



A stampede of ideas for planning, preparing, publicizing, and putting on a rip-roarin' VBS!

Director Manual



DIRECTOR MANUAL



YEE-HAW

DIRECTOR MANUAL



LOVELAND, COLORADO
GROUP.COM

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.

Yee-Haw Director Manual

Copyright © 2019, 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.

On the Clip Art & Resources CD, you'll find a handy Permission Release Form to help you use various pieces of art and content within this program without having to first contact Group Publishing to obtain permission. You may print out this form to take to your local bakery, T-shirt vendor, or office supply store; or to provide as documentation to church administration should they require release verification.

There's no need to return or send the Permission Release Form to Group Publishing, Inc. or to permissions@group.com.

Visit our websites:

group.com ✪ group.com/vbs

Thanks to the herd who rounded up this VBS! Laura Baldwin-Stout, Jody Broisma, Stephen Caine, Shelly Dillon, Jan Kershner, Lyndsay Gerwing, Laycie McClain, Mike Porter, Joani Schultz, Rodney Stewart, and Gabriele Woolever.

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 978-1-4707-7803-3

Printed in the United States of America.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 27 26 25

Contents

Basics

Yee-Haw Overview Chart	6
Introduction to Yee-Haw	8
Your Starter Kit	10
Yee-Haw Resources	11
How This VBS Is Different	12
Stations	15
Crews	17
Preteens and Upper Elementary Kids	20
Middle Schoolers	21
Teenagers	22
Effective for Churches of All Sizes	23

Planning

Planning Calendar	28
When and Where to Have VBS	36
Publicity	37
Publicity Skit	39
Community Flyer	40
Parent Invitation	41
Daily Schedules	42

Recruiting & Staff Training

A Survival Guide to Recruiting	46
Filling Out Your Staff	48
Station Leader Contact Info Chart	51
Job Description Handouts	52
Crew Leader Sign-Ups	59
Staff Training Meeting	61

Registration

Preregistration	70
Setting Up Crews	71
Preparing for Registration Day	75
Registration at Yee-Haw	76
Registration Instructions	77
Age-Level Rosters	78

Elementary Crew Rosters	79
Preschool Crew Rosters	80
Alphabetical Master List	81
Yee-Haw Registration Form	82
Parent Letters	83
Yee-Haw & Beyond	
Helping Children Follow Jesus	86
Health and Safety Concerns	87
Kids With Special Needs	89
Awesome Family Resources	90
Wrapping It Up	91
Evaluating Your Yee-Haw Program.....	92
Volunteer Sign-Up Sheet for 2020	93
Station Leader Evaluation.....	94
Crew Leader Evaluation.....	95

Note: The Director Evaluation is only available online at group.com/Yee-HawEval.

BASICS



YEE-HAW WEEKEND VBS OVERVIEW

At Yee-Haw Weekend VBS, the Bible Point is carefully integrated into each station's activities for unforgettable Bible learning.

DAY 1

ALL AGES GATHER

Moo-sic & More

Learn the Bible Point and Bible verse, meet cowboy Rawhide McSpur, and worship with upbeat songs.



Bible Story:

God sends Jesus to earth. (Luke 2:1-20)



SMALL GROUPS ROTATE

ELEMENTARY

Bible Adventures

Discover that Jesus left the glory of heaven to come to earth as God's greatest gift of all time.



SMALL GROUPS ROTATE

PRESCHOOL

Preschool Bible Adventures

Learn that Jesus, who was born in a stable, is God's gift of love to us.



DAY 2

ALL AGES GATHER

Moo-sic & More

Hear Rawhide sing a silly song, and discover how God sent Jesus to pay for our wrongdoings.



Bible Story:

Jesus dies and comes back to life. (John 16-21)



SMALL GROUPS ROTATE

ELEMENTARY

Bible Adventures

Discover that sin weighs us down like heavy stones, but Jesus took our sins away when he died on the cross and rose again.



SMALL GROUPS ROTATE

PRESCHOOL

Preschool Bible Adventures

Learn that Jesus loves us so much that he died on the cross for our sins, then came back to life to be our friend forever.



ROUND UP THE WHOLE CONGREGATION

- Sing the amazing Yee-Haw songs.
- Encourage Rawhide to share God's gifts with others.
- Celebrate Projects With-a-Purpose.
- Enjoy the Spotlight VBS™ slideshow.



Sunday
Celebration

Bible Point: God gives good gifts.

Bible Verse: "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)



➔ **ALL AGES GATHER**

Projects-With-a-Purpose®

Begin working on a project that shares God's good gifts.

Choose one option:

- Giddyup & Grow Chart
- Heart-y Soup Mix
- Block-a-Roos



Saddle-Up Sports

- Get Along, Little Dogies
- Give and Give
- River Crossing



Closing Corral

Watch a kid-story video, then explore what a big difference we can make when we share God's good gift of love in our world.



Preschool Craft & Play

Choose one option:

- Art Hearts
- Horsin' Around
- Giddyup & Grow Chart



Preschool Games

- Baby on Board
- Hug Hop
- Shake, Shake, Shake



➔ **ALL AGES GATHER**

Projects-With-a-Purpose®

Finish the Giddyup & Grow Charts, Heart-y Soup Mix, or Block-a-Roos; and pray for the people who will receive them.



Saddle-Up Sports

- Silly Sayings
- Stampedel!
- Water You Focused On?



Closing Corral

Watch a kid-story video, then celebrate the joy and surprise of Jesus' resurrection.



Preschool Craft & Play

Choose one option:

- Sprinkle Crosses
- Joyful Faces
- Surprised by Love



Preschool Games

- High in the Sky
- Forgiveness Tag
- Silly Statues



Introduction to Yee-Haw

HAVE YOU HERD?

