

Children's Ministry Roadmap



Potomac Baptist Church

Fall 2014

Welcome

You hold in your hands a **ROADMAP** for guiding children on their journey with Christ. Now to call our relationship with Christ a “journey” or even an “adventure” is a great understatement. Knowing God and loving Him is life itself! But in seeing our relationship with God like a journey, we can understand the necessity of a roadmap. Without it, you can get really lost!

At PBC, we believe the Bible is God’s ultimate roadmap. There is no other completely trustworthy source of information about God, man, life, and the afterlife. It reveals who God is and how we can get into a right relationship with Him! It equips us for living, points us in the right direction, and prepares us for the journey ahead.



So how important is it that we teach our children how to understand and read God’s roadmap? Can you think of anything more important?

The PBC Children’s Ministry Team would like to partner with parents in guiding our children to know and love the Lord. Our heart’s desire is to see kids decide whole-heartedly to follow Christ. We also want to prepare them for life, equip them for right living, and get them ready for the future. Our motto for CrossTraining has been “Ready for Life!” and it’s what our CM (children’s ministry) is all about.

But HOW can we do all this? Well, our CM is designed to do just that. And getting back to what I said earlier, you hold in your hands a roadmap. Really, it’s a roadmap to THE roadmap! This will help you understand our aims, our programs, our procedures, our curriculum, our leaders ...like a roadmap for helping children love God.

BUT wait! We need your help! We would like every parent who has their children involved in our children’s program to be engaged in the program. We will not be able to go where we want to go without your help. An excellent program requires committed partners, and help is needed in every area. It’s going to be a great adventure. Let’s do this together!

On behalf of the Children’s Ministry Team,

Pastor Scott

Our Aim ...

That our teachers and leaders, in word and deed, would touch the hearts of children with the gospel truth so they might love and fear God, experiencing a close walk with Christ resulting in Christ-like behavior, feelings and attitudes.

Specifically ...

Love

- To encourage kids to love God with all their heart and trust Christ as their Savior.
- To provide a loving community where children can love and be loved.



Respect

- To teach kids to respect each other.
- To help children learn the value of respecting authority represented in both parents and teachers.
- To draw out a teachable spirit in young people that will open their hearts to knowledge and wisdom.

Experience

- To set the expectation that being a Christian is really following Christ in word and deed. True belief in Christ requires obedience.
- To see the Fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, self-control) grow and develop in children's lives.

Truth

- Our children will know and be able to explain the basic gospel message of Christ.
- Our children will have a working knowledge of the scripture (it's message, the main characters, the timeline, and how everything points to Christ).
- Our children will have a Christian worldview that is able to apply biblical truth to real life issues.
- Our children will have a God-centered view of reality, as well as the willingness to lead a God-centered life.

Our Programs

Children's Church - Sunday @ 9:00 AM (elementary age plus 3-5 year olds) This is not just another Sunday School hour! Here children participate and experience a worship service they have helped create themselves. By bringing all our children together during this hour, we hope to build a sense of community between our kids. The service usually includes singing, offering time, interactive activities, a message, and a response time.



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Sunday School - Sunday @ 10:30AM (during the 10:30 main service hour, all ages up to 5th grade). This hour is focused on training and equipping our young men and women with the truth of God's word. Our goal is they would have a foundational understanding of the scripture, know the basic timeline of the events of the Bible as well as the main characters and themes. To accomplish this, we have chosen an excellent curriculum designed by Great Commission Publishers. It is thorough and challenging. The end result we're striving for is that all our kids enter Junior High grounded with a Christian worldview, able to defend their faith and be a witness at school.

