respect yourself.

Hold three fingers over your heart.

crossroadskidsclub.com/respect

How Can I Be a Great Small-Group Leader?

Expect God's involvement.

God loves the children even more than you do, and he cares deeply that they would come to know the love of Jesus and to follow him. Expect God to speak to your kids and to reveal his truth in ways that they can understand. Trust that God is working in their lives and in their hearts.

Empower your kids.

Find ways that the children can lead and serve your small group, such as passing out name tags or club materials, finding a Bible verse in Scripture, or leading a prayer. Let their questions and discoveries guide the direction of your small-group time, setting aside the curriculum when appropriate. This will build up the children's confidence and foster a sense of belonging.

Prepare.

Read the lesson before club. Pray for God to help you love the kids well and guide them to Jesus. Come to club early to make sure you are ready and have all your captain's instructions before the kids arrive.

Collaborate with the team.

See yourself as part of a larger vision than just your small group. Work with your team to reach kids in your whole club, and to serve the families and the school. Get to know your team members and learn how each person is uniquely gifted and how you can work together most effectively.

Practice active listening.

Make sure that each child has a chance to be heard. Listen to children with your full attention, and seek to understand them without an agenda. Aim to speak less than 20% of the time, and create space for silence.

Be vulnerable and transparent.

Share openly and honestly with your kids, and admit when you don't know the answer. Sharing more of yourself makes it a safe place for the kids to share themselves with you. Respect the time it takes for the children to build up their trust in you. Keep in mind not to overshare. Only share when it is for their benefit and not yours.

Have fun!

Create an atmosphere that is interactive and fun by using silliness, laughter, games, and food. Learn about your group, and find out what they think is fun. Adapt your activities accordingly. Enjoy the fun with your kids!

Who is Jesus?

Each week, we recommend using the following call-and-response to help the children commit the gospel to memory with words and motions.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is the Son of God.

Jesus came from heaven to earth.

He lived a perfect life.

He died on the cross to pay for our sin.

His body was buried in the ground.

Three days later, he rose from the dead victorious!

He is in heaven now preparing a place for you and me,

preparing a place for you and me!

Right now he sits on a throne in heavenly places.

There he prays to the Father for each and every one,

and sends the Holy Spirit to all God's children.

One day he will come again as the eternal king,

and he will turn every wrong thing, right!

crossroadskidsclub.com/whoisJesus

Discipleship

Goal

Train disciples, not just club leaders.

Opportunity

Seek opportunities to connect and serve.

- Pray for opportunities.
- Reflect on Matthew 9:36-38 (the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few) and Ephesians 6:19-20 (boldly proclaim the mystery of the gospel).
- Consider ways to connect with students (e.g., small groups, game time).
- Find ways to serve students.
- Reflect on Matthew 23:11-12 (the greatest must be the servant of all) and Ephesians 5:1-2 (imitating Jesus, who loved us and sacrificed for us).
- Focus on discipling and serving 1-3 students, as you can't meet with everyone.
- Reflect on Matthew 20:26-28 (you must be the servant of all).

Availability

Be available to students.

- Determine when you can make time for students.
- Make time to meet with students outside of club meetings.
- Attend a student's game or school activity.
- Meet students where they are emotionally and spiritually.
- Provide support, such as food for a family when someone is sick.
- Offer encouragement and comfort both at club and outside of it.

Relationally

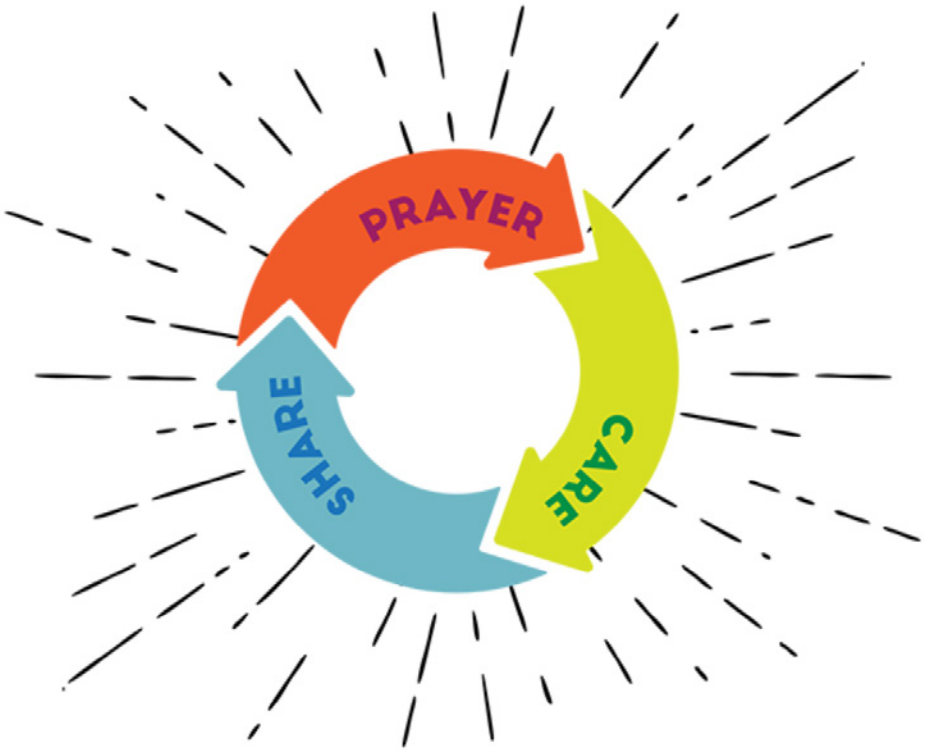
Build relationships through meaningful sacrificial servanthood.

- Reflect on Philippians 2:1-4 (having the same mind as Jesus).
- Learn from examples:
- Leader who texted, visited, and dropped off a bible and devotional at the home of a student who put their trust in the Lord.
- Leader who picked up a student for breakfast and then took him to church every Sunday.
- Recall a teacher who made you feel special, loved, and cared for.
- Recognize the influence of people who genuinely cared for you and went beyond their required responsibilities as a leader.
- Understand that as disciples of Jesus, we aim to make disciples, fostering lasting relationships with students.

The Cause Circle

Prayer

Begin by praying for those you want to reach, as Jesus did, to prepare others' hearts for the message of Jesus. Pray for boldness to communicate the gospel clearly.



Care

Show genuine care for other's needs, both physical and spiritual, by listening and helping them, following Jesus' example.

Share

Clearly and confidently share the gospel, inviting them to trust in Jesus.

The Cause Circle is an easy-to-use tool designed to help you intentionally share Jesus' message with others. It revolves around three simple yet powerful priorities that Jesus demonstrated during his earthly ministry: Prayer, Care, and Share. These same priorities will guide you in effectively sharing your faith.

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The Gospel Hand is a visual tool that uses the fingers of a hand to represent key elements of the Gospel message. Each finger corresponds to a crucial aspect of the Gospel, making it easy to remember and explain.

