

Sustainable September 2010



Children's Ministry Resources

Introduction

This resource is designed for adults who lead ministry with children of primary-school age.

The intended outcomes and their related teaching strategies are outlined below:

Outcome	Teaching and Learning Strategies
1. Participants appreciate that God created the world and gave responsibilities to humans.	Physical Expression Discussion Memory Verse Song
2. Participants become aware that humans often don't care for the world and that human behavior has led to climate change.	Role play activities Pray
3. Participants consider how they can change their behavior to better care for God's world.	Group prayer Weekly Action Card

The resource is designed as follows:

1. there are four lessons which may stand alone, but will work best when used sequentially;
2. there is a focus on participation, creativity and repetition;
3. each lesson has the same basic structure - three sections which correspond to the intended outcomes;
4. the options in each section are flexible – you can choose how long to spend on each section depending on how much time you have;
5. the resources you need for each section are listed on the right;
6. wherever possible, the necessary resources are easy-to-obtain or provided as blackline masters in the appendix;
7. your experience is respected – it is expected that you will use your discretion to alter or build on these resources in line with your local needs.

Basic Resources

You will need to:

1. Create large copy of Psalm 8 [in the Resources section]
2. Learn the song-words so you can lead from memory
3. Print BAP [Bible Action and Prayer] cards [in the Resources section] on cardboard, or print and stick on cardboard, or come up with a creative way for the participants to make their own. You may wish to distribute stickers to record progress, or encourage participants to draw something in the box.
4. Read up on Climate Change in age-appropriate language
5. Use your creativity to prepare for role-playing and imagination exercises.



Week One

Section 1

Participants appreciate that God created the world and gave responsibilities to humans.	Resources
1. Introduce the idea of Sustainable September and explain that you will spend the next four weeks learning about God’s world and how we can care for it. Open with prayer.	
2. Show and read through Psalm 8 and ask students to use their bodies to demonstrate what is being said: e.g ‘you protect us from bullies and enemies’ – hold arms out to show protection ‘you give us awesome gifts and talents’ – each person points to a part of themselves that represents their favourite gift from God For each portion, first take suggestions, then come to a consensus and make a note of it. You are basically choreographing a dance or piece of theatre in which all join in. This will be an ongoing task, and can be repeated each week and possibly performed for other members of the congregation.	Psalm poster
3. Point out the bible verse for the week – display it in highly visible way. ‘Even kids and babies can talk about how strong you are, and how you protect us from bullies and enemies.’ Psalm 8:2 Use your knowledge of the class to talk about the relevance of the verse. Repeat it several times. You may want to give a prize for those who remember correctly.	Memory verse to display
4. Sing ‘The Whole Wide World’ or some other appropriate song	A confident voice and the song words

Section 2

Participants become aware that humans often don't care for the world and that human behavior has led to climate change.

	Resources
1. Explain that, even though it is God's world and we have been asked to care for it, we don't always do so. Explain that climate change is caused by humans releasing pollution into the atmosphere. We will be thinking about how climate change affects weather, farmers, sea levels, and fresh water. See what the participants already know. Use the links at the end of this resource or do some research for more information.	
2. Explain that this week we will be thinking about how climate change affects the weather which then affects animals.	
3. Invite participants to participate in an imaginative role-play exercise. Use your creativity and encourage participating. For example: <i>Imagine you are a cold-blooded snake. [Encourage participants to lie down like a snake] You lie in the sun in the middle of the day to get your blood warm. [Invite someone to be the warm sun] You kill off rats and you are afraid of being eaten by larger animals. Now imagine that the weather changes – each year the winter lasts a bit longer, it's harder to keep warm and you can't hunt as much. It's easier to get eaten and your numbers drop off. Now the rats spread out more and eat all the fruits and berries which means the birds have less to eat etc...</i>	Imagination

Section 3

Participants consider how they can change their behavior to better care for God's world.

