



Juneau's Puppy Playhouse Ages 3 through Pre-K!

Preschool Director Manual



Juneau's Puppy Playhouse

Preschool Director Manual



Loveland, Colorado
group.com/vbs

Group

Group resources really work!

This Group resource incorporates our R.E.A.L. approach to ministry. It reinforces a growing friendship with Jesus, encourages long-term learning, and results in life transformation, because it's:



Relational

Person-to-person interaction enhances spiritual growth and builds Christian friendships.

Experiential

What we experience through action and discussion sticks with us up to 9 times longer than what we simply hear or read.

Applicable

The aim of ministry is to equip people to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

Lifelong

Experiences transform the heart, moving faith beyond the walls of church and into everyday life for years to come.

Juneau's Puppy Playhouse Preschool Director Manual

Copyright © 2025 Group Publishing, Inc./0000 0001 0362 4853

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any manner whatsoever without prior written permission from the publisher, except where noted in the text and in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. For permission information, go to group.com/permissions.

Visit our websites:

group.com

group.com/TrueNorth

Thanks to our talented team that points the way to Jesus! Laura Baldwin-Stout, Jody Brolsma, Stephen Caine, Lyndsay Gerwing, Charity Kauffman, Micaiah Lee, Laycie McClain, Mike Porter, Joani Schultz, Elisa Snell, Rodney Stewart, and Ali Thompson

Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

ISBN 978-1-4707-7744-9

Printed in the United States of America.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

27 26 25

Contents

Juneau's Puppy Playhouse Overview	4
Trusting Jesus in a Wild World	6
Hit the Trail With a Crew!	8
Your Planning Guide	9
Prepping Juneau's Puppy Playhouse	12
Decorating Your Juneau's Puppy Playhouse	13
Basic Supplies	14
During True North	15
Safety Tips	18
Exploration Stations.....	19
Preschool Bible Pack	20
Sticky Scripture™	21
Bible Memory Buddies®	22
God Sightings®	24
Operation Kid-to-Kid™	25
Parent Letter	28
Assembling a Preschool Team Worth Barking About	29
Preschool Staff Job Descriptions.....	30
Preschool Sample Schedule	37
Preschool Daily Schedules	38



Juneau's Puppy Playhouse Overview Chart

Here's what's happening at True North!

At True North, the daily Bible Point is carefully integrated into each station's activities to reinforce Bible learning. Each activity is an important part of kids' overall learning experience—kind of like the pieces of a puzzle.