This is an excellent resource for leaders to share with children in small group settings. It offers a simple, interactive, and memorable way to help kids understand the core message of the Gospel. The Gospel Hand is a versatile and effective resource for leaders to share the Gospel and for children to consistently understand and remember its core message. By leveraging the simplicity and interactivity of the hand illustration, leaders can provide a clear and engaging presentation of the Gospel that children can easily grasp and recall.

The Gospel Hand

THUMB

God created us to be with him.

Genesis 1:27
So God created human beings in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

INDEX FINGER

Our sins separate us from God.

Romans 3:23
For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.

MIDDLE FINGER

Sins cannot be removed by good works.

Ephesians 2:8-9
God saved you be his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.

RING FINGER

Paying the price for sin, Jesus died and rose again.

Romans 5:8
But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

LITTLE FINGER

Everyone who trusts in Jesus alone has eternal life.

John 3:16
For this is how God loved the world; He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

Recommended Club Materials

Club Registration Flyers

Crossroads will provide your club with a PDF flyer/registration form. Please give us three days to create and send you the PDF. Parents can also register their children online at crossroadskidsclub.com/register and you will receive an email that they registered, as well as the child will show up on your roster on the app and website under Club Management Tools.

crossroadskidsclub.com/flyer

Nametags

For safety purposes, children and adults must be identified at club. Plastic name badges with lanyards are most commonly used. The best ones are the ones with the little pocket for the kids to hold their tickets.

Music

If you don't already have music/sound equipment or a leader who plays an instrument, we recommend buying a small, portable wireless bluetooth speaker. Music is helpful to use for transitions, worship and ask students enter to create a fun and welcoming environment. We put together a playlist with recommended songs for club at the link or QR code here.

crossroadskidsclub.com/playlist

Games/Sports Equipment

All games referenced in the curriculum list the materials required for play. Most of these games require little to no supplies. If you choose to buy dodgeballs, avoid hard or small dodgeballs, as they are a safety issue and are banned in many schools. Foam ones are best.

Family Discussion Guides

Family Discussion Guides are aligned with the year's curriculum and encourage children to have spiritual conversations with their parents at home. These can be printed and sent home with the students or emailed directly to parents.

Tickets and prizes

We encourage you to use raffle tickets for positive behavior reinforcement. Give students a ticket when they arrive, answer questions, win games, and are sitting nicely while other kids are not doing what is expected. Do a daily or monthly raffle for prizes or have kids save up their tickets for a Crossroads store. You can get some cheap prizes or candy from the dollar store or in bulk online.

Storage Space

Ask your school principal if there is a space in the school, such as the gym supply room or a storage closet, where you can store a few items like the small group leader supply bins. Sometimes the schools are willing to let you use space, and that helps with the weekly club set up.

T-shirts

Some churches make their own Crossroads t-shirts for the children, but it is entirely optional. Crossroads does not provide or sell t-shirts, but we provide logos free of charge to anyone who wants to make shirts or other club materials for themselves or their teams.

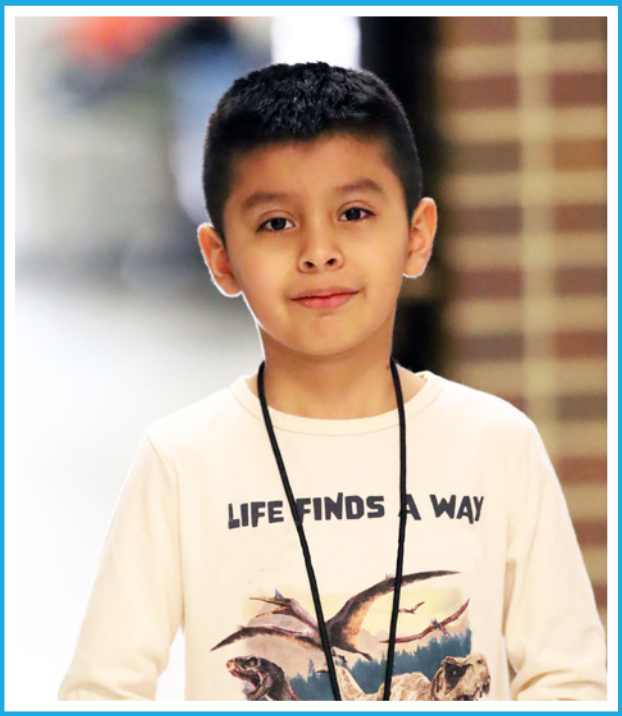
crossroadskidsclub.com/logos

Additional Resources

Additional resources are found at the link below. Some of those resources are:

- Other game ideas
- Object Lessons
- Party plans
- Family Fun Nights
- Club culture lesson to kickoff the year well
- And more!

leaders.crossroadskidsclub.com



Yes, you can talk about Jesus!

Three ways your church can share the gospel in schools.

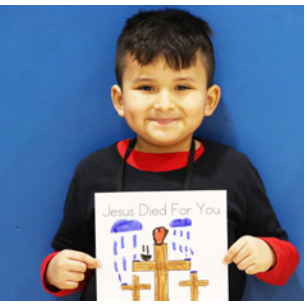
Children between the ages of four and fourteen are the group most responsive to the gospel. In fact, it is estimated that more than 60 percent of all people who ever make a commitment to Jesus do so during this ten-year period of their lives. According to the U.S. Department of Education, more than 90 percent of school-aged children attend public schools, and across the nation, there are schools and churches located in the same communities. In fact, the ratio of churches to public schools is roughly three to one. This presents a missional opportunity for local churches seeking to impact their communities with the Good News of Jesus. Sad to say, many voices in our society have led us to believe that sharing the gospel in schools is illegal, but this is far from the truth. In this article, we will explore the law and also develop a theological framework for how to approach a school. Finally, we will discuss details related to how a church can impact a school with a Bible-based club.

THE LAW

Generally, there are three broad ways that Christians may legally share their faith with public school students. These are through

1. **Released Time**
2. **Equal Access Act**
3. **Community Use**

1. Released Time



Released time is the oldest of these three. Discussion about the possibility of releasing students from a portion of their regular academic program to receive religious instruction goes all the way back to at least 1905, and the first known released time program began in Gary, Indiana, in 1914, when the superintendent enrolled six hundred children in that district's program. By the 1940s, an estimated two million children across two thousand school districts were participating in a released-time program. Case law, including an important 1952 Supreme Court decision, has established that released-time programs are constitutional if the following three conditions are met:

1. The program is voluntary, and no one is coerced to participate.
2. The parents give consent for their child to participate.
3. The program takes place off-site.

Additionally, schools may not use state resources to support a released-time program. While the Supreme Court has ruled that released time is not unconstitutional, neither is it a constitutional right. Therefore, permissibility of released-time programming varies from state to state. Where allowed, this can be a very effective way to reach public school students, as they are able to be introduced to the Bible during the school day.