	Resources
1. Remind the participants that climate change is caused by humans, so humans can work to stop or limit it.	
2. Distribute/Make BAP cards. Explain that the ACTION for the week is to turn off lights when leaving a room. Say to participants: 'Each night, go through the BAP card with an adult and put a tick/star/sticker if you've done your best to do that ACTION. You can also say the memory verse and a prayer together.'	BAP Card
3. Invite participants to contribute ideas for prayer, and pray according to your custom. You may also wish to revise the psalm movements, the bible verse, the song or something else you have done.	



Week Two

Section 1

<i>Participants appreciate that God created the world and gave responsibilities to humans.</i>	Resources
1. Reinforce the idea of Sustainable September and explain that you are spending four weeks learning about God's world and how we can care for it. Open with prayer.	
2. Continue the Psalm 8 exercise from previous week. Continue to refine it	Psalm poster
3. Point out the bible verse for the week – display it in highly visible way. You need us to be leaders who look after pets, native creatures, birds, fish and all the other creatures. <i>Psalm 8:7-8</i> Use your knowledge of the class to talk about the relevance of the verse. Repeat it several times. You may want to give a prize for those who remember correctly.	Memory verse to display
4. Sing 'The Whole Wide World' or some other appropriate song	A confident voice and the song words

Section 2

<i>Participants become aware that humans often don't care for the world and that human behavior has led to climate change.</i>	Resources
1. Reinforce that, even though it is God's world and we have been asked to care for it, we don't always do so. Explain that climate change is caused by humans releasing pollution into the atmosphere. We will be thinking about how climate change affects weather, farmers, sea levels, and fresh water. See what the participants already know. Use the links at the end of this resource or do some research for more information.	
2. Explain that this week we will be thinking about how climate change affects the weather which affects sea levels.	
3. Invite participants to participate in an imaginative role-play exercise. Use your creativity and encourage participating. For example: <i>Imagine you and your family live on an island surrounded by water. [Invite participants to splash around in the ocean or pick coconuts] Climate change causes the polar ice caps to melt, which increases sea levels. It might not seem like much, but gradually the water creeps up the beach and your island gets smaller. Crops are destroyed, houses get washed away, and there is less room than before. You try to move away, but you don't have enough money [role play trying to find somewhere else to live etc...</i>	Imagination

Section 3

Participants consider how they can change their behavior to better care for God's world.

	Resources
1. Remind the participants that climate change is caused by humans, so humans can work to stop or limit it.	
2. Look at BAP cards and discuss how participants did in the previous week. Recognise that not everyone succeeds but we can all try to limit climate change. Explain that the ACTION for the week is to turn off the computer or TV when it's not in use, remembering 'If it's not off at the wall, it's not off at all!' Say to participants: 'Each night, go through the BAP card with an adult and put a tick/star/sticker if you've done your best to do that ACTION. You can also say the memory verse and a prayer together.'	BAP Card
3. Invite participants to contribute ideas for prayer, and pray according to your custom. You may also wish to revise the psalm movements, the bible verse, the song or something else you have done.	



Week Three

Section 1

<i>Participants appreciate that God created the world and gave responsibilities to humans.</i>	Resources
1. Reinforce the idea of Sustainable September and explain that you are spending four weeks learning about God's world and how we can care for it. Open with prayer.	
2. Continue the Psalm 8 exercise from previous week. Continue to refine it. The participants will appreciate the repetition and the chance to develop their 'performance'	Psalm poster
3. Point out the bible verse for the week – display it in highly visible way. You made us to be like you! You give us awesome gifts and talents! <i>Psalm 8:5</i> Use your knowledge of the class to talk about the relevance of the verse. Repeat it several times. You may want to give a prize for those who remember correctly.	Memory verse to display
4. Sing 'The Whole Wide World' or some other appropriate song	A confident voice and the song words

