



HOUSE CHURCH KIDS GUIDE

We have a deep desire for children to see their parents living in community with others in their church and neighborhoods. We want children to see their parents reading the Bible, discussing Scripture, praying together, serving alongside others, and being in community with other believers. We also want children to form friendships with other children in the church, just like their parents are doing.

Seeing our children involved, connected, and growing in House Church is one of the most rewarding aspects of House Church, but it can also be one of the more challenging aspects. Each age and stage of life brings with it different unique challenges. What follows is a simple guide, broken down by age, to help you as the House Church Pastor most effectively navigate the dynamics of kids and House Church. In this guide, you will also find simple kids lessons pulled from our KXP lessons, Family Devos, and Family Resource Wall to help you lead the children in your House Church to know, love, and follow Jesus each week of this semester.



HOUSE CHURCH GOALS FOR KIDS

BIRTH - PRE-K | GOAL: SAFETY AND SANITY

Safety for the kids. Sanity for the parents. In this stage of early childhood, these are the priorities. If parents don't feel like their kids are safe, they will not be engaged. In providing a safe environment for their children, we are serving and ministering to the parents. A lot of times this looks like toddlers staying in the room with the adults and the middle of the floor being their play area. Remember, our kids are an opportunity, not a distraction. This is the message that will need to be conveyed to maintain the sanity of the parents. No one worries about kids causing a disruption like the parent does. As a House Church Pastor, you help set the tone for this. Remember, one of the main wins of our kids in House Church is children seeing their parents invested in biblical community, engaged in Scripture, and connected in prayer. Setting this example can't start early enough. More is caught than taught, and appetites for the things of God are formed early.

KINDERGARTEN - 2ND GRADE | GOAL: DISCOVERY

In this stage, our kids are beginning to discover the truths of who God is through the Truths of His Word. At this age, we can really begin to see the core values of Venture Kids play out in and through House Church. Those core values are to Keep Kids Safe, Make Church Fun, Teach the Truth, and Partner with Families. House Church positions us uniquely to see these core values lived out in unique ways each week. It is important that every week our kids spend some time in Scripture (memory verse helps here) and in prayer. Provide the children in your House Church a chance to share their hearts and prayer requests and pray with and for each other.

3RD - 5TH GRADE | GOAL: ENGAGEMENT

In this stage, we want our kids to engage in what is happening in House Church. This looks like saying the prayer before a meal or closing the night in prayer with the adults in the room. It can look like helping pick up the trash and clean up the toys to ensure that we leave the environment and host home better than we found it. At this stage, they are learning to navigate Scripture, find passages, read them on their own, and even read the Scripture out loud.

6TH-8TH GRADE | GOAL: COMMUNITY

In this stage, we want our kids to continue to grow in the community that they are experiencing in House Church. This age opens a new door for mentor-type relationships that occur in the context of a House Church. House Church members attending ball games and recitals together in support of the kids' interests are powerful and practical ways that this can play out. This is a great age for adults to invest intentionally into the lives of middle schoolers. It is just as important for our middle schoolers to begin investing in those younger than they are as well. The goal is to pour into them, so they can begin to pour into others. This is the stage where multiple adult voices speaking biblical truth to our kids (not just their parents) is so powerful and important.

9TH-12TH GRADE | GOAL: LEADERSHIP

This is the age and stage where we want our high schoolers to lean into more leadership roles - to invest in the younger kids while also being a part of what the adults in House Church are doing. Our students have so much to offer and can encourage both those younger and older than them in so many ways. As a House Church pastor, we want to foster these moments of leadership for our students. Please note that if high schoolers are watching younger kids there should always be another adult present for the safety of all parties.

HOUSE CHURCH FAMILY VALUES

KEEP KIDS SAFE • TEACH THE TRUTH • PARTNER WITH FAMILIES • MAKE CHURCH FUN

KEEP KIDS SAFE

Each House Church is responsible for caring for the children who attend with their families. Most House Churches have a system of rotating adults each week to ensure that the kids are supervised. Supervision looks like two sets of eyes on the kids for the safety of all involved. This time is so great to build and develop relationships among the adults and kids within the House Church. Supervising the children is a great opportunity for the kids' lesson to be delivered if that is what is determined to be best by the House Church Pastor.