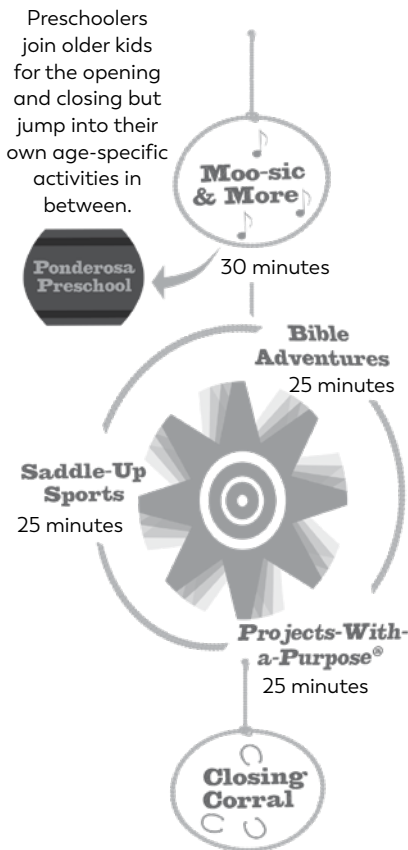
You'll give each Crew a special schedule that shows who goes where. Check out pages 42-44 for photocopyable schedules. Customizable daily schedules are also available on your Yee-Haw Clip Art & Resources CD.

Saddle Up for a Wild Weekend!

At Yee-Haw VBS, kids kick up their heels as they stampede through the wild frontier and celebrate God's good gifts! They'll round up a whole herd of friends and discover that Jesus is God's greatest gift. You'll prepare your Station Leaders to help kids reach out to others with the love of Jesus, all the while stirring up conversation, spurring on friendships, and trailblazing kids toward deeper faith! Get ready for excitement, fun, and the joy of watching kids discover God's greatest gift of love.

If this is your first time using a Group VBS, you probably have a few questions. That's why we've made it extra easy to get started, giving you a snapshot of stuff you need to know right up front.

This Director Manual contains everything you need to plan a successful program, recruit and train volunteers, publicize your program, and follow up with families after the big event. Be sure to visit our Facebook fan page at facebook.com/groupvbs. There you'll find support, ideas, encouragement, and a team of experts ready to answer your questions right away.



Crews

You'll assign kids to Crews—small, mixed-age groups of up to five kids, plus an adult or teenage Crew Leader. Crews travel together for each day's adventure. Please don't be afraid to try the mixed-age method—it really does work! It's a wonderful way to make kids feel at home, and you'll be amazed at the warm relationships that form among Crew members.

Station Rotation

Crews are divided into groups that rotate through stations together. Each station reinforces the daily Bible Point, and rotations give everyone a chance to visit each station. Preschoolers have their own age-appropriate fun and learning in Ponderosa Preschool. But everyone's together for the opening Moo-sic & More and the day's big finish at Closing Corral—an engaging closing time filled with music, drama...and a little humor, too!

Sunday Celebration

After exploring God's greatest gift, it's time for your kids to share what they've learned in a powerful segment we call Sunday Celebration! We've made it super simple—your Moo-sic & More Leader will simply follow the script in the Moo-sic & More Leader Manual. In just a short time, adults can experience the music, watch a fun slideshow, and hear about the special service project. You'll have congregation members praising along with the kids!

Frequently Asked Questions

* **Our VBS is small; do I need a different teacher for each of the stations?**

Nope! If you have fewer than 25 children at your VBS, have all the Crews rotate through stations together. That way, the Station Leaders teach their material just once per day and would be able to handle several stations.

* **Our VBS is huge; will Yee-Haw work for us?**

Yup! Larger churches tell us that for up to 75 kids, you can use the program just as written. For each additional 75 kids, just duplicate the stations.

* **Do I have to use multi-age Crews?**

No...but you really do need to try this. It works—we've tested this *thousands* of times in *thousands* of churches. Studies show that children learn as much—or more—when they're linked with kids of different ages. Children help each other, and discipline problems all but disappear, since the fifth-grade boys aren't all trying to impress each other! Still unsure? Visit facebook.com/groupvbs and ask other VBS directors from around the world.

* **What Bible translation does Yee-Haw use?**

We use the New Living Translation (NLT) because it's kid-friendly and easy to understand. Check out Group's *Hands-On Bible*®, specially created to involve kids in Bible learning with cool hands-on Bible activities, Bible biographies, key verse activities, book introductions, and Jesus Connections.

* **If I order items I don't use, can I return them?**

We receive materials prepackaged from our vendors, so we can't process returns of opened or partially used packages. If you find yourself with a few extras, use them as special gift surprises for Sunday school, for siblings of students, or for those who couldn't attend VBS. They won't go to waste!

* **Why do I have to pay for each music CD, streaming card, or download card? Why can't I just make copies of the music?**

- When you purchase a Yee-Haw kit, music CD, or music DVD, Group grants you permission to use the audio recordings, music videos, and lyrics included to conduct an in-person event/program for your church or organization.
- You do not have permission to play the songs in online services/events or to stream the music online. Email permissions@group.com or visit group.com for a web license.
- Unauthorized copying, public performance, and online use of the songs/videos/lyrics is prohibited by law. It is also unlawful to upload the songs/videos/lyrics, or your own recording of the song/video/lyrics, to public facing websites such as YouTube, Facebook, and Vimeo.
- Making your own copies of the songs/videos—even to use at your church—is against the law, which is a fact many people don't know.

For more information, check out the Permissions Guide located in the Digital Download Center. Thanks for demonstrating integrity to the people you serve in how you use this ministry resource.

* **If I have a technical question, who do I call?**

Please call Group's friendly, helpful Product Support team at 800-975-4006.