Section 2

<i>Participants become aware that humans often don't care for the world and that human behavior has led to climate change.</i>	Resources
1. Reinforce that, even though it is God's world and we have been asked to care for it, we don't always do so. Explain that climate change is caused by humans releasing pollution into the atmosphere. We will be thinking about how climate change affects weather, farmers, sea levels, and fresh water. See what the participants already know. Use the links at the end of this resource or do some research for more information.	
2. Explain that this week we will be thinking about how climate change affects the weather which then affects farmers all over the world.	
3. Invite participants to participate in an imaginative role-play exercise. Use your creativity and encourage participating. For example: <i>Imagine you live in another country [Cambodia, Nigeria, Chile – help the participants understand where you are talking about]. For generations your family have grown [maize, wheat, rice] [ask participants to show you what this looks like] but now the rainfall has decreased and you have to cart water in just to keep your crop alive. Some of the crop dies, and you don't have enough to feed your family etc..</i>	Imagination

Section 3

Participants consider how they can change their behavior to better care for God's world.

	Resources
1. Remind the participants that climate change is caused by humans, so humans can work to stop or limit it.	
2. Look at BAP cards and discuss how participants did in the previous week. Recognise that not everyone succeeds but we can all try to limit climate change. Explain that the ACTION for the week is to dress properly instead of using a heater or air conditioner. Remind participants that they can put on a jumper or ugg boots if they're cold, or wear lighter clothing when they're hot. They can also use a fan instead of an air conditioner. Even though September in Australia is typically mild, remind participants of the recent winter and the coming Summer. Say to participants: 'Each night, go through the BAP card with an adult and put a tick/star/sticker if you've done your best to do that ACTION. You can also say the memory verse and a prayer together.'	BAP Card
3. Invite participants to contribute ideas for prayer, and pray according to your custom. You may also wish to revise the psalm movements, the bible verse, the song or something else you have done.	



Week Four

Section 1

<i>Participants appreciate that God created the world and gave responsibilities to humans.</i>	Resources
1. Reinforce the idea of Sustainable September and explain that you are spending four weeks learning about God's world and how we can care for it. Open with prayer.	
2. Continue the Psalm 8 exercise from previous week. Continue to refine it. The participants will appreciate the repetition and the chance to develop their 'performance'. This may be an appropriate week to perform it for the rest of the congregation.	Psalm poster
3. Point out the bible verse for the week – display it in highly visible way. You made us to be like you! You give us awesome gifts and talents! <i>Psalm 8:5</i> Use your knowledge of the class to talk about the relevance of the verse. Repeat it several times. You may want to give a prize for those who remember correctly.	Memory verse to display
4. Sing 'The Whole Wide World' or some other appropriate song	A confident voice and the song words

Section 2

<i>Participants become aware that humans often don't care for the world and that human behavior has led to climate change.</i>	Resources
1. Reinforce that, even though it is God's world and we have been asked to care for it, we don't always do so. Explain that climate change is caused by humans releasing pollution into the atmosphere. We will be thinking about how climate change affects weather, farmers, sea levels, and fresh water. See what the participants already know. Use the links at the end of this resource or do some research for more information.	
2. Explain that this week we will be thinking about how climate change affects the weather which then affects access to water all over the world.	
3. Invite participants to participate in an imaginative role-play exercise. Use your creativity and encourage participating. For example: <i>Imagine you live in a place where there has never been much rain, but there has always been enough from wells and rivers to get by. But climate change causes the rain pattern to change. There is the same amount of people, but less water. First one well dries up, then another. Then you have to walk 3 kilometres to the river. But a business up the river is taking out water for a factory, and the river starts to run dry. People start fighting over who can access the water. etc...</i>	Imagination

Section 3

Participants consider how they can change their behavior to better care for God's world.

	Resources
1. Remind the participants that climate change is caused by humans, so humans can work to stop or limit it.	
2. Look at BAP cards and discuss how participants did in the previous week. Recognise that not everyone succeeds but we can all try to limit climate change. Explain that the ACTION for the week is to ride or walk somewhere instead of being driven. Emphasise that permission from and discussion with the responsible adult is necessary and that children must not wander around alone. Practice ways of encouraging adults to walk or ride instead of driving. Say to participants: 'Each night, go through the BAP card with an adult and put a tick/star/sticker if you've done your best to do that ACTION. You can also say the memory verse and a prayer together.'	BAP Card
3. Talk about the end of Sustainable September and revise what has been learnt. Point out that participants can continue the good habits they have learnt in Sustainable September – including their ACTION, their BIBLE READING and their PRAYER.	
4. Invite participants to contribute ideas for prayer, and pray according to your custom. You may also wish to revise the psalm movements, the bible verse, the song or something else you have done. This is the week to present to the rest of the congregation if you wish.	