Released time may be right for you if

- **you have a building located in close proximity to a school;**
- **your state has clear guidelines related to released time; and**
- **the majority of students at your local school are bussed, which prohibits a before-school or after-school option.**

2. The Equal Access Act of 1984

This is the only method of working with public school students that relies on a legislative act as opposed to case law. The Equal Access Act allows for religious clubs to take place on campus if the school generally allows other nonschool-sponsored clubs. The school is required to remain viewpoint neutral and to give religious clubs the same access to school resources (including bulletin boards, announcement systems, and use of space) that nonreligious clubs enjoy. Under the Equal Access Act, Christian clubs must be student-led and cannot have regular outside visitors. This law applies only to secondary schools (middle schools and high schools).

An equal-access club may be right for you if

- **you have a passion for equipping student leaders who will reach their peers through a Christian club; and**
- **you are seeking to reach high school or middle school students.**

3. Community Use

Public schools are just that—public. The taxpayers have funded the buildings, grounds and maintenance. Therefore, nearly every school district has policies that allow for community use of the school facilities. Most districts have a fee schedule for various types of users or uses, but commonly nonprofit groups serving local students are granted the use of space at no cost. As with the Equal Access Act, schools must remain viewpoint neutral. They cannot discriminate against a club or activity because it is religious. Religious expression is considered a viewpoint and is constitutionally protected speech.

Community-use access to school buildings for faith-based activities after school is guaranteed by a 2001 Supreme Court decision (Good News v. Milford). Therefore, this is one of the simplest ways to impact a public school with the gospel. It is legal in the entire United States, relies on constitutionally protected free-speech principles, and grants the user of the space complete freedom of religious expression. Yes, you can pray in schools with children! It just has to be after school.

A community-use club may be right for you if

- **you want to reach the most responsive demographic—elementary-school-aged children;**
- **you want to offer a club program that is led by adults; and**
- **students are generally available after school (not bussed or committed to other activities).**

THE LORD

Crossroads Kids Club mobilizes God's people to share the Good News inside public schools through church-led clubs. We provide curriculum, equipping and ongoing coaching to help you successfully reach children and families with the gospel, and we offer everything we do at no cost to our church partners because we want to serve churches of all sizes and budgets. Crossroads relies on community use in order to bring caring adults from your church together with elementary school children at their school one day a week for ninety minutes each time.

Through the years, in addition to developing a practical understanding of the legal ways churches and ministries can work with public schools and the children there, we have also thought through a theological framework. It hinges on holding two passages in tension as we approach school leaders.

Colossians 1:15-17 (NLT): "Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together."

And Philippians 2:6-8 (NLT): "Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross."

The Colossians passage tells us that Jesus is supreme over all kingdoms and authorities. In fact, they are established by him and for him. He holds them together. This includes our public schools. Jesus created them. Jesus rules over them. He is God and King.

Philippians 2 tells us that Jesus did not demand and cling to his rights. He set them aside to become human and to serve—even dying a criminal's death on a cross. When we think about approaching a public school for a gospel outreach, we want to hold these two truths together. Jesus is King, and we also have a legal right to use the space. At the same time, we must follow Jesus' example and enter the conversation as servants prepared to lay down our rights for the sake of the gospel.

Throughout the years, we have seen that when we approach schools with a basic knowledge of the laws governing the separation of church and state related to schools and with a posture of humility and service, many doors open for effective work.

School Access

One of the most surprising things to many people is that your church has a legal right to use space inside public schools just like any other community group. School districts that make their facilities available to outside organizations must make them available to all groups equally. Discrimination based on religion is unconstitutional. So, we encourage you to approach your school district with confidence in your legal right to hold a Crossroads Club there.

Confidence does not mean arrogance, and it does not mean making demands. Always adopt a posture of service. In the context of serving, you may educate the school leaders about the law. Crossroads provides churches with a legal Q&A memo (pg. 38) for this purpose. Many educational leaders would love to see a Crossroads Club in their schools, and they are hesitant only because they are unaware of the law. Showing them that you know the law and have confidence gives them the freedom to say yes.

It is important to understand that educational leaders have multiple competing priorities, and it is not uncommon for requests to be ignored. Don't take this personally. It may take four or five (or many more) attempts to connect in person, by phone, and email just to get an appointment with the school's principal. Do not take silence to mean rejection of you or the program. Be persistent, and be prayerful as you seek a meeting.

Because it may take several attempts to schedule an appointment, do not wait to initiate the process. With over 25 years of experience, we can confidently say that it will almost certainly take longer than you think it should to get the use of space approved. You need to set the pace. Following up two times per week is not too much. Do not wait around for an answer. It will likely never come. Be proactive. Unless you think you are annoying with your frequency of contact, you are probably not contacting them enough (seriously!). Always be friendly and polite, but do not wait more than 3 - 4 days after contacting someone for an answer.

Step 1: Commit the Process to Prayer.

The first step in approaching your school is to commit the process to prayer. Share what you are doing with your church's staff and with friends and family who will support you and your efforts in prayer. The Lord can open the door quickly and easily, or he may open it through persistence and follow up. If the door opens, he is the one opening it.

Step 2: Research the Procedures of Your District.

The next step is to do some research to understand the school's or district's policies and procedures for requesting the use of space. There are generally two ways that a school system will operate for facility usage requests.

District-Based System

In a district-based system, the central office gives the final approval for all rental groups. The procedure to use space generally starts at the district level in these cases. In a district-based system, you will want to find the building use form online. Sometimes it is an online form, and sometimes it is a paper form that you will print out and complete by hand. After submitting the application form to the district, you will want to contact the principal about setting up a meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to introduce yourself, your church, and the Crossroads program to the principal. You will be assuring them that you have applied through the district and that you want to make sure they are comfortable with you and the program. This takes a lot of pressure off the principals because they do not have to consider the legality of your use of space (i.e. whether it honors the separation of church and state, which, of course, it does).

Principal-Based System

This is rarer, but sometimes the principal has full autonomy in the decision to allow your program in their school. This can be a long process and should begin by establishing and building a positive relationship with the principal. Approval success will vary widely from school to school based on the principal and their openness to you and the program. This is the more challenging system because principals are often not well informed about the nuances of church and state separation and may have a lot of doubts and fears. They may be wondering whether they will get in trouble for working with you.

The following steps will guide you as you approach your school in a district-based system. *If you are looking to approach a school in a principal-based system, your coach will give you personalized assistance.*

Step 3: Complete Building Use Form(s), and Submit Them with Any

Required Documentation

After locating the building use form(s) (step 2 above), fill it out completely and submit it to the district along with any other required documentation (e.g. proof of insurance, evidence of nonprofit status). If you don't know exactly when the school is available or when or where you will do your club (like in the gym or cafeteria, etc.) go ahead and fill out the form for what would be ideal for you. Just realize that the space requested may not be available at the time or day you are requesting, so be prepared to adjust it later.

Step 4: Schedule a Meeting with the Principal.

Now you want to make a personal connection with the principal. Whenever possible, finding a personal connection is the best. Do you know a member of the staff at the school who can introduce you? Or maybe you know a different principal in the district, or you've heard the principal attends another church in town. Do you know a parent in the school? Ask around, and see who knows the principal, and then ask for an introduction.