TEACH THE TRUTH

Each week kids should hear scripture and participate in prayer. The level of engagement in both will be determined by the age of the child, but it is never too early to begin developing appetites for the things of God and the Truths of His Word. This could take place in a large group setting with the adults in the room, or it could happen with the kids' leaders who have volunteered to watch them. Incorporate the kids in the same environment with the adults as often as possible for the reading of Scripture and prayer.

PARTNER WITH FAMILIES

We are positioned like never before to partner with our families in leading their children to know, love, and follow Jesus. One reason that it is a great practice to have the kids lesson with the adults present is because it gives the House Church Pastor an opportunity to model for our parents how to talk about Scripture with their kids. Never underestimate the power of this example and how much our parents pick up on from watching and listening in these moments. Celebrating milestones in the lives of our kids together as a House Church is also a special and powerful way to build community and partner with families.

MAKE CHURCH FUN

Our desire is for our children to experience friendships with other children in our church, their neighborhoods, and their communities. It is a HUGE win if you hear your child say they had fun! Playing is a major part of this, so we want to encourage our kids to have fun together while at House Church. Remember, partnered adult supervision is the best practice, so this playtime doesn't have to be a "free for all." Adults engage with the kids in play as well. Activities like kickball, jump rope, sidewalk chalk, or cornhole are just some simple but great examples of what play could look like at House Church.



SEMESTER OVERVIEW

The following passage in Deuteronomy gives us a pattern that helps us relate the Word of God to our everyday lives. We are to love God, to think about His commandments, to teach those commandments to our children, and to live each day by the guidelines in His Word. God emphasized the importance of parents teaching the Bible to their children.

House Church provides us with a unique environment to partner with families on this journey together.

The conversation around the scripture each week is not just for the kids. As the House Church Pastor,

you can cast a vision that encourages adults to lean in during this time.

- Encourage the kids to bring their Bibles and have the adults help them find the passages.
- Utilize the conversational content that you will be provided each week.
- Engage in prayer WITH and FOR the children in your House Church.

This passage reminds us that God's design is for the home to be the primary place for discipleship to take place in the lives of our children! Our prayer is that as a House Church family, we will sharpen and encourage each other along the way!

KEY VERSES

Deuteronomy 6:5-9 – “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and gates.”

Matthew 22:35-39 – “One of them [a Pharisee], an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’ Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

REFLECTION:

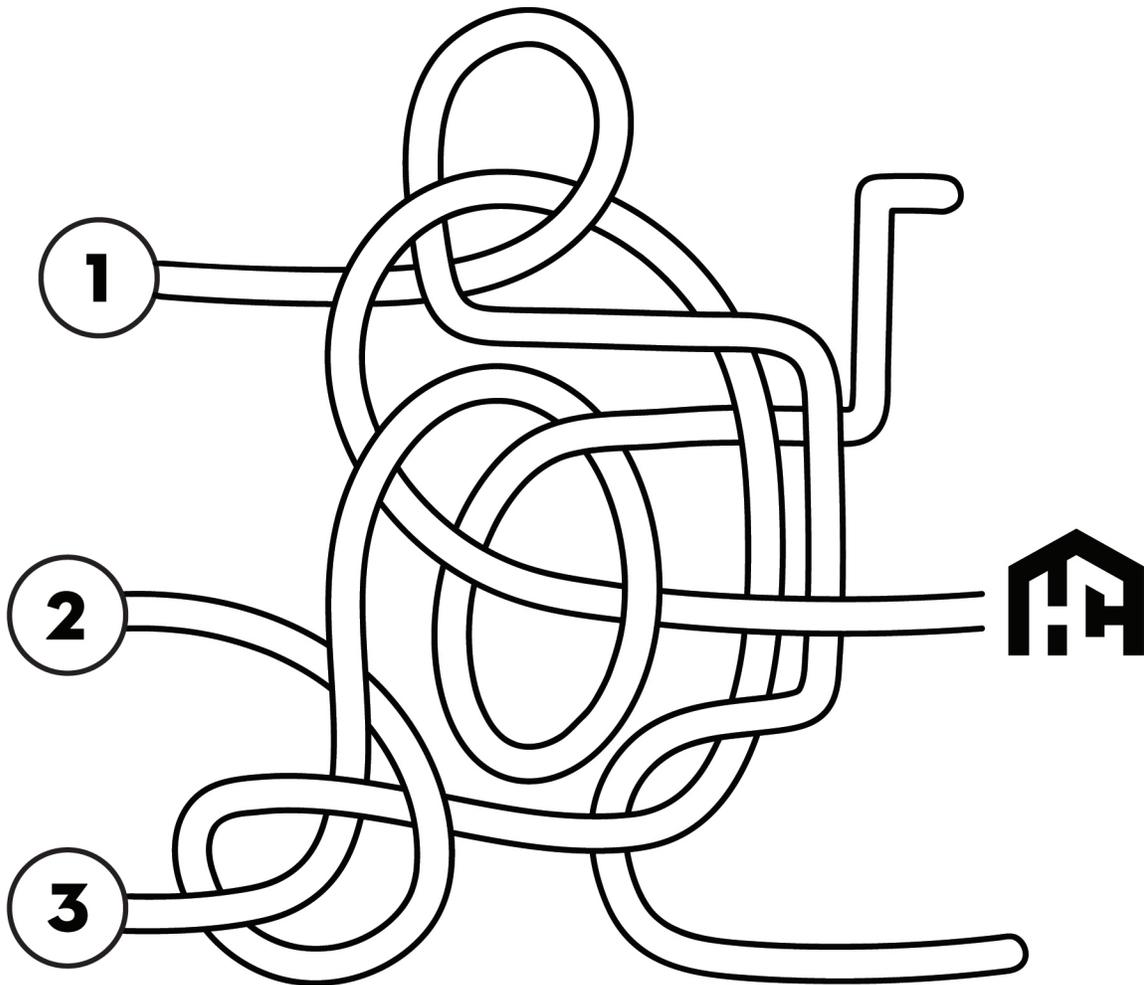
What does the Bible tell us is the most important command? That's right! To love God! He wants us to learn about Him and talk about Him with our families and friends! What is the second most important command? Yes, love your neighbor! What are some ways you can show love for God? How can you show love for your neighbors?

PRAYER:

God, help us to recognize the responsibility we have as parents in the discipleship of our kids, and how we as a House Church can support each other in that. Show us ways to love God and love people in House Church this year. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



WHICH PATH LEADS TO HOUSE CHURCH?



Write the correct number in the space below.

KIDS HOUSE CHURCH GAMES

BIG BAD WOLF

1. Have the children stand in a line at one end of the game area.
2. One leader or child is the “Big, Bad Wolf” and will stand at the other end of the area with her back to the children.
3. In unison, the children shout, “What time is it, Mr. Wolf?”
4. The wolf answers with an hour. For example, “four o’clock.”
5. The children take that number of steps forward. If the wolf said, “4 o’clock,” the children would take 4 steps toward the wolf.
6. When the wolf thinks the children are close enough to her, she answers their question with, “It’s eating time!”
7. Then she chases them back to their starting line. Anyone she tags joins her as a wolf.
8. The game ends when all but one participant has been tagged.

OVER / UNDER

1. Players are divided into two teams.
2. Teams line up in parallel rows with players standing behind one another.
3. The first player on each team is given an item (ex: beach ball, balloon, etc.)
4. When the leader says, “Go,” the first player on each line passes the ball backward over her head to the second player.
5. The second player passes the ball under his legs to the next person in line, and so forth.
6. The ball/item continues to be passed backward down the line, alternating over and under, until it reaches the last player.
7. The last player, receiving the ball, runs to the front of his or her line and begins to pass the ball back again.
8. Game can end when the player at the back makes it to the front with the item for the first time.
9. The team whose first player gets to the front of the line again is the winner.