Day 1	Sing & Play Peak	Exploration Stations	Bible Adventures & Missions	Games
<p>Bible Point: When we wonder, we can... <i>(trust Jesus!)</i></p> <p>Bible Story: John prepares the way and baptizes Jesus. (Matthew 3; 11:1-6)</p> <p>Bible Verse: "Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise." (Matthew 7:24)</p>	<p>Just for Day 1, preschoolers skip Sing & Play Peak and go straight to Juneau's Puppy Playhouse to meet their Crews and Crew Leaders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible Activity Page • Wonder Wall • Wild Life: Explore the Campsite • River Crossing 	<p>Share the exciting news that Jesus is coming, just as John did!</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wonder Where • Pond Pickup • Wonder Who-la Hoop
<p>Day 2</p> <p>Bible Point: When we feel alone, we can... <i>(trust Jesus!)</i></p> <p>Bible Story: Jesus teaches about God's love for us. (Matthew 6:25-33; 18:12-14)</p> <p>Bible Verse: "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn the Day 2 Bible Point and verse, and meet Bible Memory Buddy Clawdia. • Share God Sightings and add trees to the God Sightings Celebration Spot. • Sing True North songs. • Listen to Scout's surprising tale about preparing s'mores for Jesus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible Activity Page • Tide Pool Play • Ice Pairing • Wild Life: Pup Tent 	<p>Use pompoms to explore Jesus' teachings about a shepherd caring for his sheep and God caring for his people.</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-Five Hello • Tide Pool Shuffle • Crabby Crew Tag
<p>Day 3</p> <p>Bible Point: When we feel powerless, we can... <i>(trust Jesus!)</i></p> <p>Bible Story: A Roman officer trusts Jesus. (Matthew 8:5-13)</p> <p>Bible Verse: "Don't be afraid," he said, "Take courage. I am here!" (Matthew 14:27)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn the Day 3 Bible Point and verse, and meet Bible Memory Buddy Kody. • Share God Sightings and add trees to the God Sightings Celebration Spot. • Sing True North songs. • Help Scout use the right tools to survive in the wild. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible Activity Page • Tide Pool Freeze • Arctic Art • Wild Life: Gone Fishin' 	<p>Follow orders like soldiers, and hear how a powerful man trusted in Jesus' power.</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm the Chaos • Follow Mama (or Papa) Bear • Water Woes
<p>Day 4</p> <p>Bible Point: When we need hope, we can... <i>(trust Jesus!)</i></p> <p>Bible Story: Jesus dies and comes back to life. (Matthew 26:47-28:8)</p> <p>Bible Verse: "And his name will be the hope of all the world." (Matthew 12:21)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn the Day 4 Bible Point and verse, and meet Bible Memory Buddy Earnest. • Share God Sightings and add trees to the God Sightings Celebration Spot. • Sing True North songs. • Give Scout hope...and new, dry supplies! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible Activity Page • Can't Keep Hope Down • Ice Rescue • Wild Life: Snow Day 	<p>Put stickers on a paper cross to discover how Jesus brought the hope of life forever when he took our wrong choices onto the cross.</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing Direction • Off the Grid • Hoping for a Splash
<p>Day 5</p> <p>Bible Point: When we need help, we can... <i>(trust Jesus!)</i></p> <p>Bible Story: Jesus gives the Great Commission, and the Holy Spirit comes. (Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 2:1-12)</p> <p>Bible Verse: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn the Day 5 Bible Point and verse, and meet Bible Memory Buddy Bruce. • Share God Sightings and add trees to the God Sightings Celebration Spot. • Sing True North songs. • Lend a hand with Scout's heavy backpack. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible Activity Page • Bubbling Over • Build Big • Wild Life: Campfire Friends 	<p>Catch whirling paper pieces to celebrate the Holy Spirit—a helper who arrived with wind and fire!</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping Hands • Helper Heroes • Moose on the Loose

Tundra Treats



A (Northern) Light Snack



Blizzard in a Cup

Sticky Scripture™

Play "Wilderness Wise" as they explore Matthew 7:24 and discover what it means to have wisdom.



Craft & Play

- Northern Lights Painting
- Snowflake Sun Catcher
- Floating Otter



Closing Circle

Review the day, learn about God Sightings, receive a Watch for God Wristband and Juneau sticker, and wrap up with prayer and music.



S'mores on a Stick



Mini Mountains



Find Matthew 11:28 in the Bible, then "Find a King Crab" in a bucket! They'll investigate what it means to come to Jesus and find a forever friend.

- Starry Night Light
- Sparkling Snow Globe
- Crawly Crab



Review the day, talk about God Sightings, receive a Juneau sticker, and wrap up with prayer and music.



Bear Foot Feast



Bear Bites



Play "The Trail Is Lava" as they practice taking courage during scary times.

- Mountain Range Ring Toss
- Sledding Spinner
- Kody Bears



Review the day, talk about God Sightings, receive a Juneau sticker, and wrap up with prayer and music.



Snowball Snacks



Snowy Treats

Hope to "Spot the Match!" as they explore Matthew 12:21 and investigate how Jesus is the hope of the world.



- Northern Lights Kaleidoscope
- Pine Tree Puzzler
- Eagle Flyer



Review the day, talk about God Sightings, receive a Juneau sticker, and wrap up with prayer and music.

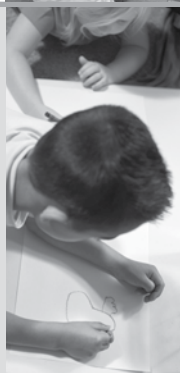


Moose Munchies



Log Cabin Crunchers

Explore Matthew 28:20, and be guided step by step as they learn how to draw a moose.



- Snow Place Like Home
- Alaskan Wilderness Scene
- Moose Antlers



Review the day, talk about God Sightings, receive a Juneau sticker, and wrap up with prayer and music.



Trusting Jesus in a Wild World

Guide kids on the ultimate Alaskan adventure where northern lights glow over majestic mountains, racing rivers, and glistening glaciers. As kids trek the tundra, they'll explore how easy it is to lose sight of what's true in our wild world today. Point kids to Jesus, a faithful friend we can always trust. He's our True North!