When a personal introduction is not feasible, we suggest you make your first contact in person. Stop by the school during normal business hours. Share with the receptionist who you are and what you are looking to do. Let them know you submitted a building use form to the district, and ask to schedule a meeting with the principal. Leave the Crossroads school brochure, legal memo, and a personal note with the receptionist to pass on to the principal.

Right after you drop in at the school, send a follow-up email to the principal. (See the template below.)

Subject: We want to serve the students at {{School Name}}!

Dear Principal _____,

My name is _____, and I am serving as the club leader for {{Church Name}}'s Crossroads Kids Club program. Crossroads Clubs are free after-school programs that meet in schools around the nation.

I stopped by the school earlier today and spoke with _____ to set up a meeting with you to introduce myself and this exciting program to you. The program connects caring adults to kids, helping them to learn good character and have additional positive role models in their lives. I submitted the paperwork for a building rental for this program to the district office online, but it is very important to me that you know what this is all about and that we can build a solid partnership for kids.

I have attached some information that I left with _____. I know you're very busy, but I'm hoping we might find a time to connect in person within the next week or two. Would you have 20 minutes to meet in your office next week?

Thanks in advance,

Wait two or three days for a response. If none is received, call (yes, on the actual phone like it's 1982!) and ask for the receptionist with whom you personally connected. Reference your previous visit and that you haven't heard anything yet. Ask gently if they know if the principal has had a chance to review the information. You can also ask if the principal is available to take your call to schedule a meeting. (Usually, they aren't.) Finally, ask when would be a good time to try back to reach the principal, and make sure to ask that they let the principal know you called. When you call the school, be polite and relational, and use the receptionist's name.

If you don't receive a call or email back within three days, send a second email to the principal. (See template below.)

Subject: Did you receive our information?

Dear Principal _____,

I just spoke with _____ and wanted to follow up via email as well. I just wanted to make sure you received the information I left for you. I am still hoping that we can connect in the next week or so about our program and how it might be a benefit to the {{School Name}} community.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

If you don't receive a reply within three days, call the school again and see if they have been able to find a time for you to meet with the principal. After three or four more days, stop by the school again. Consider bringing cookies or a gift for the staff if you feel that it is appropriate. Ask if you can speak with the principal or if you can schedule a meeting within the week.

Follow up with an email to the principal. (See template below).

Subject: Can we connect?

Dear Principal _____,

I hope I'm not being too much of a bother to you. It's just that I am very enthusiastic about sharing with you how we can serve the children and families at {{School Name}} through a Crossroads Club program. Would you have time to connect for 20 minutes or so?

Thanks in advance,

If you don't get a response again after three or four days, call the school and explain that you are not trying to bug them, but that you would like the opportunity to share about the Crossroads program and ask if you can schedule a meeting. At this point, you might also consider following up with the district office to see if your request is approved.

If after three days, you haven't heard from the district or the principal, you might consider sending this as a final email. (Use template below).

Subject: Assuming you are not open to our community use rental request

Dear Principal _____,

Since I have not heard from you, I am assuming that you are not open to our community use rental request for a Crossroads Kids Club program. Please let me know if I am wrong about that.

Sincerely,

Talk to your coach about finding another school that would be open to a Crossroads Club.

Step 5: Meet with the Principal.

The purpose of the principal meeting is to introduce yourself, your church and the Crossroads program to the principal. Strictly speaking, you are not asking for permission. This is granted by the law and the district. Of course, the principal generally has the right to refuse groups access to space. Still, you want to make it clear that the district is processing the rental application. There is a fine line to walk here. What you are trying to avoid is asking the principal to determine if this is legal (It is!). You are wanting to communicate that all the legal issues will be handled by the district, but that you are very interested in developing a positive relationship and serving the school.

We suggest the following outline as a basic agenda for this meeting.

- **Introduce yourself.** Share your heart for the school community/kids and why you have partnered with Crossroads to start this program. It's great if two people can go to the meeting (e.g. two co- captains or a captain and a pastor.) One can be the "head" and share the program overview and details, and the other can be the "heart" and share their desire to support the school community and families, etc.
- **Share about the Crossroads program.** Bring the Crossroads school brochure and legal memo. Be prepared to answer the following questions, and you may wish to share the answers even if the question is not asked.
    - What does the program look like? When/how often does it meet?
    - What about church/state separation? (We are an outside group renting space. Refer them to the legal memo.)
    - How are the kids dismissed after the program?
    - Where would it meet?
    - How are the volunteers background checked?
    - How does the program positively affect kids' lives?
- **Discuss club promotion.** Show a sample flyer. Ask about promotional policies of school/district.
- **Plan next step(s).**
    - Have we agreed on days/times/space?
    - Confirm on the start date and walkthrough.
    - What are the next steps to get the rental contract?
- **Reinforce how excited you are about being about to serve the school.** Share that one of Crossroads' key values is service, and how your team and church are open to ways they can serve the school community outside of the club as well when possible.
- **Thank them** for taking the time to meet with you, and express your excitement about working together to serve the children at their school.

Sometimes these meetings will go incredibly well, and the principal will give their support to the program right away. At other times they may have questions or objections. Below we have listed some common objections and how you might respond. Also, be sure to ask for a commitment date by which they think they can make a decision. For example, "We'd like to start this fall, when could I follow up with you to find out your decision?"

Objection: We don't have any space available/we already have a number of other after-school programs.

Emphasize that the program can fit just about anywhere! At one school, we had a group meeting in an elevator lobby. It can meet in a classroom, a cafeteria, a gym, the band room, etc. Take whatever space they are willing to offer. Demonstrate flexibility on days of the week to work in conjunction with other after school programs rather than competing for students at the same time. If they have a daily after school program, mention that a number of Crossroads clubs work in cooperation with other after school programs (e.g. the YMCA) to offer an "opt in" option for kids to leave that program during the time that Crossroads meets, with parental permission.

Objection: Most of our kids are bussed.

This is an important factor. Try to determine what percentage of the students are bussed. If there are at least 200-300 students who are not bussed, make the case that there are probably enough students who would be available. If there are fewer than this number, we recommend finding a different school or finding transportation that you provide.

Objection: I need to talk to my superiors.

This is a valid concern. Just ask them when they think they might have an answer, and make yourself (and your coach) available to answer any questions that may arise.

