

PROGRAM GUIDE

NURSERY PROGRAM



SUGGESTED PROGRAMS FOR NURSERY CHILDREN



Note: ADRA's Adventures for Kids is not designed for nursery-aged children. If you must have children cared for because their parents are volunteering in the program, then follow these instructions. Be sure that you have MATURE supervision for these children.

Two to four-year-olds meet in a different room and do not visit the learning centers. At this age, they need stability. Remember these children like to be constantly active, lack fine muscle coordination, have short attention spans (two to four minutes), are sensitive, need constant reassurance, are building vocabulary, cannot express ideas or feelings well, have no sense of time or distance, have short memories, are fearful of new situations, and love repetition. Do not introduce new songs every day. The more acquainted they become with the program, the more they will like it. Nursery children usually will not want to sit in their chairs very much. They need lots of activity. Keep them moving. They do not relate well to crafts, so only a few have been selected.

Decorate the room with colorful, simple, kid-friendly pictures and props placed at the child's eye-level. Because coordination is weak in young children, remove objects that might prove dangerous. Include items that tie into the theme and that spark their interest.

Include lots of music in the program. Choose songs that are easy to sing with an upbeat melody and lots of visual aids. "Singable" songs stick in the mind for years. Most importantly, use songs that are familiar to them. Find a pianist who is creative—providing background music during activities, playing excerpts of songs, and repeating a song until everyone is finished.

This age group responds well to repetition so do not worry about boring them. They do not yet understand complex, abstract issues yet, so reduce concepts to simple, concrete language. Generally, the program will include the leader welcoming children by name and enthusiastically introducing the day's activities and familiar music. Repeat the Bible stories so that the children learn them. You can use the same Bible story as the other older children, but tell them simply and use lots of visual aids.

Tell the children that people still get hurt and are hungry today and that ADRA helps them – they feed people, help them get to clean water to drink, and teach them how to read and write. Use hand motions to demonstrate activities and encourage children to copy them.

For the service element, repeat the physical activities several times. For instance, pass out pieces of clothing and then ask everyone to bring them to the front and place in a box marked "ADRA." Children are delighted and look forward to doing it again.

Check with parents to find out whether they want their children eating snacks and the type preferred. Ask about allergies. Serve snacks early.

Plan to conclude the program with quiet music, especially during evening programs. Bedtime is very close and children should be calming down, not getting agitated.

PROGRAM ONE

HELPING

Basic message – We share what we have because Jesus would do the same. Wanting to be like Jesus, ADRA workers help people in many ways. One way is to collect food, clothing, tools, building supplies, blankets, and other items. These things are packed into boxes and loaded onto boats or airplanes for shipping to countries hit by disasters.

Activity one: A boat on wheels or a child’s car can be used to transport children to another land where they will share (have a variety of items) with children. Repeat the “trip” until every child has had a ride.

An alternative is to have a shallow tub of water in which a toy boat can be floated as children pretend to ship food and clothing. Ahead of time make cubes of Styrofoam that will fit onto the boat. Have the children stack the load, steer the boat, and then unload. Repeat so that all the children get a turn. *Caution: Do not leave the water tub unattended. Empty it immediately to avoid spillage or other accidents.*

Activity two: Repeat this activity using trucks. Prepare ahead of time a geographical map on a plastic tablecloth. Include roads passing mountains, streams, trees, villages, and fields. Children drive the truck of supplies from an airport or deep-sea port to a refugee camp on the other side of the map.

Activity three: Find props for tasks that require teamwork, such as broom and dustpan. Have two children work together to perform the task. Repeat so that everyone has a chance.

Songs – [Sing sharing songs, such as “I have two apples and you have none.”]

Craft – Picture

Use the template from Day Nine to make each child a copy of “Give a Hand.” Put the child’s name and the date on the back before applying paint. Spread out newspapers and finger paints. Station someone at the sink or clean-up area, which is stocked with mild soap and paper towels. Have two adults or teens each work with half a dozen children. After the child chooses a color, one adult applies paint to the child’s fingers and palm. Instructing the child to hold hand and fingers straight, the adult carefully presses it onto the paper. A paper towel is used immediately to remove extra paint. Then the child goes to the clean-up area for a thorough hand-washing. The finished prints are allowed to dry. Display them on a table until closing program.