Your Starter Kit

- * **Yee-Haw Director Manual**—(You’re reading it now!) This manual has all the Weekend VBS info and organizational helps you’ll need!
- * **Yee-Haw Program Resources DVD**—Packed with fun footage, super-simple tips, and a brief overview of Yee-Haw in action, this DVD is great for recruiting and training your staff and getting your congregation excited about VBS. Plus, here’s where your Closing Corral Leader will find the daily DVD segments about real kids who know that God gives good gifts!
- * **6 Leader Manuals**—Leaders will love these easy-to-use resources:
 - Moo-sic & More and Closing Corral
 - Bible Adventures
 - Projects-With-a-Purpose®
 - Saddle-Up Sports
 - Spotlight VBS™
 - Ponderosa Preschool
- * **Moo-sic & More Leader Version 2-CD Set**—Disc 1 includes songs with and without vocals. Disc 2 contains PowerPoint slideshows of all the song lyrics.
- * **Student Materials Sample Pack**—You’ll find a sample of these fun and useful resources: Bible Memory Buddy, “God Gives Good Gifts” Wristband, Follow-Up Foto Frame™, and Yee-Haw name badge.
- * **Projects-With-a-Purpose® Info**—Choose from three projects that give kids the chance to giddyup into meaningful service projects in your church or your community!

HAVE YOU HERD?

Because many of the churches that use Group’s VBS programs have the same person lead the opening Moo-sic & More station and the final Closing Corral station, we’ve combined the material for both stations in one easy-to-use leader manual. The pages are perforated, so if you have a different leader for each station, just tear out the Closing Corral section for each day and hand it off to that volunteer.

WHERE DO I FIND...?

Looking for the master supply list? Want to know where to find valuable station resources for Bible Adventures? Just go to group.com/vbsTools and look in Updates/Resources for “Yee-Haw VBS Resource List.”



Yee-Haw Resources

Bible Memory Buddies®

Kids will love these Bible Memory Buddies! They feature the key Bible verse, John 3:16, to remind kids of God's greatest gift—Jesus. Kids can wear their Bible Memory Buddies on their Yee-Haw Carabiners to keep them from getting lost.

On the first day of VBS, the Projects-With-a-Purpose Leader will distribute these keepsakes to Crew Leaders, who will hand them to children with a heartfelt affirmation. Preschoolers will get these at the end of their Bible adventure on the last day of VBS.



“God Gives Good Gifts” Wristbands

Also during Projects-With-a-Purpose, your kids will receive these cool, colorful wristbands to keep. These are great reminders to watch for God's good gifts all around!



Yee-Haw Clip Art & Resources CD

The Yee-Haw Clip Art & Resources CD is loaded with many helpful tools and resources, such as editable forms, program helps, and publicity, plus the fun Yee-Haw-themed clip art. It also includes the printable Crew Leader Guides containing practical information for all your Crew Leaders.

Decorations to Set the Scenery

The Sky and Weathered Wood Plastic Backdrops set the theme of an exciting frontier environment. You can decorate as wild or mild as you'd like—the choice is yours. Consider recruiting a decoration coordinator who can help Station Leaders and set an overall open-range tone for your VBS. Each leader manual includes tips for decorating that station area, and the Yee-Haw VBS catalog provides plenty of themed decorations and other resources to create a setting that kids will be excited to see.



How This VBS Is Different

Understanding the Advantages

It may seem that all VBS programs are alike. But take a closer look, and you'll see why Group's VBS is the most effective VBS there is. Knowing and understanding these distinctions will help you present Yee-Haw VBS to your church or committee.

Volunteer-Friendly

Volunteers are the heart of any ministry. They're more than warm bodies filling a role—they're the smiles, the prayers, the handshakes, the hugs. Yee-Haw was intentionally designed to make it easy on your volunteers. You need them for only two sessions, there's little prep or planning, and everyone can serve out of his or her gifts and abilities.

Easy-to-Learn Bible Truths

At Yee-Haw, kids learn one important Bible Point: **GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS**. Instead of trying to teach kids more than they can remember or apply, Yee-Haw focuses on *one* key biblical concept. The Bible Point is reinforced by the key Bible verse—"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16)—and through Bible Adventures, songs, and hands-on activities that help kids know Jesus is God's greatest gift of all. Kids who attend your church regularly will enjoy exploring God's Word in fresh, new ways. And neighborhood kids who come to your VBS will experience Bible truths perhaps for the first time.



FIELD TEST FINDING

Don't overlook the impact this program can have on teenagers and adults. Learners of all ages benefit from the active, fresh Bible Adventures presentations at Yee-Haw. We've heard from youth and adults who said their hearts were touched, lives were changed, and faith was renewed after experiencing these Bible truths in such new ways!

Different Learning Styles

At Yee-Haw, kids learn the way they learn best. Not all kids learn the same way, so Yee-Haw offers several stations to meet the needs of all kinds of learners. Children will come away from VBS each day remembering the Bible Point because each child will pick it up in a way that matches his or her learning style.

- * **Moo-sic & More** songs and motions will teach the Bible Point to your **musical learners**. It's where kids worship God with gusto!
- * **Saddle-Up Sports** and **Bible Adventures** allow **kinesthetic (physical) learners** to wiggle and move as they explore the Bible Point in active ways.
- * **Projects-With-a-Purpose** allows **interpersonal learners** the opportunity to explore God's love as they create special gifts for others.
- * **Closing Corral** includes dramatic and interactive programs to help **linguistic** and **visual learners** remember the Bible Point and Bible verse.

- * **Leaders at every station** ask meaningful, thought-provoking questions that encourage **logical learners** and **introspective learners** to think about and apply the Bible Point.

Different Teaching Strengths

At Yee-Haw, teachers teach the way they teach best. Instead of forcing every teacher to teach the same material, Yee-Haw provides opportunities for you to place a variety of teachers in the roles that best suit them. Have a great drama leader in your congregation? Recruit that person to lead Bible Adventures. Have someone who enjoys sports? Recruit that person to lead Saddle-Up Sports. Because each station is different, teachers can volunteer in their areas of expertise. And volunteers who are intimidated by the idea of teaching a large group can join your staff as Crew Leaders.

