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CONTACT INFO

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3rd - 5th Grade Pastor - Bryan Watt

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COMMUNITY GROUP LEADER

EXPECTATIONS:

- Become a member of RHCC by attending, or agree to attend, the RH101 class and signing the commitment card.
- Attend RHCC for a minimum of 1 year (exceptions are made but must be approved by the pastoral staff).
- Complete and submit a TreeHouse application for review, background and reference checks.
- Sign and agree to teach what is written in the RHCC Doctrinal Statement.
- Attend a meeting which includes an orientation to the ministry.
- Arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the service for prayer, community building, and any further details needed.
- Follow the guidelines and procedures found in the Leader's Notebook.
- Build community with and be supportive of other TreeHouse staff and volunteers.
- Prayerfully consider who you could invite to co-lead with you. Jesus sent disciples out in pairs. Why not invite someone to partner with you?

SHEPHERDING RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Minister to the children in your group

Approximately 15 children will be assigned to your small group for the year. We recognize that not every child will show up each week, so your group will typically have 8-9 kids each week, small enough for you and a co-leader to minister effectively to them.

- Develop a relationship with the children in your group through the small group time as well as the free play time at the start of service. Plan to write simple notes [TreeHouse provides postcards and we will mail them for you!] to let the children know you are thinking of them.
- If a child has not attended for several weeks, please connect with them for follow-up.
- Seek opportunities to introduce yourself to your group's parents in person.
- Encourage and pray for your children. Ask them for prayer requests and seek the

Lord on how you can best minister to them.

- For older elementary groups, if you plan a social activity with your class, always have at least one other adult with you on your outings. Notify your Community Builder or Pastor/Director of your plan. Your CB will get you both the Community Group Outside Activity sheet and a TreeHouse Permission/Medical Release for each child participating. Never go on an outing that includes just you and one child.

2. Lead a small group of children

- Spend adequate time each week in preparation for the lesson. This would also include praying for your class time as well as for individual students. A goal this year might be that for every minute you spend with the children in class, you will pray for them for that period of time during the week.
- Be prepared for your class 30 minutes before the service starts. Leaders meet with their Community Builder each week for prayer and for any further instructions or updates for the weekend.
- Assist with large group activities as needed. Be mindful of children who are disrupting the Large Group activities and take appropriate action. This might include giving reminders, moving a child to another location, sitting next to the child or isolating the child somewhere in the room where they will not be a distraction. If behavior does not improve, notify your CB or Pastor/Director.
- Memorize the Bible passages that your students are learning.
- Make arrangements well in advance for a substitute for your class when you will be absent. Your best sub will be the leader from the opposite month schedule or a child's parent from your class. If a parent, they will need to submit a TreeHouse application. Invite the parent to join you one Sunday to observe the small group in advance of when you need them to sub for you. Provide the substitute with the lesson and pertinent group information. Notify the Community Builder or Division Leader of arrangements as soon as possible.

TIME SCHEDULE

If you serve at the 9:00 service, arrive by 8:30.
If you serve at the 11:00 service, arrive by 10:30.

All Community Group Leaders get to attend a mandatory weekly huddle with their Community Builder for prayer and announcements.

- K - 2nd leaders meet in Room 119 [Across the hall from the E-pod]
- 3rd - 5th leaders meet in Room 102 [Conference Room adjacent to Warehouse].

You will want to be ready for class prior to meeting. Community Builders will email your lesson to you. Do not plan to discover what you are teaching during huddle.

K - 2nd Brick Room/E-pod

:00-:30 Worship with parents
:30-:35 Transition to E-pod
:35-:40 Small group rewind
:40-:55 Large group teaching
:55-:15 Small group
:15- Post-service Activities

3rd - 5th Front Room/Warehouse

:00-:30 Worship with parents
:30-:35 Transition to Warehouse
:35-:45 Large group teaching
:45-:15 Small group
:15- Post-service Activities

ELEMENTARY LESSONS

As a small group leader, you have a tremendous impact on the children in your group. Each week you have the opportunity to present the Bible to your students in a way that makes it relevant for them to learn how to think and live like Jesus.