Preschoolers will experience amazing Bible adventures *and* watch for God in everyday life. Even young children can discover that God is active in their lives and that his fingerprints are *everywhere*!

If you haven't used Group's VBS materials before, you're in for a treat. True North is an exciting, fun-filled, Bible-based program your kids will love. (We know because we've been doing field tests with our amazing, life-changing VBS programs for 30 years! Look for notes marked "Field Test Finding" to learn how our discoveries will make *your* program the best.)

FIELD TEST FINDING

Although your little ones do want to copy the big kids, the activities in the elementary-age stations haven't been designed for or tested by preschoolers. By using the activities in Juneau's Puppy Playhouse, you can be sure that every activity is age-appropriate and designed specifically for children 3 to 5 years old.

Who Should Come to Juneau's Puppy Playhouse?

The activities at Juneau's Puppy Playhouse are designed for and tested by children who've *not* yet completed kindergarten. Most pre-kindergartners haven't yet been immersed in the structure of a school setting, and their attention spans are still pretty short. While parents of pre-K children may insist that their children aren't preschoolers anymore, gently let them know that the activities in the preschool program have been created specifically for pre-elementary kids. We want kids of every age to get the *most* out of VBS!

And although it may be tempting to include everyone in the VBS fun, we encourage you to use this program only with children who are at least 3 years old.

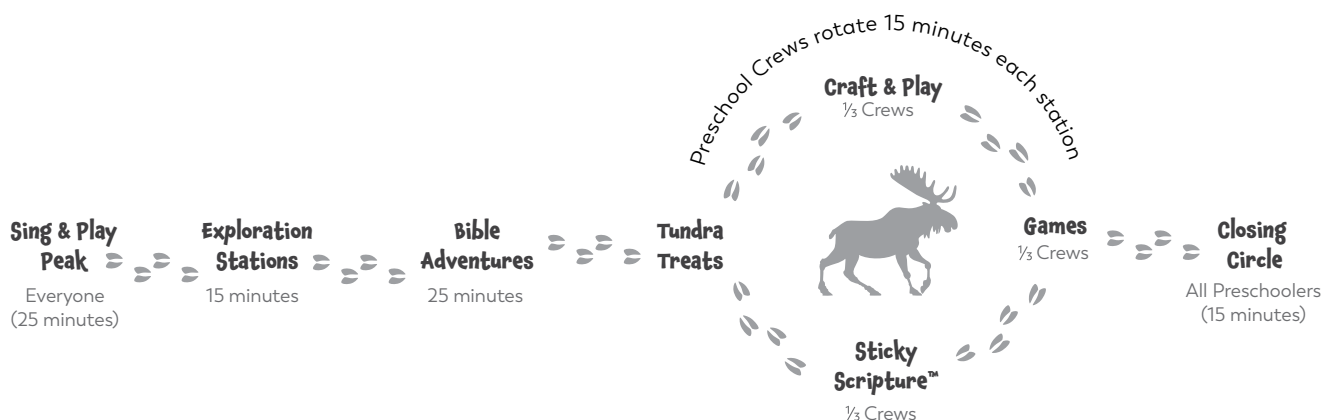
What Happens at Juneau's Puppy Playhouse?

We've worked with preschool experts to design a format that gives preschoolers a little less structure and more free-choice, resulting in smooth transitions and a simple learning environment.

- Preschoolers begin their adventures with the older kids at **Sing & Play Peak**, singing and doing motions to exciting Bible songs that introduce kids to the concepts they'll be learning that day. (Note that on Day 1, preschoolers begin their day with free-flow Exploration Stations rather than at Sing & Play Peak. This introduces them to their Crew, leaders, and Juneau's Puppy Playhouse room in a less-overwhelming, small-group atmosphere.)
- Then preschoolers travel to **Juneau's Puppy Playhouse** with their Crews (small groups of up to five kids and one teenage or adult leader).
- Your little learners ease into their day by choosing from a variety of hands-on **Exploration Stations** that reinforce the Bible Point.
- Then preschoolers join together for a big, interactive **Bible Adventure**.
- Next, it's time for mountains of munchies at **Tundra Treats** snack time!
- Then preschool Crews form three groups to rotate through the following stations:
 - ▶ **Craft & Play** activities include opportunities for preschoolers to create and discover!
 - ▶ At **Sticky Scripture™**, Bible memory goes from the head to the heart like never before! Here, preschoolers explore the daily verse through actions, life-application activities, and interactive video. Plus, this is where kids receive their collectible Bible Memory Buddies.
 - ▶ Preschoolers can get their wiggles out with high-energy play at **Games**.
- Finally, Crews come together for a quick review and music at **Closing Circle** before parents arrive to take them home.

