

Home Visit Tips



- Call to make an appointment. Ask for twenty to thirty minutes of the family's time. If the family does not have a phone, send a note home with the student. Give three or four days and times when you are available, and let the parents choose the one convenient for them. Ask them to return the note with the student the next Sunday. Or use the U.S. mail. Enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope or postcard for their response. Be patient. It may take several tries before you get a meeting time.

When several children from the same home attend your Sunday school, coordinate the visits with the other teachers so that only one teacher visits the family each quarter. (See the Chart for Scheduling Home Visits on the CD.)

- After the first visit, each visit take one activity that your class *has done* and enjoyed so the child can participate in the "show-n-tell." The activities on this sheet are *suggested* ones. Feel free to choose any other activity that your class has enjoyed, and the student will be excited about sharing with his family. Strive for variety—craft, game, demonstration.

- Bring enough supplies so each family member can participate. Use a tote bag and zip-lock bags to keep the supplies organized. Before leaving home, double-check to be sure you have everything you need.

- The To Do Activity is usually one that the student has *not* done in class. It is another link, connecting the home and church. The student does this activity at home and brings it back to church. Bring extra supplies so family members who are not in your Sunday school class but want to participate in this activity can.

- Keep a TV or lap tray in your car. If you think workspace might be needed because of table overload (clutter), take the tray with you.

- Dress clean and neat, but casual. Always wear a smile.

- Be conscious of the time. Do not overstay your welcome. It is better to leave before your hosts want you to. Under normal circumstances twenty to thirty minutes is long enough.

- Say only complimentary things about the student. This visit should be a time the family looks forward to, not something they dread because they are going to be dumped on. If the parent brings up a problem related to the child's behavior, tell him/her that you will call later to discuss it (not said, but understood—when the child is not present).

- Take a camera. If the parents do not object, use this opportunity to take a family picture. Photos of the family working together on the project would be great. You might even ask the parent to take a picture of you with the student. Please send copies of your better pictures to Word Aflame Publications for promotion of Home Field Advantage.

Caution: some parents may not want their picture taken or even a picture taken in their home. Be sensitive to their feelings.

- Keep a grab bag of small prizes in your classroom as some of the To Do Activities promise a reward.

- Prayer and fasting will break down strongholds and prepare the way before you.

- After the each visit, fill out a home visit evaluation form. (The form is on the HFA CD. Your Sunday school director has the CD. These forms can be filled out on the computer and filed on disk or as many copies as you need can be printed out.) Give a copy of each visit's evaluation to your Sunday school director and keep one in your files. This will refresh your memory when it is time to make the next visit. If another teacher is also visiting this family, share your report. Your notes will help him prepare for his visit. In case you should ever have to leave your class, your files will be of immense value to the next teacher.

Ideas for First Home Visit

Fall 2003



1. Bring a small gift for the parent/s and the child/ren. Bring extras for siblings. (An ideal gift would be a small item with your church's name, address, and phone number on it.)
2. Bring something to show to the family that tells them more about you (i.e., a picture album; pictures that your children drew; a collage of pictures, real or cut out of a magazine, of your favorite things; one item that describes you).
3. Bring a picture of the classroom and of the children in your class. Allow the child to point out things in the picture to the parent. Tell the parent about your class. (Do not reveal personal information about other families or children.)
4. Bring a picture of the church. Allow the child to show the parent where the children go in, where the vans park, etc. Tell the parent/s about the church.
5. Complete the Sunday School Student Emergency Information Card.
6. Ask the student to bring something to Sunday school the following week to tell the class more about him/herself. (See above for suggestions.)
7. Pray with the family members before you leave.

Activities for Home Visits

Winter 2003-04



Toddler

Take the hand puppet of Mrs. Holly and Joey provided in the teacher's resource packet. Use the puppets to interact with the family members in a variety of ways.

Suggested Review Activities

(1) Make a caterpillar using construction paper circles (Fall Toddler Teacher's Manual, lesson 12, activity 2, page 72).

Let each family member write a need on a construction paper circle. Glue the circles together to make a caterpillar. Optional: attach a magnet to the back so it can be displayed on the refrigerator.

(2) Make the edible angel using an ice cream cone and Tootsie Pop (Winter Toddler Teacher's Manual, lesson 1, activity 4, page 21). Let the child tell his parents about the angels in the Christmas story.

Prayer Time

(1) Have the family sit in a circle. Pass the caterpillar around and let each one pray for a

need written on one of the circles. Pray a concluding prayer of blessing for each family member and the home that you are visiting in.

(2) If you made angels for the activity, talk about how angels watch over us. Pray for the safety of the family members and for the peace of God to rest upon their home.

To Do Activity

(if the visit is made before Christmas)

(1) If the visit is made before Christmas, give each child a small box, wrapping paper to fit, and ribbon. Ask the parents to help the child wrap the gift. They can bring the gift to class the next Sunday. Use the wrapped gifts to decorate your room. They will coordinate with the theme for this quarter, "God's Gift," and the holiday season as well.