Memory Verse: In order for the children to learn and apply God's Word, we choose one verse each month for them to memorize [if we're in a series of lessons, it may be one verse for 5 or more weeks]. Though there might not be a specific point in the lesson to look at the memory verse, we encourage you to incorporate it into your time with the kids. In your notebook, there are suggested games and activities to help keep God's Word in the minds and hearts of the kids in your group.

Bible Story: Each week we'll look at a new Bible story and passage of scripture.

Bottom Line: If there is one thing we want the students to leave with at the end of our time together, it can be found in this statement.

Rewind: These are questions to use in the brief small group rewind time prior to the large group teaching or the start of small group time following the large group teaching. We want you to personally connect with the children in your group, find out how their week went, review the things we have been investigating from the Bible and how they have been applying what they have been learning.

Replay: After hearing the Bible story in the large group, this portion of your lesson will give you various creative means to engage your students in retelling the story. We believe this will give greater understanding and retention. Activity bins are available to assist with replay. These include Bibles, art, computer with Bible software, costumes, puppets, wooden figures, writing paper with utensils.

Reflect: These questions allow you to discuss the Bible story and grab the truths found in it. You will find questions that have the group recalling facts about what they have heard as well as open ended questions that get them thinking and feeling about what they have learned.

Response: God gave us His Word so we might know Him better and discover how we might live more for Him each day. God's Word changes HOW WE THINK which changes HOW WE LIVE – with the goal of thinking and living more and more like Jesus. The Bible was written for application. The mystery of the Christian faith is that God's Word is written for everyone but the Holy Spirit reveals to each person's heart how it needs to be applied. Elementary lessons are written in such a way that each child can respond as the Holy Spirit leads them. Be open to how the Holy Spirit leads the children in your group and follow-up accordingly the next week when you have your Rewind Time.

Blessing: Be sure to extend the blessing included at the end of each lesson.

Gizmo Box: People learn in different ways. Some are visual and learn best by seeing, auditory learners need to hear something, while kinesthetic learners respond to action and movement. We tend to teach according to our preferred learning style and while it can be difficult to incorporate all learning styles of your small group in your teaching, the Gizmo Box offers you a variety of objects to help the kids grasp what you are teaching. Periodically, your lesson may refer to an object in the Gizmo Box to use that day but if you discover that your kids enjoy certain objects, go ahead and use them anytime!

KNOW YOUR KIDS

Here are some questions you could use to help you get to know the children in your group better.

- 1 - What things are you really good at? What things do you like doing the best/most?
- 2 - If you had a thousand dollars what would you do with it?
- 3 - What kind of things make you mad?
- 4 - What makes you happy? What do you get really excited about?
- 5 - If you could ask God anything, what would it be?
- 6 - What do you sometimes worry about?
- 7 - What kind of fun things do you do with your family?
- 8 - What do you want to be when you grow up?

INVOLVING PARENTS

Here are some ways in which you can encourage parents to be involved with their children and your small group. We need to remember that the Scriptures [Deuteronomy 6:6-7] tell the parents to train up their children; we are there as a support to them!

- Send an email, make a phone call or drop them a snail mail note to let them know the positive things you see in their children while in your class. This also gives you an opportunity to tell them what we are studying.
- Invite the parents to visit your class.
- Invite the parents to be on a sub list for you should you ever need to miss a week.
- Connect with the parents of your kids to help plan and lead a group activity this year. See bottom of Page 1 for important info about planning group activities with older elementary kids.
- Ask parents to become a prayer partner to pray for specific needs and for the children in the group. If you don't already have a co-leader, you might ask a parent to team-teach with you.
- Parents who want to get more involved in the TreeHouse can talk with the Pastor/Division Leader or go to the church website: rollinghills.org/treehouse-volunteers

WEEKLY GAME PLAN

- What lessons do I need to review or follow up on from previous weeks?