COMPASS CLUE

You can have preschoolers join older kids at Compass Closing. However, we didn't create the Compass Closing experiences specifically for preschoolers, nor did we test them with preschoolers. Rather, we *have* found that preschoolers really enjoy having their own smaller, less-overwhelming Closing Circle time after a tiring day. Plus, it's easier for parents to pick up their little ones in a smaller area before going to get elementary siblings.



Hit the Trail With a Crew!

Crews are small groups of preschoolers who participate together at True North each day. Each Crew consists of up to five children and one adult or teenage Crew Leader. With one leader shepherding five children, you can be assured that your preschoolers will get lots of attention, and discipline issues will decrease. Use the developmental information below to guide you as you work with preschoolers at True North.

COMPASS CLUE

Crew Leaders will have a much easier time if you include a mix of boys and girls, plus a range of 3-year-olds, 4-year-olds, and 5-year-olds in each group. The 4- and 5-year-olds will be able to do many of the activities themselves, leaving the Crew Leaders free to help the 3-year-olds.

FIELD TEST FINDING

We found that the Crew Leaders and the children benefited when we assigned assistant Crew Leaders to children who were more active or who had difficulty staying with their Crews. Assistant Crew Leaders can be trained high schoolers or middle schoolers.



• **We're 3 years old.** We've just learned how to play together, and we're still learning how to share and take turns. It may be a little hard for us to change from one activity to the next, so give us plenty of warning ahead of time. We're generally happy and sometimes even silly, but we may be a little shy about trying new things. We enjoy playing games that involve moving and jumping around, but we may tire more quickly than our older playmates.



• **We're 4 years old.** We're full of imagination and excitement. We love to use our imaginations in make-believe play and art activities. We like to use loud voices and big movements. You may need to remind us when it's time to play quietly in Juneau's Puppy Playhouse. We enjoy listening to Bible adventures and answering interesting questions such as "What do you think God's voice sounds like?"



• **We're 5 years old.** We love to help our Crew Leaders and our other leaders. If you notice us helping, please tell us thank you. We're proud of the things we can do, but we're also sensitive. Other children may hurt our feelings by blurting out reactions to things we do. We're improving in our coordination. We can cut with scissors and color between the lines. We're also pretty good at throwing and catching balls.

Preschoolers travel through every experience at True North with their special Crews. These small groups become like little families during the week. Pray for God's direction as you and your VBS Director place children and leaders together.

Your Planning Guide

- **Read through this Juneau’s Puppy Playhouse Director Manual.** This director manual contains the information you need to plan and facilitate a wonderful True North experience for preschoolers.

- **Work with the True North Director to determine how you’ll set up your preschool program.**

Option 1: If you have fewer than 20 preschoolers, form Crews and lead the activities yourself, with preschool Crews all visiting each area together. You’ll guide the order in which all Crews do each activity.

Option 2: Recruit a different leader for Craft & Play, Games, and Sticky Scripture—these activities run simultaneously. Those leaders can team up to lead the remaining activities (Exploration Stations, Bible Adventures & Missions, and Closing Circle). Form three groups of Crews, with no more than four Crews in each group, and have groups rotate through the stations. Use the daily schedules on pages 38-42.

Option 3: Recruit a different leader for Exploration Stations, Bible Adventures & Missions, Games, Sticky Scripture, Craft & Play, and Closing Circle. Form three groups of Crews, with no more than four Crews in each group. Then have groups of Crews rotate through the stations. Use the daily schedules on pages 38-42. If you have more than 12 preschool Crews, consider setting up two of each station to keep the station sizes manageable.

No matter which option you choose, the Tundra Treats Leader will serve as a leader for both preschool *and* elementary Crews.