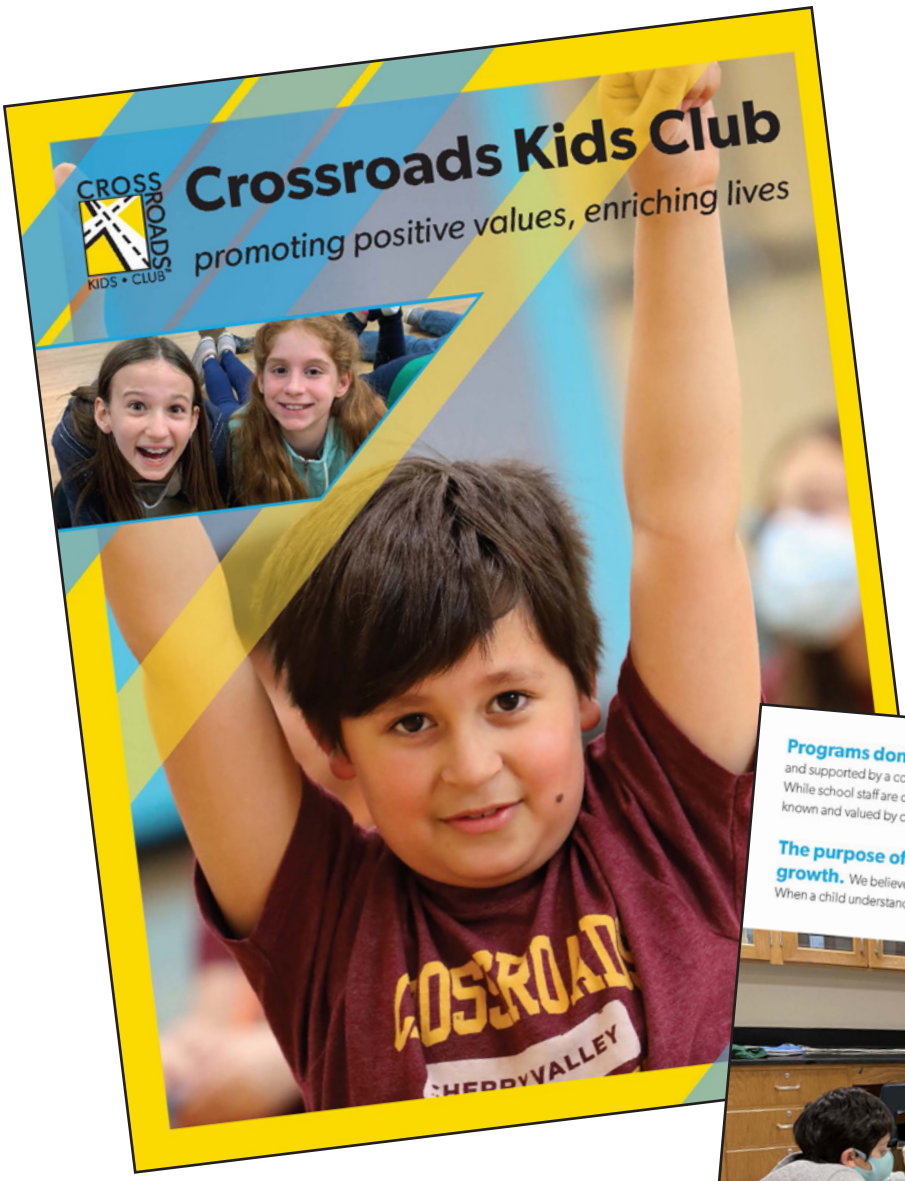
Step 6: Follow Up on the Meeting.

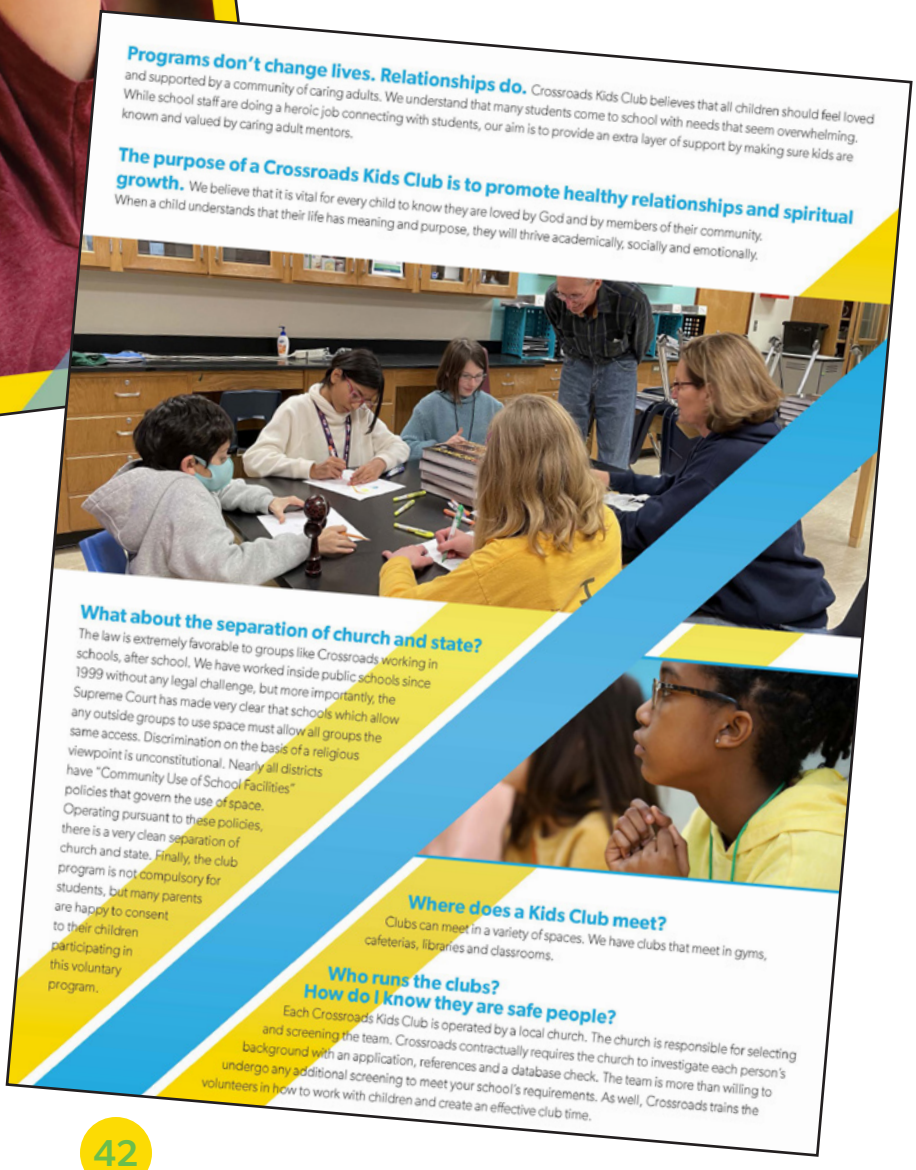
Send a handwritten thank-you note to the principal expressing appreciation for them and their service to the kids and the community. Let them know how excited you are to be working together.

Step 7: Receive and Sign the Final Contract from the District.

Contact the district office (the department to which you submitted the application) to clarify when you will receive a contract. You may need to be persistent to get an answer to this and to receive the actual contract. Once received, sign and send it back with any required documentation and payments as soon as possible. Dropping it off in person to make a personal connection is suggested.

School Brochure





Programs don't change lives. Relationships do. Crossroads Kids Club believes that all children should feel loved and supported by a community of caring adults. We understand that many students come to school with needs that seem overwhelming. While school staff are doing a heroic job connecting with students, our aim is to provide an extra layer of support by making sure kids are known and valued by caring adult mentors.