- What is the most important thing I want my kids to leave our Community Group time with?

- What would I like to accomplish this week in regards to:
 1. Bringing my kids into a closer relationship with the Lord?
 2. Getting to know my kids better; showing them I care?
 3. Things to pray about?

- What should we practice in our Community Groups so the kids are prepared to live out their Christianity in real life?

- Which of my kids do I need to follow up with regarding:
 1. A prayer request
 2. A question I could not answer
 3. A concern they raised in the group

AGE GROUP CHARACTERISTICS for KINDERGARTNERS

PHYSICALLY

Because the kindergartner is like this:

Very active, restless, on the go but still tires easily. Large muscles and corresponding motor skills are developing rapidly. Runs and jumps moving quickly. Small muscles and corresponding motor skills are developing at a slower pace. Cutting, coloring and printing skills are developing yet still experiences difficulty in this area. Proud of their growth and may view themselves as a “big” boy or girl but keep in mind they are still little.

Teach them like this:

Provide lots of space to move about and large sturdy equipment and materials. Change activities frequently interspersing opportunities for rest and slower paced activities. Encourage the child to participate in things they are big enough to do but provide help as needed. Encourage experimentation with materials but avoid criticism of the child’s efforts or undue requirements for the “finished product.”

MENTALLY

Because the kindergartner is like this:

Curious. Asks many questions. Has an increasing vocabulary and is able to put thoughts and ideas into words. Attention span still relatively short, 5-6 minutes. Cannot distinguish between fact and fantasy. Does not understand symbolism and has limited concepts of time, numbers and space. Learns best through imitation, play and using their senses. Forgets easily.

Teach them like this:

The child can memorize but does not easily understand the meaning so use verses and stories that are literal rather than symbolic. Take time to help the child understand the meaning of the verse or story. Be patient with all the “why” questions the kindergartner asks. This is an important way they learn. Provide a variety of sensory learning experiences; touch, taste, see, hear and do.

SOCIALLY

Because the kindergartner is like this:

Imitate adults. Can play in small groups and learn to share. Still self-centered, aware more of their own needs rather than needs of others. Tends to conform. Wants the approval of adults but may “test the waters” to see how far they can get with their behavior. Needs boundaries to feel secure.

Teach them like this:

Be a good role model. Couple Bible stories with contemporary stories to help child begin to understand the needs and feelings of others. Provide group activities where all children can get involved. Encourage the child by praising their efforts. Be firm with the child when needed, but be fair and consistent in your discipline.

EMOTIONALLY

Because the kindergartner is like this:

Appears more confident but emotions may be intense and near the surface. Expresses anger, love, laughter and tears easily. Adult approval is very important. Need affection and security as fear is a main emotion. Picks up easily on the emotions of others around them.

Teach them like this:

The child needs a calm, secure, unhurried environment to help keep their emotions in check. Don’t rush the child through an activity. Show attention equally to all the children. Do not show favoritism. Encourage all the children, especially the shy ones, but don’t focus attention on them. Do not show your own emotions to an extreme as the child quickly imitates the same emotion.

SPIRITUALLY

Because the kindergartner is like this:

Developing concepts of right and wrong but may blame others for wrongdoing. May confuse God and Jesus. Thinks of God in a personal way and Jesus as a friend. Influenced by external rewards and punishments. Can pray. Spiritual maturity directly related to the child’s emotional maturity.

Teach them like this:

Let the child know that doing what is right pleases Jesus. Use stories that emphasize the difference between right and wrong. Help the child understand Jesus as a personal friend they can talk with. Encourage prayer as a time of talking to God as they would a friend. Let the children know you can forgive them when they do wrong because God forgives us.