Interconnected Lessons

At Yee-Haw, no activity stands alone. Instead of leading independent, isolated classes, Station Leaders see all the kids each day. Moo-sic & More songs play in the background during other activities. Kids serve by making memorable project creations during Projects-With-a-Purpose, and those projects are presented and blessed during your Sunday Celebration segment. Station Leaders assist with Spotlight VBS photos. Each member of your team provides a unique and important part of kids' total VBS experience.

Learning Together

At Yee-Haw, everyone works together. Because elementary kids travel in small, mixed-age Crews, big kids and little kids learn to work together. Instead of trying to compete with children their own age, older children help younger children during Projects-With-a-Purpose and Saddle-Up Sports. Younger children spark older children's imaginations during Bible Adventures and Closing Corral.

Each Crew also has an adult or teenage Crew Leader. Crew Leaders aren't teachers; they're simply part of Crew families. Crew Leaders participate in all the activities and encourage kids to talk about and apply what they're learning. Crew Leaders put God's love into action!



FIELD TEST FINDING

"Can't I just create Crews of first- and second-graders, third- and fourth-graders, and so on?" Well, you could—but many years of experience has shown our team that this is *always* a bad idea. This VBS program is designed to succeed with kids of all ages working together. It's an amazing experience for kids—and adults! By forming age-graded Crews, you create problems and rob kids of a new and memorable experience.



HAVE YOU HERD?

Where is competition creeping into your VBS? We've seen churches turn worship (who can sing the loudest), missions (who can bring in the most money), outreach (who can bring the most visitors), and even God's Word (who can learn the most Bible verses) into a competition. We urge you to think *carefully* before assuming that competition is the best motivator. How did Jesus motivate his followers? How can we fashion our ministry after that of Jesus?

Cooperation, Not Competition

At Yee-Haw, you'll have highly competitive kids and kids who hate competing, athletic kids and sedentary kids, kids who are used to winning and kids who have never once crossed the finish line first. That means you'll have to help your kids break the "competition habit." Whether it's games, singing, devotions, or mission offerings, your goal is for kids to work *with* one another, not *against* one another. It's a new concept for some of your kids. These quick tips will help.

- * **Remember, relationships first.** The purpose of Yee-Haw is to help kids grow in their faith and to encourage healthy relationships. Ten years from now, nobody will remember who won the relay race or who brought more kids to VBS, but friendships made at Yee-Haw can continue to be a blessing.
- * **Create an environment in which everyone succeeds.** Why create a competitive environment that ensures someone will walk away a loser? You may be used to having kids earn prizes for Bible memory, but consider how a visitor might feel if he or she doesn't earn the prize. Are "boys versus girls" penny drives usually part of your VBS? Think about having a mission project where you can celebrate everyone's achievements.
- * **Don't allow put-downs.** Set this as a clear expectation, and enforce it. Your kids will grow in their faith as they see that cooperation, not competition, creates a servant heart.
- * **Applaud effort, not accomplishment.** Encourage constantly. Be lavish with applause. Make it fun for kids to try new things, even if they fail. Build kids up!
- * **Check your own "competition meter."** Do you get caught up in competition? love winning at all costs? If so, realize that you must model cooperation if you expect kids to do it. The cooperative spirit of your VBS begins with you.
- * **Pray, pray, pray.** Pray that God will use your VBS to draw kids and their leaders closer to him and to one another.

Love in Action

It's great to *talk* about sharing God's love, but we wanted to give kids the opportunity to actually *do* just that! That's where Projects-With-a-Purpose comes in. Instead of making craft projects for themselves, kids at Yee-Haw will spend two days working on one big project that they'll give away...and you get to choose where it goes! One option will be a special project for the staff or families of your church; the second and third options are designed for distribution in your community. You can choose which option best fits your church. The easy-to-follow instructions are included in the Projects-With-a-Purpose Leader Manual.

Stations

Elementary Station Rotations

At Yee-Haw, there are five elementary stations, each staffed by an adult leader. Each station features a different Bible-learning activity. Moo-sic & More and Closing Corral accommodate all the Yee-Haw participants simultaneously. Kids will visit other stations in smaller groups. Here's what kids learn at each station.

Moo-sic & More

- * The Moo-sic & More Leader introduces the Bible Point and key Bible verse.
- * He or she does a skit with Rawhide McSpur, an accident-prone cowboy, that reinforces the Bible Point in an entertaining, captivating way.
- * Kids learn all the fun motions to the great Yee-Haw songs—and every song reinforces Bible learning!

Bible Adventures

- * Kids experience the daily Bible story in a hands-on way. For example, on the first day, kids mosey through interactive experiences where they'll learn why Jesus' birth changed the world.
- * Crew Leaders guide small-group discussions in which kids connect their unforgettable Bible experiences to real life.

Projects-With-a-Purpose®

- * Kids create a meaningful project to give away. You'll work with the Projects-With-a-Purpose Leader to determine which of the three options will work best for your church.
- * On Day 1, the Projects-With-a-Purpose Leader gives each child a Bible Memory Buddy to take home. This fun collectible features the key Bible verse, John 3:16.

Saddle-Up Sports

- * Kids play frontier-life-inspired games that connect with the Bible Point.
- * Each day there are three game options to choose from—high, medium, and low energy.

Closing Corral

- * Kids sing the Yee-Haw songs they've learned that day.
- * Kids watch a special daily DVD segment that will inspire hearts to look for and be "wowed" by God's good gifts all around.
- * The Closing Corral Leader uses drama experiences and engaging object lessons to help kids apply what they've learned throughout the day.



Preschool Station Rotations

Preschoolers (children ages 3 through 5 who haven't yet finished kindergarten) have a special Yee-Haw program of their own: Ponderosa Preschool! Little ones join the older kids for opening and closing activities each day, and in between, they enjoy fun, age-appropriate Bible-learning activities in their preschool area. Preschoolers also receive a Bible Memory Buddy. After all, life-application and Scripture memory are for everyone!