NOTE: If you will be doing the craft in Program 3, take a picture of each child today



PROGRAM TWO

FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY

Basic message – Jesus cares about hungry people. One time, He used two fish and five loaves to feed 5,000 people (Matthew 14:15-21). There were even leftovers. If you have the Bible Story made of felt in your Sabbath or Sunday School, use the felt pieces and a the flannel board to tell the story. Have children sit on a rug so they are close to the board. You could also use a Bible or children’s storybook and show pictures.

Activity one: Act out the story, first handing every child a felt fish or plastic loaf of bread. Then allow children to take turns collecting the loaves and fishes in a basket. One alternative is to have cubes of real bread that the children can eat while listening to the story. Check with parents about allergies before passing out bread.

Activity two: Talk about how food grows in gardens. ADRA workers teach people how to grow their own food. Hand the children plastic rakes, hoes and watering cans (available in toy departments) to use during the explanation about growing food; dig, plant seeds, smooth the dirt, hoe, and water. Collect tools and hand out plastic fruit and vegetables that can be “harvested” when a child with a basket walks by. If you can’t use plastic or real fruit, you could use felts with a felt basket and have the children put them on the flannel board. The basket is then carried to market. Repeat a number of times.

Songs – [themes should relate to food, water, God provides.]



PROGRAM THREE

GOOD HEALTH

Basic message – Jesus healed people because He loved them. (Be sure to explain that Jesus loves everybody and that sometimes people aren’t healed. It doesn’t mean that He doesn’t love them.) ADRA immunizes children against diseases and helps mothers to learn to take good care of their children.

Activity one: Have a doctor’s bag (available in toy departments) with basic supplies or use a pretend bag. Ask a child to pull out an object, then demonstrate using it. Repeat until everyone has been able to stand up front.

Activity two: Set up a fenced area. Get enough stuffed animals so that several (or all) children can participate at once. Hand out the stuffed animals. Tell the children that ADRA workers teach people

to put up fences so that animals cannot eat or trample the vegetables. Invite the children to save a garden by putting the stuffed animals in the fenced area or, by keeping the animals outside of the fenced garden.

Songs – [Songs about health]

Craft – Picture

Use the template from Day Three to make each child a heart out of construction paper. Put the child's name and the date on the back. Spread out newspapers. Have two adults or teens each work with half a dozen children. Allow each child to decorate the outside edge of their heart with crayons and/or stickers. Using a glue stick, help the children paste their picture onto their decorated heart frame. Display them on a table until closing program.



PROGRAM FOUR

HELPING PEOPLE IN TROUBLE

Basic message –Disaster, such as floods and earthquakes, damage houses and force people to leave their homes, clothing, and other belongings. Tell the story of Noah's ark found in Genesis 6-9, emphasizing that Noah spent a lot of time preparing.

Activity one: Place a large empty box at the front of the room. This will be the "Ark." Hand out stuffed animals to the children, which they hold until the animals enter the ark. Then they bring their animals to the ark and place them in the box.

Activity two: When you end the story, mention that the rainbow is a sign of hope. When we care about people and help them, we give them hope. If possible, have bubble blowing fluid and bubble-maker; allow the children to take turns making a few bubbles and observing the rainbows in the bubbles. If you have a day program and would like to take the children outside – this is a good outside activity.

Activity three: Place a sturdy, medium-sized box in the front of the room. Hand each child a container of food. Empty cereal boxes are fine, but don't use heavy cans of food, since the children could drop them on their toes. Explain that this box will be given to someone who is hungry. Have children put their item in the box while the group sings songs about sharing.

Activity four: Repeat the activity with another empty box, substituting clothing for canned food.

Songs – Sing songs about sharing and Noah and the flood.

PROGRAM FIVE

CLOSING PROGRAM

Basic message – We help people because Jesus cares about each person on this earth. ADRA is an agency that teaches people how to grow their own food, find jobs, have better health, and to learn to read and write. When major disasters happen, ADRA provides emergency food, water, and shelter.

Major activities – Repeat an activity from each of the programs, using props related to food, jobs, health, disaster training, and education. Review what the Bible tells us about each of these and how ADRA helps people.

Songs – Sing songs that the children enjoyed.

Crafts – Hold up each craft item and explain its significance.

Close with prayer.