The purpose of a Crossroads Kids Club is to promote healthy relationships and spiritual growth. We believe that it is vital for every child to know they are loved by God and by members of their community. When a child understands that their life has meaning and purpose, they will thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

What about the separation of church and state?
The law is extremely favorable to groups like Crossroads working in schools, after school. We have worked inside public schools since 1999 without any legal challenge, but more importantly, the Supreme Court has made very clear that schools which allow any outside groups to use space must allow all groups the same access. Discrimination on the basis of a religious viewpoint is unconstitutional. Nearly all districts have "Community Use of School Facilities" policies that govern the use of space. Operating pursuant to these policies, there is a very clean separation of church and state. Finally, the club program is not compulsory for students, but many parents are happy to consent to their children participating in this voluntary program.

Where does a Kids Club meet?
Clubs can meet in a variety of spaces. We have clubs that meet in gyms, cafeterias, libraries and classrooms.

Who runs the clubs?
How do I know they are safe people?
Each Crossroads Kids Club is operated by a local church. The church is responsible for selecting and screening the team. Crossroads contractually requires the church to investigate each person's background with an application, references and a database check. The team is more than willing to undergo any additional screening to meet your school's requirements. As well, Crossroads trains the volunteers in how to work with children and create an effective club time.

crossroadskidsclub.com
contact@crossroadskidsclub.com
Toll Free: 1-855-KIDSCLB (543-7252)

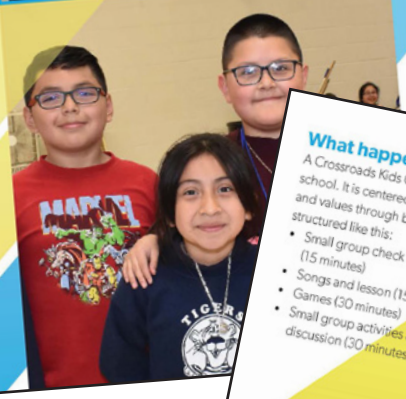
What Educational Leaders Are Saying

"Have you ever felt as if you wanted to do more for the kids you see come in and out of the school building each day? Knowing full well that students can never have too much love and acceptance, we realize there are limitations to the time we can devote and to the messages we can deliver. That's where Crossroads Kids Club comes in. This opportunity provides kids with a chance to connect with community mentors, hear a message about strong character and faith, and feel loved and accepted for who they are. Crossroads fills a gap in the public education system and helps bring the school and community together for the sake of the kids."

— Quinn Wulbecker, Principal at Adolph Link School (Elk Grove Village, Illinois)

"The Crossroads Kids Club at Dujardin School is run very well. The adults in charge of the program are extremely organized and so well planned for their after school time. In addition, each volunteer is very patient, kind and caring with the students. They really enjoy working with kids. Our student participation has increased each year, which goes to show you that the program is working and successful. The word is out and parents want their children involved with excellent programming. Crossroads adds another layer to the support system that all students need, from academics to social and emotional learning and especially with character building. I say bring it on, the more the merrier, you can never have too much quality adult attention, mentoring and support in a child's life."

— Mark Dwyer, Principal at Dujardin School (Bloomingdale, Illinois)



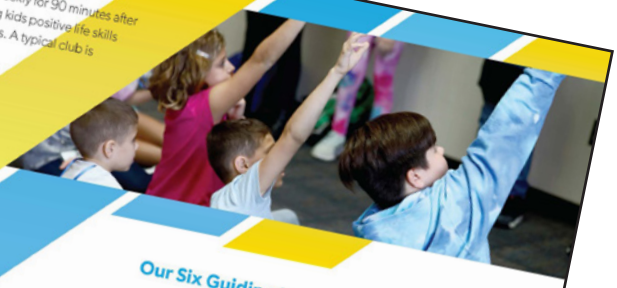
"Crossroads gives our students the opportunity to be exposed to additional sound teachings and activities that encourage good character, practice good manners, and demonstrate proper respect of others. The group leaders are great role models for our students. Our students feel valued by the group leaders. Our school totally promotes the building of character throughout our school day, so it's good to see that continue into the Crossroads program on a weekly basis. In our daily Morning Meeting, we address six character traits with our students throughout the school year: citizenship, respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, caring, fairness. The stories and activities shared with students at the program help our students internalize good character traits."

— Ray Owens, Principal at Spring Creek School (Rockford, Illinois)

What happens at a Kids Club?

A Crossroads Kids Club meets weekly for 90 minutes after school. It is centered on teaching kids positive life skills and values through biblical stories. A typical club is structured like this:

- Small group check in and snack (15 minutes)
- Songs and lesson (15 minutes)
- Games (30 minutes)
- Small group activities and discussion (30 minutes)



Crossroads is completely FREE to parents and schools.

Our Six Guiding Principles

1

We will treat all people with dignity and respect because we believe they are made in God's image and have intrinsic worth.

2

We will create a healthy and safe environment for students by selecting, screening and training well-qualified team members who are excellent role models and who work well with children. They will be positive, committed, trustworthy and enthusiastic.

3

We will work for our club to be open, fair and accepting. We will not tolerate discrimination against students or parents based upon race, gender, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, church participation or disability.

4

We aim to shape the character of students according to biblical values, inspiring them by our example, teaching them God's ways and challenging them continuously to grow in their love for God and others.

5

We will cultivate the best possible relationships with students, parents, school leaders, members of our team and the community at large.

6

We seek to earn the trust of parents, educational leaders and the broader school community by demonstrating integrity and excellence in everything we do.

Legal Q&A

WAGENMAKER & OBERLY

CROSSROADS KIDS CLUB
LEGAL GUIDANCE ON PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAMS

To: Public School Administrators

From: Attorney Sally Wagenmaker

Date: May 30, 2019

Re: Crossroads Kids Club Programs Carried Out in Public Schools

Introduction

This memorandum addresses the legal permissibility of public elementary and secondary schools allowing onsite programs provided by churches in collaboration with Crossroads Kids Club. Crossroads offers educational materials and related support to churches, to start and operate youth programs at public schools within their communities. The following guidance is provided in Question and Answer format, particularly to provide assurance of full legal compliance regarding specific concerns that arise. In brief, a public school must allow access and other benefits to Crossroads Kids Club and partnering churches on an equal basis as provided to other groups and organizations for extracurricular activities. Our law firm regularly provides legal guidance in these areas for schools and other nonprofits, and we are delighted to be of service here as well.

General Principles

1. Crossroads Kids Club seems like a religious organization. We're a public school. Aren't religious organizations forbidden to conduct extracurricular activities at public schools?

No, on the contrary, public schools *must* allow religious clubs to host activities on the same basis that the school allows other, secular clubs to host activities. Public schools may not discriminate against an extracurricular program solely because of its religious character. In fact, disqualifying a religious extracurricular program from access opportunities which are open to other, secular extracurricular activities would be an unconstitutional penalty on the free exercise of religion.