- **Look through the leader manual for each preschool station.** Some areas, such as Games, Exploration Stations, and Craft & Play, contain a variety of activities for you to choose from. You can set up all the activities or just a few. Work with each Station Leader to choose the ones that work best for your kids.
- **Help preschool Station Leaders gather the supplies they’ll need for the activities they’ve chosen.** Meet with the True North Director to go over the supply lists. Let the Director know what supplies you have or can collect on your own and what supplies you’ll need to collect from church members or purchase. Some supplies are the same ones that elementary kids use. Open communication will make your job easier!

COMPASS CLUE

Since all preschoolers visit Bible Adventures & Missions together, be sure to recruit an extra Bible Adventures & Missions Leader if you have more than 20 children. Larger groups of preschoolers can be hard to manage, even with the assistance of Crew Leaders.



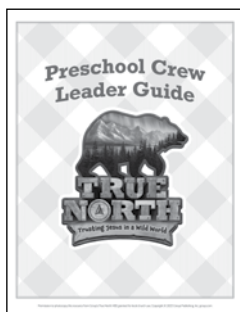
- **Recruit Crew Leaders for your preschoolers, with the help of your Director.** A Crew Leader can be anyone, from a high school student to a senior citizen. Crew Leaders just need to love the Lord and love children. Although they don't have to prepare anything, their presence, attentiveness, love, and guidance form the backbone of your program. Recruit one Crew Leader for every three to five preschoolers.
- **Provide Crew Leaders with valuable resources to help them feel confident about their role.** A Preschool Crew Leader Guide PDF is available on the True North Clip Art & Resources CD. The Crew Leader Guide is filled with helpful tips and guidelines that will make your Crew Leaders the best ever! This PDF is customizable so you can even add special instructions and notes for your VBS week. Meet briefly with your Crew Leaders to go over this information, answer questions, and let them know about their special responsibilities as preschool helpers.
- **Encourage preschool staff to attend the staff training meeting.** They'll learn how True North VBS works and get helpful advice on helping children get the most out of VBS. If leaders can't come to the training, we *highly* recommend that you share the Ultimate Director Go-To Training DVD. This "pass-along" training DVD is filled with practical, helpful tips.
- **Make a large sign for each Crew.** Creative Crew Signs are available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier. Or have Crew Leaders make their own signs at the staff training meeting.
- **Confirm arrangements for preschool registration.** Make sure the registration workers put preschoolers and pre-K children into mixed-age *preschool* Crews—not in with elementary Crews. The activities at Juneau's Puppy Playhouse are designed for children who haven't yet been to kindergarten. Children will *thrive* on these age-appropriate activities and will be much more likely to understand, remember, and apply the Bible truths.

FIELD TEST FINDING

Over the years, we've found our middle-school-age assistant Crew Leaders and our high-school-age Crew Leaders to be very helpful and loving. They interacted well with the preschoolers. However, we discovered that *some* students didn't always know what to do next. When we explained their specific tasks ahead of time or wrote jobs on paper, they were empowered and more focused on their roles. Make sure they attend the leader training session and get a copy of the Preschool Crew Leader Guide to learn some valuable tips on shepherding their Crews.

COMPASS CLUE

We recommend *naming* your preschool Crews (rather than giving them Crew *numbers*) to avoid confusion with elementary Crews. Or simply put a "P" before the numbers to indicate that these are preschool Crews.



