



VBS PLANNING GUIDE

2020 Easy VBS



Greetings, VBS Groupie!

Welcome, and all aboard for Rocky Railway VBS. This Planning Guide is designed to help you and your VBS team tackle VBS planning during these very challenging times.

This year, the church has an opportunity to reach families like never before. Our ultimate hope is that the summer unfolds with COVID-19 restrictions being rolled back and VBS will happen much like it normally does. But even if that doesn't happen, there are still ways you can plan a great VBS experience.

Regardless of the circumstances you know parents will be looking for ways to engage their kids meaningful experiences. And you know how much kids love VBS. We believe this year VBS has the potential to impact kids and families more than ever!

So, take a breath, pause, and pray. And trust God.

In this guide, you'll find an activity to complete with your team, giving you three easy-steps on how to move forward with VBS in 2020. It may need to look different, but we've given you some ideas on how to strategize and adapt. We know how creative you are, and you'll come up with even more ways!

We're thankful that this summer, fall or maybe even winter you'll help kids explore Jesus' power and how we can trust Jesus to pull us through. These days, life may feel like a valley or a steep climb, but Jesus has strength when we don't. And remember your VBS retailer and the team at Group are with you every step of the way. Thank you for all the love and laughter you pour into kids at VBS. You are our everyday God Sightings!

Blessings!

The Group VBS Team

Focus on what matters most.

Before you worry about the "how" it's best to focus your priorities. Gather your VBS Team on a phone call, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, or FaceTime. Take some time to discuss the questions below so you can focus on what matters most at your VBS. Remember to be as specific as possible, so you can make the most of the time you have with kids.

What lasting image do we want to leave with kids who attend our VBS?

What are some ways to stretch our budget so we can focus on what matters most?

How can we use our time most effectively for maximum impact?

How can we provide student resources to kids, as a way to help families stay connected with Jesus after VBS? _____

Relationships are the difference.

Crew Leaders are key in developing lasting relationships with the kids at your VBS.

How will you intentionally develop relationships with your VBS volunteers, kids and parents?



Be Ready to adapt!

There's no doubt COVID-19 has come through like a freight train and derailed countless plans, routines, and expectations. No one knows what the coming months will look like, but with some planning, creativity, and faith you can still do your part to make VBS happen—no matter what. Gather your VBS Team, for where two or three are gathered in Jesus' name (even virtually) he is there with them! (Matthew 18:20)

Here's why we should steam forward:

- ▶ VBS is a time-tested, proven effective outreach strategy that reaches millions of kids and families. We can still do VBS, it just may look a little different this year!
- ▶ VBS provides the unique chance to connect with kids who may never set foot inside your church any other time.
- ▶ Typically, 29% of the kids who go to VBS are not regular attenders of the church hosting the program, and 22% don't attend church at all! VBS is a key opportunity to introduce kids to Jesus!
- ▶ With all the things that seem to be taking kids and families away from church, kids are still free in the summer, and parents need stuff for kids to do. Especially now!

- ▶ "VBS can be a critical way to reconnect with the kids and families in your church over the summer, after many months without face-to-face contact. Your relationships with kids and parents in your church need to be maintained."

"Rocky Railway explores how "Jesus' Power Pulls Us Through!" On the heels of Covid-19, it will be so important and timely to reflect on how Jesus sustains us in challenging times. This year's VBS will be important, not only for kids' spiritual growth, but also their emotional health. It will give kids an opportunity to express their feelings about the quarantine experience and to realize how God was with them in those difficult moments." —Dr. Joseph D. White, Child Psychologist

Here's how to steam forward:

1. PRAY
2. ADAPT
3. IMPLEMENT

Nothing can replace the face-to-face VBS experience, so we encourage you and your team to not give up! God is up to something big this year and he's counting on us to stay on track and do our part.

Choose three options or add your own creative ideas. **Pray**, then decide on target dates for **implementation**. Begin by communicating to families and your community. **Adapt** plans as needed based on the current situation.

We Want to Stick with a Traditional VBS Schedule

Stick with our current VBS date.	Date:
Plan B Date (a future VBS date, still as a traditional week-long program)	Date:
Plan C Date (multiple sites with smaller numbers of kids)	Date:
We'll decide about moving to Plan B or Plan C by	Date:

Let's Explore Some Alternative Schedules

1-day for 5 weeks	Date:
Weekend VBS	Date:
Back to School VBS	Date:
Evening VBS (later summer or fall)	Date:
Fall Break VBS	Date:
Christmas Break VBS	Date:
Use VBS material on Sunday mornings, evenings or mid-week	Date:

Other Options Using Student Materials (Bible Buddies, Student Books, Sciency Fun Gizmos, Preschool Crafts and Music CDs)

Drive-Thru VBS (families pick up packet, parents lead the activities with student resources)	Date:
Drive-In VBS (church led with families in cars, physically distanced by parking spaces)	Date:
Backyard VBS (small groups of neighborhood kids led by key VBS volunteers or parent)	Date:
Online VBS (live stream led by VBS church leaders)	Date:
Out	Date:

Implementing Our VBS Plan

Plan A	
Plan B	
Plan C	

Trust Jesus to Make VBS Happen in 2020

Times like this will put our faith to the test. Take heart, the “all things are possible Jesus” has empowered us to be engineers for his kingdom. With Jesus’ power, we can rise to the challenge and reach families like never before!

While we don’t have clear direction at this time, we do have faith that with Jesus as our conductor, we’ll reach our destination. Full steam ahead!



“For I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength.”

—Philippians 4:13

Group

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