It is true that the government may not promote any one religion; however, allowing Crossroads Kids' Club to use government facilities is not government promotion of a

312.626.1600
312.626.1610

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ligion. Rather, it is granting Crossroads Kids' Club access to governmental facilities, on same basis as to all other extracurricular groups (whether religious or secular).

May Crossroads Kids Club use our school's facilities? Must we allow roads Kids' Club to use the facilities?

ssroads Kids Club is free to use the school's facilities on the same terms as other icular programs, such as the Boy Scouts of America, 4H, and other programs. For f the school allows extracurricular programs to hold meetings in classrooms after ng weekdays, Crossroads Kids Club should be permitted to meet during weekdays lassroom. If there is a rule which limits the times when the facilities are available side activities, the rule must be neutral and generally applicable. That means that the rule cannot single out certain types of organizations, such as religious organizations, and limit those groups in ways other groups are not limited.

3. May Crossroads Kids Club receive funding through the school?

Yes, if your school provides funds or grants to extracurricular programs generally, then Crossroads Kids Club is eligible to receive funding on the same basis as other clubs. For example, if the school makes funding or fee waivers generally available for extracurricular programs, Crossroads Kids Club may receive these funds as well. Any restrictions on funding must apply generally to all extracurricular organizations, not to religious extracurricular activities only. *This is consistent with the requirement that the government must provide equal access to its services and other benefits.*

4. May Crossroads Kids Club participate in school club fundraisers, fairs, or open houses?

If your school has an event which is open to participation from extracurricular programs, such as a family game night fundraiser or school fair, Crossroads Kids Club must also be permitted to participate on the same basis as other groups.

5. May Crossroads Kids Club communicate with parents through school distribution lists?

Yes, Crossroads Kids Club has a right to access and use communications resources on the same basis as other extracurricular programs. For example, if the school circulates an event calendar and permits outside extracurricular organizations to submit activities for inclusion on the calendar, Crossroads Kids' Club must also be permitted to submit events. Furthermore, if other organizations are permitted to contact parents through a newsletter or listserv, Crossroads Kids Club must likewise be provided with these resources and permitted to use the resources on the same terms as other organizations.

6. May Crossroads Kids Club communicate with parents through school distribution lists?

Yes, Crossroads Kids Club has a right to access and use communications resources on the

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Memo.Crossroads.Public School Activites.2019

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same basis as other extracurricular programs. For example, if the school circulates an event calendar and permits outside extracurricular organizations to submit activities for inclusion on the calendar, Crossroads Kids' Club must also be permitted to submit events. Furthermore, if other organizations are permitted to contact parents through a newsletter or listserv, Crossroads Kids Club must likewise be provided with these resources and permitted to use the resources on the same terms as other organizations.

7. May Crossroads Kids Club distribute information through posters on campus or on the school website?

Yes, Crossroads Kids Club must be provided access to post and advertise activities and events in any forum that is generally open to other extracurricular programs for such purposes.

8. May public school teachers participate in the Club?

Public school teachers may not sponsor a religious extracurricular activity at the school, if the teacher's involvement would appear to be done in the individual's role as a teacher. On the other hand, public school teachers are generally free to engage in religious activities that are clearly outside of their employment hours and role. For example, a teacher may not sponsor a club meeting during time scheduled for student instruction or during times when the teacher is responsible for supervision of the students, such as during an athletic event on the school campus. Conversely, a teacher's involvement in a Sunday school class at his or her church is permissible, even if one or more students from the teacher's school attends the same church. Some other situations may warrant careful evaluation to determine whether a teacher's conduct falls within or outside the scope of employment.

9. May Crossroads Kids Club activities be an elective class or a part of the school curriculum?

No. Crossroads Kids Club programs may not be provided for school credit, even as an optional elective.

Additional Legal Guidance

10. What is the legal basis for these guidelines? Has the United States Supreme Court ever addressed the issue of religious organizations hosting extracurricular programs in public schools?

Religious organizations have rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution, just like other groups and individuals, including the First Amendment rights to free exercise of religion, freedom of speech, and freedom of association.

More specifically, and has been recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court, the First Amendment allows adult-led clubs to meet at schools during any time when the school permits other clubs or groups to meet, whether during non-instructional time or during

ctional time. The First Amendment's constitutional protections are triggered ver (1) any public facility (2) allows use of its facilities for certain persons or groups ct meetings.

precedent involves the Good News Club, which is an adult-initiated and adult-ricular religious club like Crossroads Kids Club, designed to serve children through twelve years old. A public school district banned the club from mpus, based on the school's understanding that it could not permit a club ngaged in religious instruction and might imply the school endorsed Supreme Court rejected the ban as an unconstitutional viewpoint d instead ruled that the government could not discriminate against limited public forum" of a school. Religious clubs therefore possess to be treated neutrally and given access to speak on the same terms as other *ee Good News Club v. Milford Central School, 533 U.S. 98 (2001)).*

Following the *Good News Club* case, other federal courts explored the issue of treatment of religious extracurricular and enrichment programs in public schools. In one case, a Christian Bible Club was meeting after school on campus. The public school permitted the meetings, but otherwise denied the club the benefits the school offered to other clubs, such as funding, the annual club fair, the school auction, and posting of events on campus. The court found that this conduct was similarly unconstitutional viewpoint discrimination – treating a religious club differently than a secular club simply because of the content of the club activities.

Most recently, in a highly publicized case called *Trinity Lutheran Church of Columbia, Inc. v. Comer* (582 U.S. _____, 2017), the U.S. Supreme Court reaffirmed that religious organizations cannot be penalized or disqualified from generally available government benefits simply because of the organizations' religious identities. In *Trinity Lutheran,* the Missouri government offered grants to allow elementary schools to replace their playground surfaces with recycled tires, to reduce injuries of children who might trip and fall on the playground. A Lutheran elementary school applied for the grant and was selected through the application process. However, the school was disqualified because it was a religious school, and the grant singled out religious organizations as ineligible for the grant. The United States Supreme Court identified this government policy as discrimination and a penalty on the free exercise of religion. The guidance in the case continues to influence state and federal agencies, as well as courts.

In sum, government agents including public schools must allow access and other benefits to religious organizations, such as Crossroads Kids Club and partnering churches, on the same basis as to others that provide extracurricular activities.

crossroadskidsclub.com/legal

Sample Registration Flyer/Form

{{Church Name}}

Presents

CROSSROADS KIDS • CLUB

A **FREE**, weekly after-school program where kids build friendships, explore faith, and grow in character.

{{Day}}, {{Time}}

{{School Name}}

{{Room club will meet}}

Starting {{Date}}

AT CLUB, WE:

- Hear engaging stories from the Bible
- Learn values like honesty, kindness, and respect
- Enjoy games, snacks, music, and fun activities
- Connect with caring adult leaders from a local church

REGISTER NOW!

Presented by:

nber}}

Scan the QR
the form on the opposite side register.

