



SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

GROW UP
WEEK 1 NO EXCUSES

Small Group Welcome

1. **Introduce** yourself, and **welcome** new kids by name.
2. Kids **share** what happened during the past week.
3. **Check up** on past week's prayer requests and events.
4. **Discuss** the welcome question: **How many people do you wish you could invite to your birthday?**

Small Group Activity

You'll Need

- Shapes beach ball (1 per group)
- No Excuses activity supplement (1 per group)

To Do

Say: You've got to catch an excuse before it slips out and keeps you from doing what you need to do! This game will see how quickly you can catch an excuse!

1. **Toss** the shapes ball to a kid in your group.
2. Kid **names** the shape closest to their right thumb.
3. Group **looks up** the shape and its matching statement on the No Excuses activity supplement.
4. Kids **shout out** if it's an excuse or a right choice as quickly as they can.
5. **Choose** a kid to **explain** why the statement was an excuse or a right choice. *See supplement for help.*
6. **Repeat** the game until each kid has had a turn to catch the ball.
7. **If time allows, play** the game again.

Choose questions to ask while kids play.

1. **How can you tell the difference between an excuse and a right choice?** *Answers will vary.*
2. **When you hear a lot of excuses, how does it make you feel?** *Answers will vary.*
3. **How would you feel about yourself if you made a lot of excuses?** *Answers will vary.*

Small Group Discussion

Say the point and Bible verse together.

No more excuses. It's time to grow up!

James 4:17 NLT

Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it.

1. **What does this verse teach you?** *Answers will vary.*

Choose a few review questions.

1. **In the Bible story, how did Samuel show he was mature?** *He answered right away when he heard his name even though he was asleep.*
2. **What responsibilities do you want to have?** *Answers will vary.*
3. **What do people miss out on when they make excuses all the time?** *New responsibilities, chances to be a leader and a good example, etc.*
4. **What big plans do you think God has for you?** *Answers will vary.*
5. **When you know what you need to do, how long should you wait before you do it?** *Don't wait. If you know what to do, do it!*

Choose an action step question.

1. **Share an excuse you say a lot. Ask God to help you stop saying it this week.** *Answers will vary.*
2. **Share a responsibility you want to have. What can you do this week to show you're ready for that responsibility?** *Answers will vary.*

Pray together.

1. **Ask** kids to share things they'd like to pray about.
2. **Write down** their prayer requests.
3. **Pray** together over the prayer requests.

Not sure what to pray? Pray this: Dear God, please help us to do what is right and stop making excuses. In Jesus' name, amen.

Check Out

Stay in small groups until kids are checked out.

1. **Talk about** earning points by returning the Challenge Card and **play** the game again.
2. When a kid from your small group leaves, **say** something positive and specific to their family.
3. **Encourage** families to do the Challenge Card together.

Please save questions on back for Small Group Discussion.



SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

GROW UP
WEEK 2 NO WHINING

Small Group Welcome

1. **Introduce** yourself, and **welcome** new kids by name.
2. Kids **share** what happened during the past week.
3. **Check up** on past week's prayer requests and events.
4. **Discuss** the welcome question: **What do you think it's like to listen to a baby cry all the time?**

Small Group Activity

You'll Need

- Vine toy (1 per group)

To Do

Say: Remember the Bible story we saw about Jonah? His complaining was terrible! In this game, if you get stuck with the vine, you have to whine or complain about something like Jonah did. Wah-wah!

1. **Pass** the vine around the circle and **chant** the point together: **"No more whining or complaining. It's time to grow up!"**
2. When the chant is complete, the kid with the vine **whines** or **complains** about something.
3. The rest of the group **says**, "Wah-wah!" when the kid finishes complaining.
4. **Repeat** the game as time allows.

Choose questions to ask after kids play.