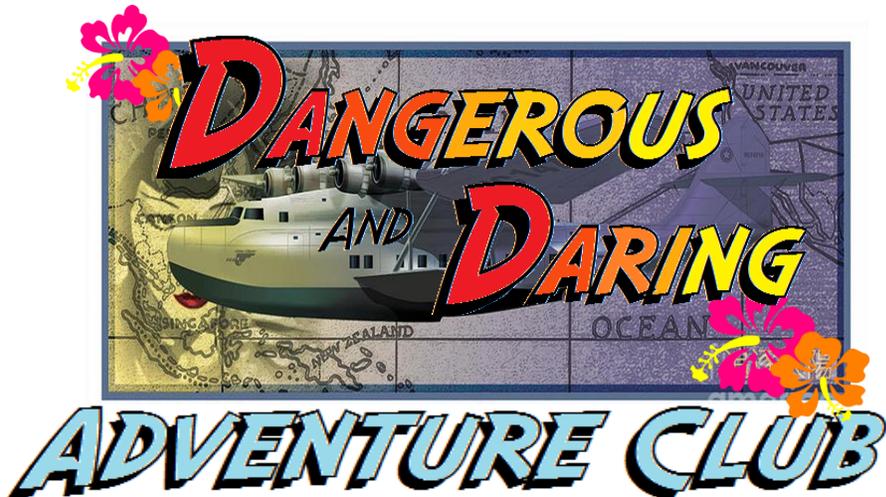
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PureFitKID! - 2 Sundays a month @ 4:30 PM (for upper elementary age kids who are interested in getting a serious workout), led by Ed Santiago, an experienced athletic coach who has prepared many high school athletes to compete in college sports. Along with his wife Brandi and Pastor Scott Hesler, Ed has designed a program for kids to learn how to get in shape both physically and spiritually. This is an intense spiritual mentoring program that uses high energy strength training program as a metaphor for Christian development.

PureFitKID



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DADAC strives to create a fun and adventurous venue for elementary age kids to grow physically, spiritually and in basic life skills. The Dangerous and Daring Adventure Club (DADAC) will pull out the best aspects from programs such as Scouts, Awana, PureFitKID, and CrossTraining. It would be fair to describe DADAC as **a Christ-centered adventure program** loosely based on the books “The Dangerous Book for Boys” and “The Daring Book for Girls”. Our aim is to equip kids with essential life skills that will help them move confidently into the world. The spiritual component is at the heart of the program, as Bible lessons will help mature boys and girls in their faith. The core program will be Wednesday evenings from 7:00 – 8:30PM along with the occasional outings.

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CrossTraining - Date TBD, usually the last week of July. Super Bowl Training Camp (3rd grade - 8th grade - day of Superbowl).

The CrossTraining philosophy combines children with teens and adults putting them in a challenging, high adventure environment in order to teach them spiritual truths. The slogan “Ready for Life” expresses our goal of using rock climbing, caving, rafting, construction, and other outdoor activities to prepare children to walk with God every day of their lives. In addition to being one week in the summer, CrossTraining also sponsors a “Superbowl Training Camp” that uses football as a means of teaching spiritual principles.



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Vacation Bible School - **Date TBD, most likely the end of June (3 years old to rising 8th graders).** This is no canned program. Our VBS team consistently puts on an excellent program that features a live band, fun skits, crafts, games and Bible lessons. Each year a huge, well-organized team of adults put on a memorable week of VBS that has kids singing songs they learned the rest of the year. It's a highlight of the summer not just for the kids, but for the adults that participate as well.

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How to volunteer ...

We want volunteering at PBC to be a “win-win” arrangement ... enjoyable for you and good for the kids. We're praying for 100% involvement of all our parents. This is a partnership. Our CM team does not want to replace parents but empower them. And as more parents own CM programs, the burden gets spread around and we're able to provide the best program possible for our children. No Christian is called to the life of a spectator. We're all participants! Let's dive in together!!

So here's a roadmap to help you get involved...

Roadmap to involvement

1. What age children do you enjoy working with the most? (circle one)

- Nursery
- Toddlers
- Younger Elementary
- Older Elementary



2. What is your primary gift (or the area you'd like to explore)? (circle one)

- Teaching or learning to teach
- Behind the scenes organizing or assisting
- Training using athletics
- Music
- Play (Seriously, some people just can't do this!)
- Leadership (we need more folks on our CM team)
- Food/snack preparation (yep, we Baptists believe in the gift of FOOD!)

3. When you hear the vision of each program, which one stirs something in you? (check one)

Introducing children to worshipping God ... (Children's Worship)

Grounding children in Biblical truth... (Sunday School)

Helping our kids become a tight community of friends who can work together... (TeamKID)

Mentor children using the vehicle of Athletics... (PureFitKID)

Challenge kids to the limits using adventure ... (CrossTraining)

Reach out to kids in the community during the summer ... (VBS)

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Expectations of CM workers...