Preschool Crew Leader Guide

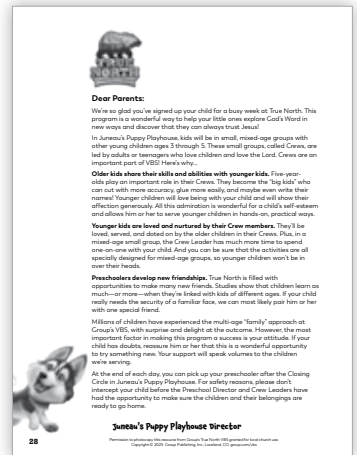


Ultimate Director Go-To Training DVD



Crew Signs

- **Give parents advance information on the benefits of mixed-age Crews.** Some parents may be skeptical about having their children in a combined-age class. (“My 5-year-old won’t want to play with 3-year-olds!” “My 3-year-old will get trampled by all those 5-year-olds!”) Reassure parents that all activities are designed to build relationships, encourage teamwork, and highlight children’s abilities. Make photocopies of the letter on page 28, and give the letter to parents as they register their preschoolers for True North.
- **Have a foolproof plan so preschoolers and their caregivers know that the kids are welcome and safe.** Let helpers check in the children so you will be available to greet kids and guide them to their Crews. Be sure your Crew Leaders arrive and are ready to go at least 30 minutes before your program begins. Releasing preschoolers to parents directly from the preschool Closing Circle helps ensure that no preschoolers get lost.
- **Plan your wardrobe!** Ask your True North Director what you should wear to True North. Adult staff T-shirts (available from group.com or your Group VBS supplier) will help kids identify you and help you identify other Station Leaders.



Parent letter

COMPASS CLUE

Some parents may want their preschoolers to join elementary Crews (with older siblings). Firmly insist that the activities in Juneau’s Puppy Playhouse are the *best* ones for preschoolers. It’s really unfair to elementary kids, Crew Leaders, and even preschoolers to move children into activities that aren’t age appropriate.

Prepping Juneau's Puppy Playhouse

- **Work with your Director to choose a room for Juneau's Puppy Playhouse.** You'll want a fairly large room that you can leave set up all week. If your church has a preschool or kindergarten Sunday school room, you might want to use it. If you're having the children stay in one classroom, simply designate areas of the room for each station.

If you're using different rooms for each Juneau's Puppy Playhouse station, be sure to choose rooms that have easy access to bathrooms and sinks.

- **Make sure all the furniture in each room is child-size.** If it's too big, it can cause accidents. If you can't get child-size tables and chairs, remove the furniture and set up work areas on the floor. (Lengths of cloth taped to the floor work great for this because they indicate special areas for each activity.)
- **If you're having a separate Tundra Treats spot just for preschoolers, set up an eating area in your room or outside.** If you'll be using the tables for other activities, you may want to have children sit on floor mats or pieces of cloth to eat their snack.
- **Find an out-of-the-way place where you can set Craft & Play projects that need to dry, arranging them by Crew.** Then at the end of the day, helpers can round up the projects and deliver them to each Crew Leader to send home with kids.

FIELD TEST FINDING

You don't need much space to set up your Juneau's Puppy Playhouse! At our field tests, we used a large preschool Sunday school room for Exploration Stations, Bible Adventures, Sticky Scripture, and Closing Circle. Then we set up Craft & Play in a classroom next door and took preschoolers outside for Games.



Decorating Your Juneau's Puppy Playhouse

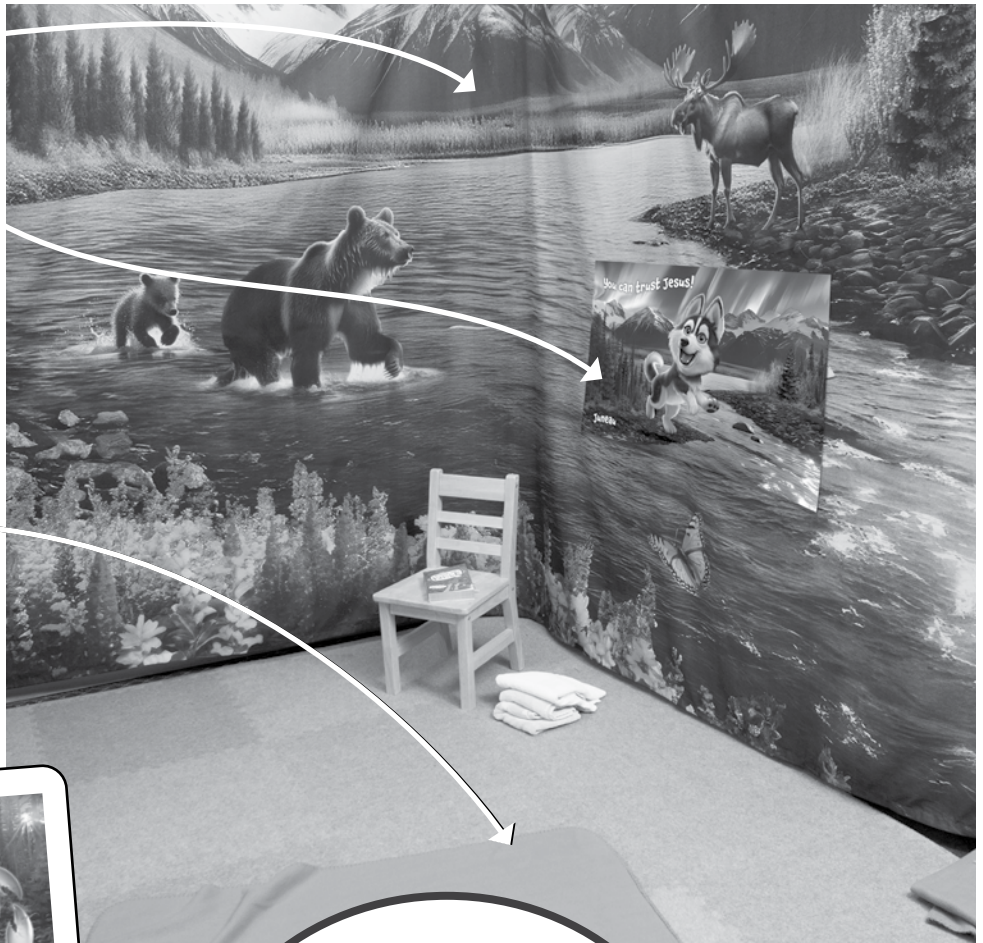
Get ready to take kids into the wild north, where they'll explore mountains, rivers, and sweeping tundra! Connect with your True North Director about who will decorate the Juneau's Puppy Playhouse area—whether that's you or a designated decorating leader.