AGE GROUP CHARACTERISTICS FOR 1ST AND 2ND GRADERS

PHYSICALLY

Because 2nd graders are like this:

Full of energy and active but growing at a slower rate. Small motor skills are developing. Girls are ahead of boys in small motor development. Willing to try most anything often overestimating their own physical abilities. Easily distracted. Easily catch childhood illnesses.

Teach them like this:

Put lots of activity in your teaching. Allow for plenty of movement involving a variety of motor skills. Provide opportunities for slower paced activities and rest as the child still tires easily.

MENTALLY

Because 2nd graders are like this:

Eager to learn therefore likes to read and write. Enjoys games involving words and numbers. Thinks in concrete terms, beginning to develop reasoning skills. Likes both fact and fantasy. Has good imagination. Has ability to memorize. Attention span 10-15 minutes.

Teach them like this:

Provide opportunities to read and write but do not force the child to read as reading skills are just developing. Provide Bible games involving words and numbers. Avoid symbolism. Distinguish between fact and fantasy. Teach memory verses. Change pace several times during the hour using a variety of activities.

SOCIALLY

Because 2nd graders are like this:

Desires to please the teacher. Acceptance by peer group is important. Wants to make friends. Dislikes criticism. Winning and being first are important. Self-centered, taking turns is difficult. May try to dominate social situations. Likes to talk.

Teach them like this:

Provide non-competitive activities where child can interact with others with minimal amount of criticism. Provide opportunities to take turns. Show equal amounts of attention and praise to each child. Praise the group as they work well together.

EMOTIONALLY

Because 2nd graders are like this:

Easily excited. Experiencing new and intense feelings. Moves between emotional extremes. May have difficulty controlling behavior. May resist personal demands. Shyness and fear can be overcome with familiar surroundings and routine.

Teach them like this:

Maintain a calm atmosphere in the class and be calm yourself. Establish boundaries and guidelines for the class and review weekly with the class. Don't allow an activity to get out of control. Teach cooperation and obedience.

SPIRITUALLY

Because 2nd graders are like this:

Beginning to understand concepts about God's love, creator, his greatness but has difficulty with not seeing a physical presence. Has faith in prayer. Understands Jesus as their friend and may be ready to accept Jesus as their personal Savior. Has questions about death and heaven.

Teach them like this:

Help the child see God in nature, in answered prayer and by modeling faith in God in your own actions. Provide opportunities for prayer and acknowledge answered prayer. Be sensitive to the developing spirituality in a child but do not "play on emotions" to lead a child to Christ. Answer questions openly and honestly as they arise, keeping in mind the child's limitations in grasping concepts that are not concrete.

AGE GROUP CHARACTERISTICS FOR 3RD AND 4TH GRADERS

PHYSICALLY

Because 3rd and 4th graders are like this:

Greater stamina, tires less easily. Highly active. Enjoys physical games and may play rough. Small and large motor skills are more developed, refined and improving in speed. Steady physical development with girls ahead of boys.

Teach them like this:

Without getting out of control, provide a more active classroom. Games and activities can be more physically involved and can go for greater length of time. Plan hands on activities. Because the child may overestimate their abilities, keep games and activities safe in nature.

MENTALLY

Because 3rd and 4th graders are like this:

Has a higher level of creativity but may be self-conscious. Increasing independence. Expresses curiosity. Attention span is 10-15 minutes. Likes fiction, adventure, and fantasy. Has difficulty understanding symbolism. Learning to reason things out usually with a trial and error approach.

Teach them like this:

Provide opportunities for dramas. Have students act out the story especially those with adventure. Plan a variety of activities. Give beginning opportunities to investigate situations and reach a conclusion. Avoid abstract concepts. Continue to distinguish between fact and fantasy.

SOCIALLY

Because 3rd and 4th graders are like this:

Participation in and approval by peer group is very important. Still desires adult approval. Can work together in a group. Enjoys competition. Looks up to "models" or "heroes". May not like members of the opposite sex.