CATCH THE DRAGON TAIL

1. Ask the kids to form a long human chain by holding hands.
2. The person standing first is the head of the dragon and the one at the end is the tail of the dragon.
3. The head should try and catch the tail, while the others in the middle should try and stop the head, without breaking the chain.
4. If the head succeeds in catching the tail, the tail becomes the head, and the person at the end of the chain becomes the tail. The game continues with the new head and tail.

KIDS HOUSE CHURCH GAMES (CONT.)

EVERYBODY'S IT TAG

1. There are two rules: (1) Everybody is "It" and (2) When a player is tagged, he or she is frozen.
2. Have everyone stand in a circle.
3. Then the leader shouts, "Everybody's it!" and the game starts (and quickly ends).

ELBOW TAG

1. Assign all players a partner. Spread pairs out evenly across the playing area. Have the pairs link arms.
2. Choose one pair to start out as the chaser ("it"), and the chasee.
3. Just like regular tag, "it" tries to tag the chasee.
4. If the chasee is tagged, he or she in turn becomes "it" and the chase reverses.
5. The chasee's goal is to link with another player.
6. When the chasee links arms with one side of a pair, the player on the other side must unhook their arm and begin running as the new chasee.

AMOEBAS TAG

1. Tag with a twist. One player is the tagger; this person is "it."
2. When "it" tags a runner, the runner must stop and join hands with the tagger. The two must now try to tag other runners without unjoining hands. The chain of players will grow as the game goes on.

SHARKS AND MINNOWS

1. You will need a good-size running area for this game.
2. Have the children line up along one side of the area.
3. They are the "minnows". Have the leader stand in the middle of the area.
4. The leader is the shark. When the shark yells "Go!", the minnows run to the other end of the area.
5. The shark runs around and tags as many minnows as possible before they reach the other end of the field.
6. When a minnow is tagged, he or she must freeze wherever tagged.
7. When all the untagged minnows reach the end of the area, the shark yells, "Go!" again.
8. This time the shark and the frozen minnows may tag the runners.
9. The game continues until there is only one minnow left.

KIDS HOUSE CHURCH GAMES (CONT.)

GROUP JUGGLING

1. Have the children stand in a circle with their arms in the air.
2. Toss a ball to a child. The child will toss the ball to another child and put their arms down.
3. Play continues with each child putting their arms down after they have thrown the ball.
4. The last child to catch the ball should toss it to the teacher.
5. You can play again, speeding up the action slightly.
6. To “juggle,” the children may keep their hands in the air at all times as a second ball/item is put into play.
7. The object is to keep both balls in play.

GORILLA, MAN, GUN

1. This is just like “Rock, Paper, Scissors”, except the kids will act out the “gorilla” (both hands in the air and a big growl), man (arms folded with one hand on the side of the chin/jaw with a sophisticated look), gun (however you choose to model holding a gun).
2. Once each child in the group has a partner, have them get back-to-back and teach them the rules in song form.
3. “The gorilla beats the man, and the man beats the gun. The gun beats the gorilla, if you tie you die.” and then count all together “1, 2, 3!”
4. That’s when each back-to-back partners turns around as a “gorilla, man, or a gun”. Then match up the winners and repeat until you get to the final group and have a prize for the winner.

HOT POTATO

1. Players arrange themselves in a circle and toss a ball to each other while music plays.
2. The player who is holding the “hot potato” when the music stops is out.
3. The game continues until one player is left — that player is the winner.

SIMON SAYS

1. One person is designated Simon, the others are the players. Simon tells players what they must do.
2. The players must only obey commands that begin with the words “Simon Says.” If Simon says, “Simon says touch your nose,” then players must touch their nose.
3. But, if Simon simply says, “jump,” without first saying “Simon says,” players must not jump.
4. Those that do jump are out.