(2) If the visit is made after Christmas, give each child a small white paper sack and a crayon. Ask the child to decorate the sack. Tell the child to bring the sack back to Sunday school so he will receive a small prize.

Kindergarten

Suggested Review Activity

(1) If the visit is before Christmas, make a Thanksgiving Box (Fall Kindergarten Teacher's Manual, lesson 12, optional activity 6, page 74). Let the family members look through a magazine and cut out pictures of things they are thankful for (e.g., a house, car, food, toys, church, school). Or you may want to cut out a variety of pictures to take with you.

Complete the box according to the instructions in the teacher's manual.

(2) If the visit is after Christmas, make a wreath (lesson 3, page 26, optional activity 4). You may need several handprints from each family member, if the family is small. Talk about how families work together. Let the child tell things he can do with his hands to help his family.

Prayer Time

(1) To correlate with the Thanksgiving Box, talk about the importance of thanking God for everything. Remove the lid from the box and take out several items. Ask the child if he would like to begin the prayer by thanking Jesus for something he placed in the box. When the child is finished, continue a prayer of thanksgiving, including the parents, family members, and home.



(2) To correlate with the handprint wreath, ask the family to join hands for prayer. If the family is comfortable with praying, go around the circle with each member thanking God for the ones whose hands he holds. If they are not accustomed to praying, lead in prayer. Remember to pray God's blessings and peace upon the home.

To Do Activity

(1) Ask the child to add additional pictures to his Thanksgiving Box and bring it with him next Sunday. Tell him he will receive a "thank you" gift for sharing his box with the class.

(2) Leave a sheet of construction paper and a fine-tipped marker or crayon with the child. Tell him to trace his hand on the paper. Each time he does something with his hands to help a family member, Mom or Dad writes on a finger what the child did. Tell the child to try to have something written on each finger before Sunday. When he brings the hand to class, give him a small prize (even if only one thing is written on the hand).

Beginner



Suggested Review Activities

(1) Make a paper angel (Winter Beginner Teacher's Manual, lesson 1, page 11, art activity B). Talk about the part angels played in the first Christmas. If the visit is made before Christmas, the angel can add to the family's Christmas decorations.

(2) Make balloon characters (lesson 1, page 14, art activity). Let the child choose his favorite Bible story from Sunday school. Talk about the people in that story. Let the child (and his siblings) create two or three of these characters. Encourage him to share this Bible story with his family, using his balloon characters.

Prayer Time

Talking to Jesus is just like talking on the phone to a friend. You cannot see Him, but He can hear you. The Bible tells us we should make our requests known to God.

Ask if the family has a special request for prayer. If so, pray about that need. If they have no requests, pray a blessing upon their home.

To Do Activity

Attach a card to a play cell phone (available at dollar stores). On the card write, "Call Jesus Anytime." The child puts an "X" on the card each time he prays. Tell him to bring the card to Sunday school to receive a prize.

Primary



Suggested Review Activities

(1) Make clothespin people (Winter Primary Teacher's Manual, lesson 1, activity 2, page 14) to review a lesson recently taught. Let the student decide which one. As the student and his siblings make the people, encourage them to share the Bible story with their parents.

(2) Let each family member make a Pray the Word notebook (lesson 8, activity 1, page 51). Even if you did not make it in class or have not had this lesson yet, this is a good family activity.

Prayer Time

(1) Bring a yardstick and measure the stride of family members (lesson 6, page 38). Talk about how we exercise our faith when we pray.

Pray with the family for any special requests they have. Remember to pray a blessing upon the home.

(2) Use the Pray the Word notebook. If the family is comfortable with prayer, ask for volunteers to lead the prayer. If they are not accustomed to praying, simply ask them to bow their heads as you lead in prayer.

To Do Activity

Leave each child a ruler or a copy of a ruler and a marker. Ask him to color 1" on the ruler each time he prays between your visit and the next Sunday. Give him a small prize for bringing the ruler to class.

PreTeen



Suggested Review Activities

Encourage the preteen to help you tell his family about the Compassion Clinic theme.

(1) Play the seeking game (Winter PreTeen Teacher's Manual, lesson 4, Evangelistic Appeal, page 27). For the home setting have only one seeker. After the game, briefly point out that the Bible is the true guide. If we, like the wise men, want to find the King, we must follow our star, God's Word.

(2) Help family members make the balloon love flow vessels (lesson 6, Discovery Corner, page 40). In a general way, discuss things that can cause love to stop flowing in a family.

Prayer Time

(1) Read Psalm 119:105. Ask if they have any special requests. Pray that the Word of God will guide the family and then pray for their needs. Conclude by praying a blessing upon their home.

(2) Briefly give the crazy straw demonstration (lesson 6, page 37), talking about how God's love in us is revealed by what we say and do. Ask the family members to share how their love flows in their home. Pray that God's love will continue to flow through the family and reach out to others. Conclude by asking God bless that home.

To Do Activity

Give the student five red construction paper hearts and a marker. Each time a family member does something for him that shows love, he writes what happened on a heart. Tell him that he will receive a small prize for bringing the "love-filled" hearts to class the next Sunday.