Hang the Northern Wilderness Fabric Wall Hanging.

Add a poster of your cute preschool Buddy, Juneau!

Head to group.com/vbsTools for mountains of decorating inspiration.

For Bible Adventures, set out a blanket for each Crew to gather on.



Add Mini Buddy Posters for even more friendly faces!



COMPASS CLUE

If your VBS Director bought the Ultimate Starter Kit Plus Digital Edition, you'll have access to digital files of the Sticky Scripture videos and music videos as well as MP3s of the songs that all the True North leaders will be able to use. Otherwise, make sure to buy a second copy of the Sticky Scripture™: Trusting Jesus in a Wild World DVD, a second Sing & Play Peak Music DVD, and enough copies of the Sing & Play Peak Music CD for each Juneau's Puppy Playhouse room.

Basic Supplies

Gather these basic supplies for your Crew Leaders, Station Leaders, and preschoolers. A master list of station supplies is available online at group.com/vbsTools. Supplies are listed for each activity option.

Each Crew Leader will need:

- jump-rope or 10-foot length of soft rope for the Crew to hold on to while traveling to stations
- container of hand sanitizer
- package of tissues
- permanent markers to write children's names on projects and name badges
- wet wipes to clean kids' hands before eating snacks or after making crafts
- Crew bag*

Each preschooler will need:

- Preschool Bible Pack*
- set of 5 Bible Memory Buddies®*
- True North Buddy Pack*
- Watch for God Wristband*
- True North Name Badge*

All Station Leaders will need:

- Sing & Play Peak Music CD*
- media player
- Wilderness Whistle* or other attention-getting device

Bible Adventures Leader will need:

- set of Bible Story Posters*

Sticky Scripture Leader will need:

- Sticky Scripture™: Trusting Jesus in a Wild World DVD*
- TV/DVD player

Exploration Stations/Closing Circle Leader will need:

- Sing & Play Peak Music DVD*
- TV/DVD player
- set of Bible Point Posters* (optional)



Preschool Director Manual

A mountain of smiles for little ones!

This manual includes:

- an easy-to-follow organization guide for setting up your area
- resources for recruiting a team for Juneau's Puppy Playhouse.
- job descriptions for your team
- photocopyable daily schedules
- a helpful parent letter to get families ready to hit the trail with you!

Preschoolers will...



Take part in interactive Bible stories that show what it means to trust Jesus.



Engage all their senses to explore important Bible truths.



Meet a whole pack of new friends!



Questions:

group.com/TrueNorth
800.447.1070

Follow Group VBS on:



group.com/vbs

Group

ISBN 978-1-4707-7744-9



9 781470 777449

VBS Programming



THIS IS A SAMPLE

The number of pages is limited.

Purchase the item for the complete version.