1. **Which would you rather hear all the time: someone whining and complaining or a baby crying?** *Answers will vary.*
2. **Why do you think we said, "Wah-wah!" every time someone whined or complained during the game?** *Answers will vary.*
3. **Have you ever gotten in trouble for whining or complaining? What happened?** *Answers will vary.*

Small Group Discussion

Say the point and Bible verse together.

No more whining or complaining. It's time to grow up!

Philippians 2:14 NLT

Do everything without complaining or arguing ...

1. **What does the Bible verse tell us to quit doing?** *Complaining and arguing*

Choose a few review questions.

1. **How do you think it helps when you quit whining, complaining, and arguing?** *Answers will vary.*
2. **In the Bible story, what did Jonah do that wasn't mature?** *He had a bad attitude and argued with God.*
3. **Talk about a time you acted like Jonah by whining, complaining, or arguing.** *Answers will vary.*
4. **When you have a good attitude, what do you think it shows others?** *Answers will vary.*
5. **When you whine and complain all the time, what do you think it shows others?** *Answers will vary.*
6. **What do you think when you see someone whining?** *Answers will vary.*

Choose an action step question.

1. **What are some things you can do to help yourself quit whining, complaining, and arguing?** *Remember the Bible verse, pray, ask for help, etc.*
2. **If you catch yourself whining, what will you do?** *Apologize, change your attitude, etc.*

Pray together.

1. **Ask** kids to share things they'd like to pray about.
2. **Write down** their prayer requests.
3. **Pray** together over the prayer requests.

Not sure what to pray? Pray this: God, please help us to be thankful for everything You've given us instead of whining and complaining. In Jesus' name, amen.

Check Out

Stay in small groups until kids are checked out.

1. **Talk about** earning points by returning the Challenge Card and **play** the game again.
2. When a kid from your small group leaves, **say** something positive and specific to their family.
3. **Encourage** families to do the Challenge Card together.

Please save questions on back for Small Group Discussion.



SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

GROW UP
WEEK 3 TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Small Group Welcome

1. **Introduce** yourself, and **welcome** new kids by name.
2. Kids **share** what happened during the past week.
3. **Check up** on past week's prayer requests and events.
4. **Discuss** the welcome question: **What would it be like if you had to eat baby food all the time?**

Small Group Activity

You'll Need

- Milk and Meat activity sheet (1 per child)
- Milk and Meat activity supplement (1 per group)
- Markers (1 set per group)

To Do

Say: When you choose to follow Jesus, your heart becomes a baby heart all over again! You need people to tell you how to live for Jesus. That's spiritual milk. But if you choose to live for Jesus without being told what to do all the time, that's spiritual meat!

1. **Give** each kid a Milk and Meat activity sheet.
2. **Talk about** things that are spiritual milk or spiritual meat on the Milk and Meat activity supplement.
3. Kids **draw** or **write** examples of learning to live for Jesus on the spiritual milk side of the activity sheet.
4. Kids **draw** or **write** examples of living for Jesus without being told on the spiritual meat side.
5. Kids **fold** on the dotted lines to cover their answers.
6. **If time allows**, kids **color** and **decorate** the sheets.

Choose questions to ask while kids work.

1. **Would you rather live on milk or meat?** *Answers will vary.*
2. **What do you think it would be like if you stayed a baby forever?** *Answers will vary.*

Please save questions on back for Small Group Discussion.

Small Group Discussion

Say the point and Bible verse together.

No more baby stuff. It's time to grow up!

Hebrews 5:13 NLT

... someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn't know how to do what is right.

1. **What is an infant?** *A baby*

Choose a few review questions.

1. **What is spiritual milk?** *You always need others to tell you what to do to live for Jesus.*
2. **What is spiritual meat?** *Knowing how to live for Jesus and doing it without being told; teaching others how to live for Jesus.*
3. **When is it good to drink only spiritual milk?** *When you start to follow Jesus and you don't know how to live God's way yet.*
4. **When is it bad to drink only spiritual milk?** *When you've followed Jesus for a long time and you still haven't learned how to live God's way.*
5. **How do you think you can you tell if you're eating spiritual milk or spiritual meat?** *Answers will vary.*

Choose an action step question.