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Resources

Some child-friendly introductions to Climate Change:

<http://www.climatechoices.org.uk/>

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/climate_chaos/

<http://www.clean-air-kids.org.uk/globalwarming.html>

Psalm 8

O God our Ruler, the whole world knows that you are amazing!

Your glory is higher than the sky!

Even kids and babies can talk about how strong you are, and how you protect us from bullies and enemies.

When we look up at the night sky and see what you've done - the moon and the stars that you placed there – we ask:

“Why would you care about tiny people like us? Why would you even think about human beings?”

But you made us to be like you! You give us awesome gifts and talents!

You gave us the whole universe to look after. You need us to be leaders who look after pets, native creatures, birds, fish and all the other creatures.

O God our Ruler, the whole world knows that you are amazing!

Paraphrase of Psalm 8 © C Bedding 2010

The Whole Wide World

(Tune: He's got the whole world in his hands)

The whole wide world is in God's hands x3

The whole world's in God's hands.

Decide with the participants other phrases you can sing such as:

The sun and the moon are in God's hands

The nighttime stars are in God's hands . . .

The rivers and creeks are in God's hands . . .

The birds and the bees . . .

The little grey possum . . .

The hills and the mountains . . .

The great big ocean . . .

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Bible + Action+ Prayer Card

Each night before bed, go through this card with a grown-up who cares for you.

STEP 1: Say the BIBLE verse together, and try to learn it off by heart.

STEP 2: Mark the box if you have done your best to do the ACTION for the week.

STEP 3: PRAY together using the prayer provided, or talk to God in your own words.

Week 1

Even kids and babies can talk about how strong you are, and how you protect us from bullies and enemies. *Psalm 8:2*

I turned off the lights when I left a room:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

God, thank you for helping us speak up when something is wrong. We know there are some bad things in the world that you want us to change. Help us to do our bit to stop climate change and care for all people and this planet.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

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Each night before bed, go through this card with a grown-up who cares for you.

STEP 1: Say the BIBLE verse together, and try to learn it off by heart.

STEP 2: Mark the box if you have done your best to do the ACTION for the week.

STEP 3: PRAY together using the prayer provided, or talk to God in your own words.

Week 2

You made us to be like you! You give us awesome gifts and talents! *Psalm 8:5*

I turned off the TV or computer when I wasn't using it:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Thanks for your awesome gifts, God, especially this wonderful planet. Help us to respect and care for other people like Jesus did, and help us use as little electricity as possible. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Each night before bed, go through this card with a grown-up who cares for you.

STEP 1: Say the BIBLE verse together, and try to learn it off by heart.

STEP 2: Mark the box if you have done your best to do the ACTION for the week.

STEP 3: PRAY together using the prayer provided, or talk to God in your own words.

Week 3

You gave us the whole universe to look after. *Psalms 8:6*

I dressed properly, instead of using heating or cooling:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Holy Spirit, we need your help! You've given us the universe to care for and enjoy, but we keep messing things up. Stir up people who lead our businesses and our country. Help them to make a difference to your world. Amen.

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Sustainable September 2010

Bible + Action+ Prayer Card

Each night before bed, go through this card with a grown-up who cares for you.

STEP 1: Say the BIBLE verse together, and try to learn it off by heart.

STEP 2: Mark the box if you have done your best to do the ACTION for the week.

STEP 3: PRAY together using the prayer provided, or talk to God in your own words.

Week 4

You need us to be leaders who look after pets, native creatures, birds, fish and all the other creatures. *Psalms 8:7-8*

I walked or rode somewhere instead of driving:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Thank you, God, for our pets, animals who provide us with food, and wild animals. Help us to respect all living things. May our actions show the love that Jesus showed. We pray in his name. Amen.