Teach them like this:

Plan activities where they can participate in a group giving their input to the group. Affirm the child. Make sure competitions are equal and fair. Give examples from your own life. Be a worthy model to your students and direct them in who they look at as "heroes".

EMOTIONALLY

Because 3rd and 4th graders are like this:

Can empathize with others. Enjoys challenges. Sensitive to criticism, nicknames and teasing. Emotions vary widely from shyness to exuberance. Feelings easily hurt. Vents anger verbally and physically.

Teach them like this:

Provide opportunities to help others. Do not allow students to criticize or tease other kids. Affirm the child and affirm positive behavior. Help child discover healthy ways to deal with anger.

SPIRITUALLY

Because 3rd and 4th graders are like this:

Can recognize need for forgiveness of their sin and a relationship with Jesus Christ. Developing consciousness of right and wrong and able to make deliberate choices. Has an interest in God, Jesus and the Bible.

Teach them like this:

Talk with your students about forgiveness for sin and a relationship with Jesus, allowing them opportunity to ask questions and to make a personal decision without pressure from you or peers. Provide opportunities for prayer and resources for Bible study.

AGE GROUP CHARACTERISTICS FOR 5TH GRADERS

PHYSICALLY

Because 5th graders are like this:

Slow steady growth, but may experience growth spurt at 11 1/2 to 12 years old. Girls are growing faster than boys. Some are entering puberty. Good motor coordination. Strong and healthy. Noisy, likes lots of activity especially out of doors. Enjoys competition.

Teach them like this:

Use creative techniques that challenge the 5th and 6th grader. Avoid childish techniques. Use active learning whenever possible. Provide times where students can be noisy, perhaps during music time. Capture the student's attention from the very beginning.

MENTALLY

Because 5th graders are like this:

Transitioning from concrete to abstract thinking. Can think and reason but has difficulty with symbolism. Attention span is 15-20 minutes. Likes talking, memorizing, collecting things, decision making, reading and writing. Has good vocabulary.

Teach them like this:

Provide opportunities for discussion and questioning that requires the student to think. Use thought provoking techniques. Challenge them to memorize, write and collect through classroom projects. Provide choices.

SOCIALLY

Because 5th graders are like this:

Can accept responsibility. Peer relationships are very important. Pulling away from parents and adults in desire for independence. Loyalty to peers increasing while loyalty to adults is decreasing. Wants to belong to a club or group. Prefers same sex groups. Hero worshiper.

Teach them like this:

Give students specific duties to help them feel ownership of the class. Build on group identity with class leaders, class projects, class name, activities, etc. Don't play the heavy authority figure but guide your students with lots of love and concern for them. Don't force opposite sex groups. Provide lots of positive role models of adults and teens.

EMOTIONALLY

Because 5th graders are like this:

Sixth graders may experience more moodiness as they enter puberty. Typically are happy, easygoing, friendly, well balanced emotionally. Dislike outward displays of affection. May be quick tempered. Can be very cruel to others at times, but also developing social consciousness for others.

Teach them like this:

Use humor when appropriate in your lesson. Emphasize we don't have humor at the expense of another person. Avoid displays of affection. Build value and esteem by listening attentively, focusing on the student, remembering their birthdays, etc. Avoid flare ups by having a well organized lesson plan.

SPIRITUALLY

Because 5th graders are like this:

Understands concept of sin. Asks many questions about spirituality. Faith becomes more personal, ready to accept Christ as their personal Savior. Can develop spiritual disciplines of Bible study, worship and prayer. Capable of sharing Christ's love with others. May set high standards for themselves.

Teach them like this:

Answer questions openly and honestly. Use scriptures to help answer their question, developing the understanding of Biblical authority. Provide opportunities for students to pray to receive Christ and equip them to grow in their faith through instruction in Bible study, worship and prayer. Provide opportunities to learn how to share their faith and service projects to help others in need.