Crossroads Kids Club is a Bible-based character development program. The club is hosted by a local church and meets under the school district's Community Use of School Facilities policy. For questions, contact Crossroads at 630-526-1500 or contact@crossroadskidsclub.com

REGISTER YOUR CHILD WITH THIS FORM

Child's Name _____ Grade _____ Gender ☐M ☐F

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Child's Date of Birth _____ Child's Shirt Size Youth ☐S ☐M ☐L
Adult ☐S ☐M ☐L ☐XL

Allergies ☐Yes ☐No Physical Limitations ☐Yes ☐No Other Concerns ☐Yes ☐No
If yes, please explain how we can best support your child and family:

Your Name _____ Relationship to Child _____

Primary Phone _____ ☐Cell ☐Home ☐Work

Email Address _____

After club, shall we:

- ☐ Dismiss your child to walk home unsupervised?
- ☐ Dismiss your child to the _____ program?
- ☐ Release your child to you and/or the people you have listed below?

Authorized Pick Up People: 1. _____ 2. _____

Important Information
Waiver of All Claims and Assumption of Risk

Crossroads Kids Club is an organization that licenses an after school program to local churches. Each church is completely responsible for their individual program, including the selection and screening of staff and program activities. The sponsoring church, listed on the reverse side (hereinafter the Church") is responsible for the Crossroads Kids Club program (hereinafter "CKC") also described on the reverse. The Church is committed to conducting all of its programs, activities and field trips in a safe manner. Because the Church holds the safety of all participants in high regard, all staff members insist that students follow all safety rules. Even so, students and parents must be aware that there is an inherent risk of injury when choosing to participate in recreational and social activities. As the parent/guardian, you are solely responsible for determining if your minor child is physically, emotionally, and intellectually fit to participate in the Church's CKC program . Also , students may be photographed or videotaped in connection with their participation in the Church's CKC program. Also, students may be photographed or videotaped in connection with their participation in the Church's CKC program, and all claims or rights to such photos or video recordings are released by signing below. The Church or Crossroads Kids Club may use these recordings and photos for any purpose that they deem appropriate.

I understand that by registering my child to participate in the Church's CKC program I am expressly assuming the risk and all legal liability that arises or may arise out of such participation. I also understand that I am waiving and releasing all claims for injuries, damages or losses, which my child might sustain as a result of participating in any and all activities connected with and associated with said programs/activities. I recognize and acknowledge that there are certain risks of physical injury to participants in these programs/activities, and I voluntarily agree to assume the full risk of any and all injuries, damages and losses, regardless of severity, that my minor child may sustain as a result of said participation except in cases of gross negligence or intentional misconduct. I further agree to waive and relinquish all claims that I, my successors, assigns, or my minor child may have (or which may accrue to me, my successors, assigns, or my child) as a result of participation in these programs/activities against the Church, its affiliated or partnering churches, boards of directors, volunteers, employees and associated companies. I do hereby fully release and forever discharge the Church from any and all claims for injuries, damages or loss that my minor child may have or which may accrue and arising out of, connected with, or in any way associated with these programs/ activities, except in cases of gross negligence or intentional misconduct.

By signing below I am registering my child for the Crossroads Kids Club program. understand that it is a faith-based program, that it is my discretion to enroll my child in this program, and I have read the terms and conditions above regarding my child's participation in CKC. I also understand that my child will be expected to conform to the CKC code of conduct and if s/he does not, I will be notified and they may be removed from the CKC program.

_____ _____ _____

Signature of Parent of Guardian *Printed Name of Parent or Guardian* *Date*

crossroadskidsclub.com/flyer

Getting Kids to Club

The BEST way to get kids to sign up for club is to send a paper flyer home to every kid in the school. This is just power in numbers. Usually the parents will go through the papers the kidsget in their folders each day to sign field trip forms and look at homework and they will see the flyer.

Often schools will not allow this and will offer to put the form in their email newsletter to parents, but think about how many emails you read through completely… usually this doesn't work as well, though it is still worth doing. **Promotion can be one of the biggest challenges to getting your club started. We encourage you to put in as much effort as possible, promoting in many different ways.**

When considering how to promote, think about who you are promoting to.

Parent-Focused Promotion

To get the attention of parents focus on safety and enrichment.

- Host a booth at school registration, parent-teacher conferences, open house or other school-wide family events.
- Offer to provide chidcare for parent-teacher conferences. This provides a service to the school and families as well as gets you in front of families from the school.
- Hand out flyers in the parent pick up line at the school. Try not to be creepy and intrustive, but hand a flyer to as many parents as possible and answer questions to the best of your ability.

Kid-Focused Promotion

Kids will come to a program if they think it will be fun and if their friends will be there. Food will also get their attention.

- Throw a party! Use word of mouth or promote directly to another after school program or club and invite kids to the kickoff party. Make sure you have food and games and make it a high-energy experience that kids want to bring their friends to.
- Once you get a few kids there, do a "bring-a-friend" promotion. Give kids incentives to bring their friends. Whether it's extra tickets, a prize or a pizza party for the whole club, make sure it is a good incentive that will encourage the kids to spread the word.

crossroadskidsclub.com/promotion

family FUN nights

Family Fun Nights offer an invaluable opportunity for churches and their leaders to engage with families in a meaningful and impactful way. These events are more than just an evening of entertainment; they serve as a bridge between church activities and family life. These nights are an incredible opportunity to connect with families that may not feel comfortable coming to a church service.

Family Fun Nights are a fantastic opportunity for families to spend quality time together, strengthening bonds, fostering communication, and creating lasting memories. These **90-minute sessions** are designed to be engaging, educational, and enjoyable for family members of all ages. Each session includes a mix of structured lessons, interactive activities, crafts, and game time

Family Fun Night lesson plans provide enriching and enjoyable experiences for the entire family. Each plan offers a detailed outline, ensuring that every session is seamless, interactive, and memorable. Each plan has a different theme based on the season or key time of the year. This allows families to celebrate and explore themes that are relevant and timely, adding an extra layer of excitement and variety.

Benevolence

Crossroads Kids Club maintains a benevolence fund to help meet basic needs of children, families and volunteers involved in Crossroads Kids Club. As you lead your club, you might hear of needs and we have some generous donors who want to help!

What are some basic needs that would be considered?

- Lodging
- Food
- Clothing
- Medical treatment
- Transportation to or from a place of employment
- Funeral expenses
- Initial evaluation and professional counseling appointments

Who would qualify for benevolence from Crossroads?

- Parents or other caretakers of Crossroads Kids Club participants
- Volunteers serving in a Crossroads Club
- Members of a school community served by Crossroads Kids Club
- Churches and Christian agencies that serve people with the same needs as those which fit the criteria for assistance from the benevolence fund, but which provide services Crossroads does not
- Any other persons with a connection to a participant in Crossroads Kids Club

Nominate someone for benevolence at the link or QR code below. Once a nomination is made, our benevolence committee will meet and discuss the nomination in a timely manner.

crossroadskidsclub.com/nominate

Crossroads Kids Club

Sharing the Good News of Jesus with children since 1998

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