The Ponderosa Preschool Leader Manual contains complete instructions for the following areas for preschoolers:

- * **Bible Adventures**—Each day, preschoolers experience an exciting Bible adventure in eye-catching, multisensory ways.
- * **Games**—Children continue their discoveries and work off some energy during games. These fun, energetic, and cooperative activities reinforce the daily Bible Point and Bible story in exciting, memorable ways.
- * **Craft & Play**—Preschoolers explore the Bible story and Bible Point with all five senses as they craft colorful creations! You'll find several options for each day, including ways for preschoolers to participate in the same service projects as elementary kids do.



Spotlight VBS™

Each day, your Spotlight VBS Leader (the photographer) will capture shots of kids enjoying the games, singing, and doing service projects. Other shots can let kids get a bit more “hammy”! Then the Spotlight VBS Leader has until the Sunday Celebration to copy the photos from the camera to the computer and insert them into a special slideshow. The software files to create the Spotlight shows are now available online in three formats—as PDF, PowerPoint, and ProPresenter files—that you can copy to a flash drive and use anywhere you have a laptop or desktop computer. Just go to group.com/vbsTools. At the Sunday Celebration, kids are tickled to see themselves on the big screen, and everyone will enjoy a unique review and celebration of Yee-Haw VBS!

HAVE YOU HERD?

You may be tempted to have little ones rotate through the elementary-age stations. Before you choose this option, please remember that early-childhood-education experts designed the field-tested activities in Ponderosa Preschool just for preschoolers! The activities in the elementary stations were designed for—and tested by—elementary-age kids. Be sure to provide an age-appropriate program for children who have not yet attended kindergarten. Remember, when you put preschoolers into elementary Crews, little ones struggle unnecessarily, and your Crew Leaders have to work harder, too.

Crews

Building Special Relationships

As you set up Yee-Haw, you'll assign kids to Crews. Elementary Crews are for kids who have *completed* kindergarten through the fifth grade. Preschool Crews are for kids ages 3 through 5 (or who have not yet completed kindergarten).

Crews consist of three to five children and an adult or teenage Crew Leader. If possible, each Crew should have one child from each age level. "The Crew Family" (p. 19) highlights the unique contribution children from each age level can make to a Crew. Detailed instructions for setting up Crews begin on page 71. Qualifications for Crew Leaders are listed on page 49.

On Day 1, kids report to their Crews right away to start getting acquainted. Having small Crews encourages kids to make new friends because Crew members work closely with each other at VBS. They also provide an organizational structure that helps kids progress from station to station in an orderly manner.

The relationship a child develops with his or her Crew Leader can be a long-lasting, important one! Because each Crew Leader is responsible for only a small group of kids, it's easier for him or her to give attention to each member of the Crew. Be sure to include Crew Leaders in your staff training meeting. Helpful Crew Leader Guides are available on the Yee-Haw Clip Art & Resources CD to download and print out; they've been specially designed to make relationship-building easy and effective for your volunteers.

Working With Mixed-Age Crews

You may be skeptical about placing kids in mixed-age groups. After all, that's probably not how your other children's ministry functions are structured. And the school system is set up to be age-graded, too. So why should you shake things up and try combining ages? Here's why!

- * **Combined-age Crews encourage teamwork rather than competition.** When kids are grouped in age-graded classes, there's more emphasis on comparison ("I can do it better!") and competition ("I can do it faster!"). However, by placing children in mixed-age Crews, you nearly eliminate the unspoken desire for kids to compare or compete. Instead, older kids help younger ones with challenging tasks. Younger kids seek to emulate the older, "cool" kids in their Crews.



FIELD TEST FINDING

Try to structure your Crews so they contain no more than five members. Through field-testing and customer feedback, we've discovered that larger Crews can get unmanageable and become a frustration for the Crew Leaders—and the kids. Smaller Crews maximize important relationship-building time in the Crew.



FIELD TEST FINDING

"The older kids at my church like being with their friends. They'll complain if they have to be with the 'little' kids." Many people are hesitant to try combined-age groups because they're afraid kids will balk at something new. You can let kids partner with same-age friends if they're really reluctant. But year after year at our field tests, we discover that kids enjoy being in combined-age Crews. Sure, it's a little different at first, but as kids warm up to their crewmates, you'll see them working together, helping one another, and forming unique friendships.

- * **Combined-age Crews reduce discipline problems.** Now, we love kids of all ages, but there’s something intimidating about that group of all fifth-grade boys! But when you split up that daunting bunch of preteen kids, they suddenly lose their “audience” (that is, one another), and your discipline problems nearly vanish. You’ll get the same delightful effect when you split up middle-elementary cliques, some siblings, and other “troublesome twosomes.” It works!
- * **Combined-age Crews encourage new relationships.** By mixing ages to form small groups, you provide a rare opportunity for kids of all ages to get to know one another. Most same-age kids in your community are with one another during school, sports, and other children’s ministry functions. Multi-age Crews give kids the chance to interact and build meaningful relationships with new friends.
- * **Combined-age Crews are easier to work with.** Your Crew Leaders will love how easy it is to work with kids of mixed ages. Rather than trying to assist a group of 6-year-olds with a task, a Crew Leader can give one-on-one attention to one 6-year-old. And (believe it or not) older kids will relish their helping roles as they lead with their strengths.

There are countless reasons mixed-age Crews truly are more effective than age-graded Crews. It really works! But don’t just take our word for it—visit our Facebook fan page at facebook.com/groupvbs, and ask other directors who have tried this method and succeeded. We’ve created photocopyable parent information letters on pages 83 and 84. Keep several copies on hand to help parents understand why you’re setting up your VBS program this way.

Crew Roles

At Yee-Haw, elementary kids have important roles in their Crew. During Moo-sic & More on Day 1, each child chooses a Crew job that he or she will do at VBS that day. Each Crew will have a Guide, who chooses action ideas for traveling through Yee-Haw; a Materials Manager, who distributes and collects supplies and helps carry the Crew’s bag; a Prayer Person, who leads or opens prayer times; a Schedule Supervisor, who helps monitor the daily schedule; and a Thank You-er, who leads the Crew in thanking Station Leaders each day. If Crews have fewer than five kids, some kids may have more than one job. On Day 2, kids can choose a different job.