- That each worker is striving to live out the kingdom of God in their lives. We lead by example.
- That each worker is committed to the spiritual care and nurture, as well as the physical safety of each and every child entrusted to his or her care.
- That each worker prays diligently and prepares faithfully for their ministries, asking the Lord to bless their labors.
- That each worker is committed to the overall purposes of PBC through faithful and regular attendance.
- That each worker arrives on time (15 minutes BEFORE class starts) and demonstrates diligence in ministry.
- That each worker exemplifies a teachable and cooperative spirit with those in the classroom as well as the Children's Ministry leadership team.
- That if you're unable to make it on a Sunday, each worker will find a substitute within their ministry group. If they are still unable to find someone, call our volunteer coordinator.

Classroom Environment

From the moment a child steps into our care to the moment they leave, everything we do should point to Christ. This includes preparation, prayerful attitudes, passion, competence in communicating, and our ability to maintain discipline and mutual respect.



Preparation: Spend the time necessary to work out the lesson/theme in your mind. Come prepared. You will be more relaxed and the kids will certainly enjoy their lessons more.

Prayer: Nothing can replace a teacher or leader who is praying for the souls of those under their care. Take time to bath each child and their family in prayer. Few things will have more impact than this.

Passion: God forgive us for muddling through a lesson half-heartedly. Pray God would help us see the big picture and not lose hope. We all have a bad day once and awhile, and conversely, kids are picking up more than we think they are!

Competence in Communicating: Our children deserve a clear, enthusiastic and genuine presentation of the gospel. Many of the problems in a classroom stem from a teacher who is unprepared and “winging it”.

Discipline: Discipline is necessary because children (like you and me) are inherently selfish. Every human being that has ever lived has made mistakes, had bad attitudes ... and praise God, someone helped us make a “U-turn”. That’s in essence what the word “repentance” means. It means turning around.

And this is what our CM’s discipline policy is designed to do ... help kids make a “U-turn” when they are headed down the wrong path.

Proverbs says that discipline is necessary for instruction.

Proverbs 15:32 *He who neglects discipline despises himself, But he who listens to reproof acquires understanding.*

Proverbs 22:15 *Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of discipline will remove it far from him.*

[At no time is a PBC leader or teacher to spank or otherwise physically discipline a child. This is the role of a parent. The point is, foolishness is innate, maturity is not. Children need discipline and boundaries in order to become mature.]

Let's expect that children will come to us without discipline. That means their most natural response will be to disrespect others and act in immature and selfish ways. That's just how they are wired. But this is where instruction and discipline comes in.

In our classrooms, all children are expected to respect the teacher and the property and person of other classmates. If discipline is compromised, so is the lesson. Chaotic environments will lead to confusion and a bad experience for the children. It cannot be ignored.

So what can we do? Here are some steps we can take to make the classroom safe and enjoyable for everyone.

Listed on the next page are the ways we want teachers to facilitate our "U-Turn" process.



Before we begin the U-Turn process, let's first establish what kind of behavior is unacceptable. We must pick our battles, and reserve firm measures for times when a clear line has been crossed. The behaviors we want to zero in on are:

- Disrespectful behavior to either a teacher or a classmate.
- Flagrant disobedience
- Unsafe or dangerous behavior.

Be patient. In most cases, we will have to train students over time before they become responsive. Remember, this may have to be modified for young children (3's – 5's).



Make eye contact and find out if your directions were clearly understood.
Make it clear what the consequences will be if unacceptable behavior continues.
Seek forgiveness and reconciliation.



Separate the “little offender”, and, making eye contact, let them know that their behavior will have consequences. They have crossed a line.

Give them a “time-out” and make it clear that they are not allowed to disturb the rest of the class. Let them know how long the time-out will last (which will depend on the seriousness of the offense).

Give them a way to “earn” their way back to the group, like being quiet or finishing an assignment.

Demonstrate forgiveness. This means don’t hold their offense against them (God doesn’t hold yours against you once you have sought His forgiveness!).

Welcome them back and encourage them toward obedience.



At this stage it has become imperative that a “U-Turn” is essential if the child is to continue with us. Have a “one on one” with the child, explaining that their repeated disobedience has unfortunately led to the consequence of involving their parents.

Send an assistant to find the child’s parents and notify them of the situation. Speak with the parents about the discipline issue and give them a strategy for helping the child find a pathway back. In some programs like CrossTraining where obedience is a safety issue, the child may be sent home.