1. **How can you eat spiritual meat this week?** *Read the Bible, pray, help others, etc. without being told*
2. **Pick one example of spiritual meat from your activity sheet. How can you get better at that one thing this week?** *Answers will vary.*

Pray together.

1. **Ask** kids to share things they'd like to pray about.
2. **Write down** their prayer requests.
3. **Pray** together over the prayer requests.

Not sure what to pray? Pray this: God, please teach us Your ways. Help us live for You, and show us how to teach others to do the same. In Jesus' name, amen.

Check Out

Stay in small groups until kids are checked out.

1. **Talk about** earning points by returning the Challenge Card and **continue** activity.
2. When a kid from your small group leaves, **say** something positive and specific to their family.
3. **Encourage** families to do the Challenge Card together.



SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

GROW UP
WEEK 4 NO STINKING

Small Group Welcome

1. **Introduce** yourself, and **welcome** new kids by name.
2. Kids **share** what happened during the past week.
3. **Check up** on past week's prayer requests and events.
4. **Discuss** the welcome question: **What do you think it's like to change a baby's diaper?**

Small Group Activity

You'll Need

- Good-smelling sticker (1 per child)
- Bad-smelling sticker (1 per child)
- Foam die (1 per group)

To Do

1. Each kid **sticks** 1 good-smelling sticker on their right hand and 1 bad-smelling sticker on their left hand.

Say: This die will tell us if we have to smell something disgusting like sin or something sweet like godly choices.

2. A kid **rolls** the die.
3. For an even number, the kid **says** a godly choice and everyone **smells** the good sticker. *See ideas below.*
4. For an odd number, the kid **says** a sin and everyone **smells** their bad sticker. *See ideas below.*
5. **Repeat** until all kids have had a turn.
6. **If time allows, play** again.

Godly Choices: Read the Bible, help a friend, do chores with a good attitude, pray, forgive others, etc.

Sinful Choices: Rolling eyes, lying, cheating, stealing, hurting others, saying bad words, etc.

Choose questions to ask while kids play.

1. **If you could smell sins, what would you do about it?** *Answers will vary.*
2. **What do you think it would be like if everyone stopped sinning?** *Answers will vary.*

Small Group Discussion

Say the point and Bible verse together.

No more stinking sin. It's time to grow up!

Luke 2:52 NIRV

Jesus became wiser and stronger. He also became more and more pleasing to God and to people.

1. **Who grew wiser and stronger for God?** *Jesus*

Choose a few review questions.

1. **What do you think Jesus did to grow wiser and stronger for God?** *Answers will vary.*
2. **What do you think you can do to grow wiser and stronger for God?** *Answers will vary.*
3. **In the Bible story, why did Jesus stay in the temple?** *He wanted to learn more about God's ways.*
4. **What do you think when someone makes the same wrong choice over and over?** *Answers will vary.*
5. **If you choose to sin, will God still love you and forgive you?** *Yes.*
6. **What do you think stinks about sin?** *Answers will vary.*

Choose an action step question.

1. **What is one sin you can ask God to help you quit this week?** *Answers will vary.*
2. **What godly choice can you start doing this week to be more pleasing to God and to people?** *Answers will vary.*

Pray together.

1. **Ask** kids to share things they'd like to pray about.
2. **Write down** their prayer requests.
3. **Pray** together over the prayer requests.

Not sure what to pray? Pray this: God, please help us to follow Jesus' example and grow wiser and stronger for You. In Jesus' name, amen.

Check Out

Stay in small groups until kids are checked out.

1. **Talk about** earning points by returning the Challenge Card and **play** the game again.
2. When a kid from your small group leaves, **say** something positive and specific to their family.
3. **Encourage** families to do the Challenge Card together.

Please save questions on back for Small Group Discussion.