Each year, Crew Leaders who participate in our field tests say they’re surprised what a big deal these jobs are for kids. Touch base with the Moo-sic & More Leader to remind him or her to allow time for children to choose their roles each day. Although this process is written into the Moo-sic & More Leader instructions, it’s good to double-check and be sure the leader understands the importance of the Crew roles.

The Crew Family

Every member of your mixed-age Crew adds something to every activity!

I've just completed third grade.

I'm a unique and important part of my Crew because I like to be challenged. I can help younger members of my Crew with challenging projects.

I've just completed fifth grade.

I'm a unique and important part of my Crew because I like to make choices. I can help younger Crew members with tasks and help the Crew Leader guide everyone in showing Jesus' love.

I've just completed fourth grade.

I'm a unique and important part of my Crew because I like to ask questions. I can help my Crew ask questions to make sure we understand what we're learning.

I've just completed kindergarten.

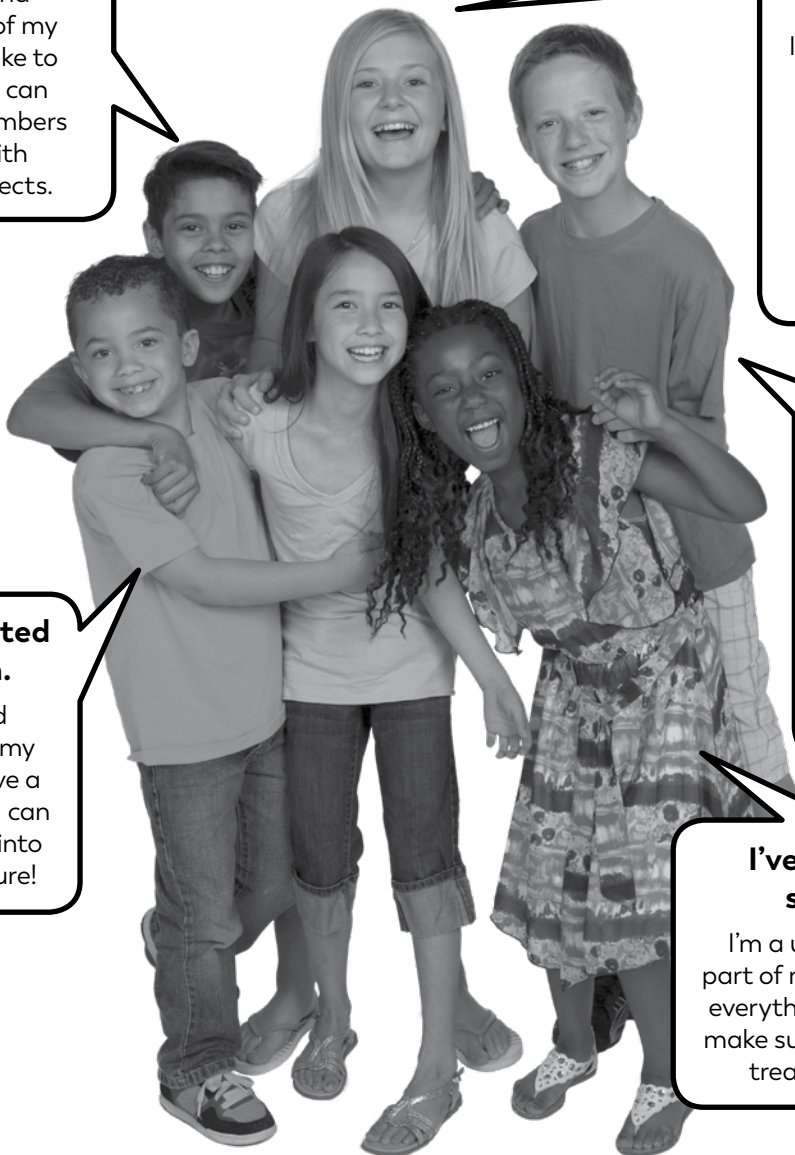
I'm a unique and important part of my Crew because I have a great imagination. I can help my Crew dive into each Bible adventure!

I've just completed second grade.

I'm a unique and important part of my Crew because I want everything to be fair. I can help make sure we all take turns and treat one another fairly.

I've just completed first grade.

I'm a unique and important part of my Crew because I like to be the best. I can help encourage my Crew to be the best it can be.



Preteens and Upper Elementary Kids

Want to know the secret to reaching preteens? Involve them in Yee-Haw! Preteens are that in-between age—10, 11, and 12—who haven't started middle school. Some churches feel like their preteen kids are “too cool” for VBS...but that's not the case with *this* program. What's so different about Yee-Haw?

- * **Yee-Haw gives preteens responsibility.** Crew roles allow each preteen to have a special job every day at Yee-Haw. That sense of responsibility fits with your preteen kids' increasing desire for control and independence...within the safe relationship of a Crew.
- * **Yee-Haw keeps preteens moving.** Since kids are moving from station to station about every 25 minutes, there's no time for kids (of any age) to get bored.
- * **Yee-Haw allows preteens to discuss and think.** Instead of answering closed-ended questions (“Where did Joseph's brothers throw Joseph?”), kids at Yee-Haw respond to thought-provoking questions (“What are some worse things that could have happened to Joseph—but didn't?”). Preteens who like to think outside the box will love pondering, sharing, and digging deeper into Bible truths.
- * **Yee-Haw lets preteens shine.** Crew “families” give your preteens a moment to shine as the older, cooler kids that younger kids emulate. And year after year, we watch preteens glow in that role! Whether tying shoelaces for a first-grader or helping a second-grader with a game, preteens *love* getting to help out and shine with their abilities.
- * **Yee-Haw gives preteens the chance to be kids.** Face it, kids are getting older younger. Any opportunity you can give preteens to act like kids (which they are) is a good one. Give them the chance to play games, make crafts, imagine, create, and learn alongside younger kids. Those opportunities will be quickly vanishing, so make this one count.