Make every effort (phone call, postcard, or note) to contact student during the week to assure them that they will be welcomed next week, and you are expecting the best from them.

Remember: Communicate your rules and expectations regularly so that every student knows what is and what is not acceptable behavior. Mean what you say. Idle threats or warnings that never result in action only encourage further misbehavior. **Children want to know the boundaries.** It provides security for them and the others in your class.

And don’t forget to praise kids regularly for obedience and proper conduct. Catch them doing things right and compliment them.

Guidelines for Security and Safety

- During our ministry programs, children are not allowed to wander around. If you see a child who is not where they should be, approach them or contact their teacher or leader.
- Children should not be allowed to bring any weapons into the church (i.e. pocket knives, guns etc...).
- If you see a stranger wandering around the children’s wing, please approach them or notify a Department Head, an Usher or Pastor.
- Workers must avoid taking a child (other than their own) alone to the restroom. Another adult or another child should accompany them. Remember: “Go in 3’s”.
- Children should have as much privacy as possible. Enter a bathroom stall only when absolutely necessary to assist the child, keeping the door open.

- Physical contact with children should be minimal and only in the presence of other adults. Appropriate touching should be limited to handshakes, high fives or brief hugs.
- Please never send children an email, and keep other social media avenues at a minimum. It's just a little creepy for adults to be contacting kids. Communicate through the parents.
- Activities or outings outside of regularly scheduled classes or childcare must be preapproved by CM team.
- Transportation should be provided by parents and normal policies apply (such as the "Rule of 3s" above) during the entire outing.



Understanding CHILD ABUSE

As defined by "The National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse":

Physical Abuse

Non-accidental injury, which may include beatings, hitting, slapping, pinching, hair pulling, choking, throwing, shoving, violent shaking, human bites, strangulation, suffocation, poisoning or burns. The results may be bruises and welts, broken bones, scars, permanent disfigurement, long-lasting psychological damage, problems in school, fear of adults, serious internal injuries, brain damage or death.

Neglect

The failure to provide a child with basic needs including inadequate hygiene, food, clothing for season or weather, education, shelter and medical care; also abandonment and inadequate supervision. Results can be extreme hunger, dirty or unbathed, and unsuitable clothing for weather.

Sexual Abuse

The sexual exploitation of a child by an older person: as in rape, incest, fondling of the genitals, exhibitionism or pornography. It may be done for the sexual gratification of the older person, out of a need for power or for economic reasons. Results may be fear of a particular person or family member, over compliance or excessive aggression, inappropriate interest or knowledge of sexual acts.

Emotional Maltreatment

A pattern of behavior that attacks a child's emotional development and a sense of self worth, such as constant criticizing, belittling, insulting, yelling, screaming, name-calling, shaming, negative comparisons to others, manipulation; also, providing no love, support or guidance, ignoring, lack of appropriate physical affection (hugs), withdrawal of attention, lack of praise, and a lack of positive reinforcement. Results may be apathy, depression, lack of concentration, eating disorders, and hostility or stress.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

Familiarize yourself with the definitions and descriptions of child abuse listed above.

If you suspect that a child involved in any of the programs of Potomac Baptist Church has been abused, the following steps are to be followed:

- Report the suspected abuse to a member of the PBC Pastoral Staff or, if one is not available, to the Department Head of the ministry under which you are serving.
- Do not interview the child regarding the suspected abuse. Someone familiar with child abuse cases will conduct this.
- Do not discuss the suspected abuse with the other workers, parents, etc... All information regarding the child should be kept confidential with your ministry leader and the proper authorities.
- You will be asked to complete a Suspected Child Abuse Report. Confidentiality will be maintained where possible. This report is to be completed immediately within twenty four (24) hours and given to your ministry leader. Please include the following:
 - Name, address and age of child.
 - Name and address of parent or guardian
 - Nature and extent of abuse or neglect
 - Any evidence of previous abuse
 - Any other information which may be helpful in establishing cause and identity of perpetrator

After a worker has reported the suspected child abuse case, proper steps will be taken to report the suspected abuse to the designated reporting agency.

Important: Please be advised that any violation of the laws of Virginia and/or the policies of PBC as they relate to either sexual or physical abuse will be cause for the following:

1. Criminal and civil prosecution.
2. Suspension from ALL future service involving children.