



8 STRATEGIES

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Working With Boys

To work with boys, you need to understand them. A wise leader will seek to understand the strengths and weaknesses of boys and plan activities that will challenge them physically, mentally, and spiritually. No two boys are the same, but they share many of the same traits.

"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it"

(Proverbs 22:6, NIV).

What Boys Need

Listed below are important considerations in working with boys.

- Boys need a relationship with Jesus Christ to be ambassadors for Christ. Pray individually for the boys and share the plan of salvation with each. Teach them how to share the message of Christ with others.
- Boys need structure. A wise leader will provide a consistent schedule, as well as set and enforce boundaries.

- Boys need time. Give them time to process what you are saying and time to respond to your questions. After several moments of silence, ask the question again or rephrase it. Repetition of activities is good for boys and gives them the time that they need to process new information.
- Boys need visuals. Provide visuals that help in teaching missions to the boys. Posters on walls should be at their eye level (waist high for leaders).
- Boys need opportunities to communicate what they are thinking. Provide activities that allow them to express their thoughts. Repeat what they say and clarify their meaning.
- Boys need lots of space and movement. Allow them the option of working at a table or on the floor during a project. Provide some type of movement during an activity, such as passing a ball or following the leader. Set boundaries.
- Boys need activities designed for their short attention spans. Schedule several activities for each meeting. Use attention getters to help them focus on the activity.
- Boys need male role models. Boys learn by example and imitate what they observe. Allow them opportunities to practice godly character, such as praying.
- Boys need to complete what they begin. Schedule enough time in the chapter meetings for boys to complete projects. Celebrate their accomplishments.
- Boys need competition. Schedule activities that allow them to compete with others.
- Boys prefer to participate in group projects. Allow them to choose from several options.
- Boys belong to a pecking order. Boys measure themselves against their peers and seek affirmation from leaders. They are asking the question, *Do I have what it takes to become a man?* Teach them how to become men of God.
- Boys like having fun. Try to incorporate fun into every project and activity that you do with the boys. At the same time, set boundaries so that they know when it is appropriate to have fun and when to be serious.