If you create a program just for preteens, chances are they'll miss out on these unique experiences. We've watched kids at field tests, and we've heard so many stories from VBS directors like you. Preteens thrive in the mixed-age Crews. Try it—it really works!

Middle Schoolers

Many churches are unsure how to handle middle school kids; they seem too old for some children's ministry programs and too young for youth group. At Yee-Haw, middle school kids can fill a number of roles. (In fact, middle schoolers at our field test reported that they loved helping because it gave them the chance to be adults *and* kids.) Check out the following options to find the perfect fit for your middle schoolers.

- * **Have them join Crews as assistant Crew Leaders.** Many middle schoolers are ready for simple leadership roles, but they still enjoy participating in activities such as games, crafts, and biblical dramas. As assistant Crew Leaders, they can help their Crew Leaders by keeping kids together or working with younger children during Projects-With-a-Purpose.
- * **They can become assistant Station Leaders.** Your middle schoolers are developing their gifts and talents and are discovering the things they excel at and enjoy. Being an assistant Station Leader is a great way to encourage kids toward this discovery. Do you know an older child who's developing a love for drama and storytelling? Use him or her as an assistant Closing Corral Leader or an assistant Bible Adventures Leader. What about a child who enjoys sports and other athletic activities? Ask him or her to be an assistant Saddle-Up Sports Leader. Your Station Leaders will appreciate the extra help, and older kids will enjoy the added responsibility.
- * **Let them help with preschool registration.** Some middle schoolers are nurturing and caring—great qualities for helping preschoolers find their way at Yee-Haw. Have a few middle schoolers available to act as guides, helping preschoolers find their Crew Leaders, showing preschoolers the restrooms, or playing with shy children to get them accustomed to the Ponderosa Preschool area.
- * **Create a sing-along team.** Older children (who might normally hesitate to sing and move to music) will enjoy teaching song motions and leading younger children in Moo-sic & More. Ask a group of middle school kids to work with the Moo-sic & More Leader to learn the words and motions to all the Yee-Haw songs. The sing-along team will add visual excitement and energy to your singing time.

Middle schoolers have so much to offer (and gain from) your program! The more these kids are involved in your program, the more opportunities you have to touch their lives.



FIELD TEST FINDING

It's important that middle school kids understand the specifics of their jobs. Over the years, we've found it's not a great idea to have middle schoolers just hanging around as "helpers." When we gave them specific roles, such as assistant Projects-With-a-Purpose Leader, they did super jobs to help us out!

Teenagers



Teenagers have an important role in making Yee-Haw a success! Use the following suggestions to involve teenagers in your program.

- * **Have them act as Crew Leaders.** Many young adults have younger siblings or baby-sit frequently and are comfortable working with children. Young adults will have a great time leading their Crews—and will love how easy it is. (Teenagers will actually get as much out of the Bible stories and discussions as the young children will!) We've heard so many stories of how teenagers' lives were touched by past VBS programs. Young adults who volunteered had such a great time and were so moved by the Bible experiences that they made life-changing decisions!
- * **Let teenagers help with registration.** Many young people have excellent organizational skills. These young people enjoy forming Crews, greeting children, and helping kids find their Crew Leaders. (These helpers make a great first impression for adults as well as kids.) On the second day, your registration helpers can register newcomers or fill in for Crew Leaders who are absent.
- * **Have qualified teenagers run your sound system or act as Spotlight VBS photographers.** Some high school drama programs train young people to run sound, lighting, and video equipment. These teenagers make excellent Yee-Haw technical staff members.
- * **Ask teenagers to lend a hand with dramas.** Teenagers with dramatic flair enjoy participating in Moo-sic & More.
- * **If your church's youth group has a choir or worship band, let them help with Moo-sic & More and Closing Corral.** Kids at Yee-Haw love singing with the "big kids," and young adults will never have a more receptive and friendly audience. Your Station Leaders will enjoy the extra backup and enthusiasm. You'll see teenagers learn and grow right along with the children!

There are countless ways to involve youth in Yee-Haw. Remember to give teenagers plenty of direction and input, since they may not be as experienced as some of your adult staff. Just let teenagers find roles where their gifts, talents, or interests lead them. You'll be surprised at how committed and enthusiastic these young volunteers are.

Effective for Churches of All Sizes

Small VBS

If you have 25 or fewer children, they can all explore the stations together. This means that your Station Leaders will teach their activities only one time. (Station Leaders may find this so easy that they will volunteer to teach more than one station, so you'll have fewer leaders to recruit!) Your daily schedule might look as simple as this:

All Crews (8:30–11:00 a.m.)

Moo-sic & More (8:30–9:00)

Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.

Bible Adventures (9:05–9:30)

Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.

Saddle-Up Sports (9:35–10:00)

Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.

Projects-With-a-Purpose (10:05–10:30)

Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.

Closing Corral (10:35–11:00)



Medium VBS

If you have 26 to 75 kids at Yee-Haw, divide your total number of elementary-age Crews by 3 to form three large groups. These groups will travel to each station following a schedule that looks like this:

Sample Yee-Haw Schedule 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Time	Group A Crews 1-3	Group B Crews 4-6	Group C Crews 7-9	Ponderosa Preschool
6:00-6:30	Moo-sic & More			
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>				
6:35-7:00	Bible Adventures	Projects-With- a-Purpose®	Saddle-Up Sports	Ponderosa Preschool
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>				
7:05-7:30	Projects-With- a-Purpose®	Saddle-Up Sports	Bible Adventures	Ponderosa Preschool
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>				
7:35-8:00	Saddle-Up Sports	Bible Adventures	Projects-With- a-Purpose®	Ponderosa Preschool
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>				
8:05-8:30	Closing Corral			

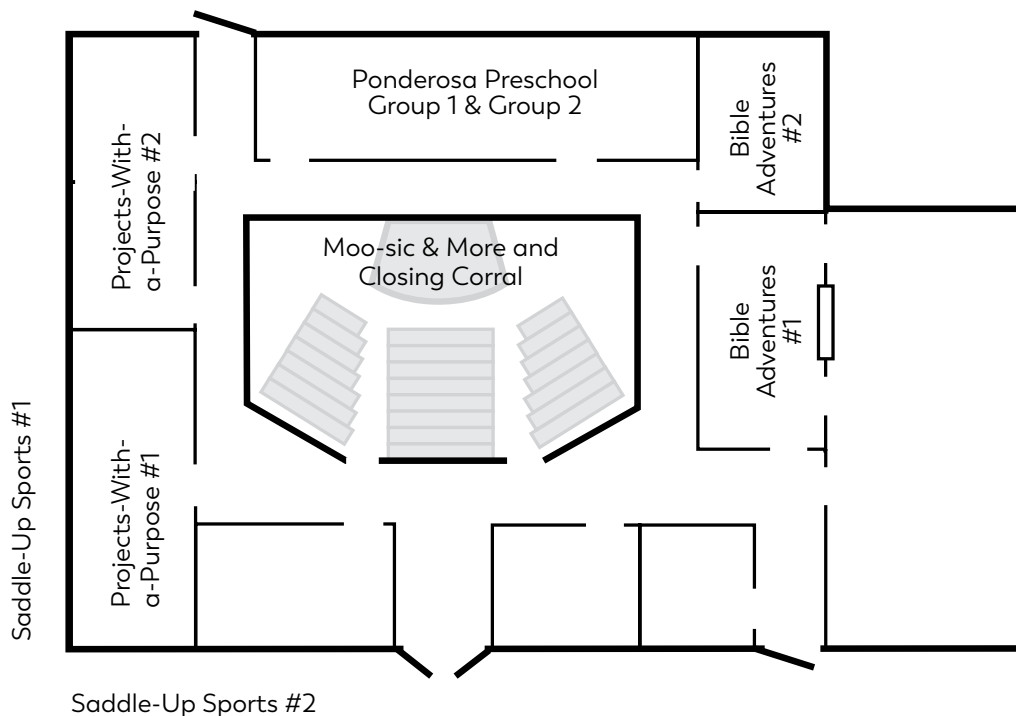
Large VBS

Ideally, you don't want more than five Crews in each station at a time. Station Leaders will have a more successful time working with 25 kids rather than a room crammed with 30-40 wiggly bodies.

If you have more than 75 kids, setting up duplicate stations is the best option—it's easy and really works. If at all possible, place the duplicate stations next to each other. Then when Crews arrive at the stations, Station Leaders can simply direct half of them into each station.

For another large-group option, run a morning and evening program. Simply have participants sign up for the daytime or evening program; then decorate once and run two "shifts."

For duplicate stations, your church might be set up like this:



Divide your total number of elementary-age Crews by 6 to form six large groups. These groups will travel to each station following a schedule that looks like the sample on the next page.

Sample Yee-Haw Schedule 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Time	GROUP A CREWS <i>1-4</i>	GROUP B CREWS <i>5-8</i>	GROUP C CREWS <i>9-12</i>	Ponderosa Preschool
6:00-6:30	Moo-sic & More			
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>				
6:35-7:00	Bible Adventures #1	Projects-With- a-Purpose® #1	Saddle-Up Sports #1	Ponderosa Preschool
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>				
7:05-7:30	Projects-With- a-Purpose® #1	Saddle-Up Sports #1	Bible Adventures #1	Ponderosa Preschool
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>				
7:35-8:00	Saddle-Up Sports #1	Bible Adventures #1	Projects-With- a-Purpose® #1	Ponderosa Preschool
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>				
8:05-8:30	Closing Corral			

Time	GROUP D CREWS <i>13-16</i>	GROUP E CREWS <i>17-20</i>	GROUP F CREWS <i>21-24</i>	Ponderosa Preschool
6:00-6:30	Moo-sic & More			
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>				
6:35-7:00	Bible Adventures #2	Projects-With- a-Purpose® #2	Saddle-Up Sports #2	Ponderosa Preschool
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>				
7:05-7:30	Projects-With- a-Purpose® #2	Saddle-Up Sports #2	Bible Adventures #2	Ponderosa Preschool
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>				
7:35-8:00	Saddle-Up Sports #2	Bible Adventures #2	Projects-With- a-Purpose® #2	Ponderosa Preschool
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>				
8:05-8:30	Closing Corral			

A New Way to do VBS!

Just One Point—Rather than five different Bible Points throughout the week, Group's Weekend VBS focuses on one simple, powerful Point: God gives good gifts!

Projects-With-a-Purpose®—No crafts? Yee-Haw has something even better! Kids share God's goodness by making special gifts for others in their church and community.

Multi-Age—Kids of all ages trailblaze together in Crews with a teenage or adult leader for each day's adventures. It really works, and discipline problems practically disappear.

Powered by Rotation—Crews rotate through stations where they worship and sing, dig into the Bible story, create service projects, and play games that reinforce the Bible Point.

Sunday Celebration—This short, simple service for the whole congregation fits into *any* service. It's designed to let kids share what they've learned at Yee-Haw...while including the church family in all the fun. And since no practice is necessary, your job is a breeze!

Ponderosa Preschool—Preschoolers join the elementary kids for the opening and closing, then enjoy their own age-appropriate Bible-learning activities in between.



group.com/vbs



group.com/YeeHaw



Visit your Group VBS supplier



800.447.1070

Follow Group VBS on:



ISBN 978-1-4707-7803-3



9 781470 778033

VBS PROGRAMMING
Printed in the U.S.A.

Group



THIS IS A SAMPLE

The number of pages is limited.

Purchase the item for the complete version.

