

# Understanding God's Heart for Children

discover together and share insights  
by reflecting on experience and exploring scripture

## Facilitation Guidelines



## Credits

- Developed from an original concept toolkit provided by Louie Cadaing and Arlynn Contreras of Lifestream Ministries in the Philippines

### **Version 1 – October 2002:**

- Informed by pilot frameworks trialed in Costa Rica (using a matrix created by Alfredo Mora) and in Oxford (using a matrix created by Gundelina Velazco)
- Adapted by Paul Stephenson, Ian de Villiers and Paul Stockley
- Design by Kok Chik Bu

### **Version 2 – October 2003:**

- Enhanced with creative input from Romanea Thong and Sheila Reid of the Children's Commission of the Evangelical Fellowship of Cambodia
- Edited by Glenn Miles and Paul Stockley

### **cover picture**

- Nabil and friends. Copyright © shoestring notions April 2002.



Understanding God's Heart for Children  
is a Viva Network initiative.

## WELCOME

Welcome to “Understanding God’s Heart for Children”. Our experiences of using this facilitation pack have proven encouraging and empowering, and we hope that you discover the same positive results as you work through the questions and challenges it raises.

This dynamic initiative offers the opportunity for learning through reflection on experience and exploration of scripture, enabling Christians to hear and understand God’s desire and purpose for children. We hope this will help you to connect with your own deep motivations for working with children, finding inspiration and guidance for effective action.

Everyone who participates should gain immediate benefit from the process. In addition, you are encouraged to share your discoveries with others around the world who are also using this process.

### Contents:

- About this facilitation pack
- You as facilitator
- Using the pack
- The bigger picture
  
- Sessions...
  1. Our Perception of Children
  2. God’s View of Children
  3. God’s Vision for a Child-Friendly World
  4. Our Part in Making God’s Vision a Reality
  5. Comparing God’s View of Children with UN CRC
  6. Comparing God’s Vision of World with UN WFFC
  7. Guiding Principles
  
- Extras...
  8. Needs and Actions Survey
  9. Child Abuse Insights Survey

## About this facilitation pack...

In this pack you will find seven sessions of about two hours in length, plus a few extra activities. It is possible to use a selected sequence (for example, sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7) over a two day event, or you may choose to use the pack over a period of time, such as one session a week for several weeks, according to the time available to you.

Session 1 provides an excellent beginning for the process, sessions 2, 3, and 4 are considered essential, and session 7 provides a vital bridge to practical action. Sessions number 5 and 6 are useful for non-governmental and community-based organisations (NGOs and CBOs). If you find they are not relevant to your work, you may omit them.

Each session contains...

- an **Overview:** *"How does this session fit in?"* including an explanation of its place in the series, and also...
  - **objectives:** *"Why are we doing this?"*  
The purpose that this session is aiming to achieve.
  - **outcomes:** *"What will we have to show for it?"*  
The resulting creative expression of the learning.
  - **inputs:** *"What do we need for this session?"*  
The materials and information required.
  
- the **Process:** *"How do we make it happen?" "How do we do it?"* instructions for...
  - **lead-in:** *"Where do we start?"*  
a short introduction to the session.
  - **activities:** one or more activities which comprise the session. Some will be essential to include, but others may be optional.
  - **synthesis:** drawing it all together,  
a final activity to bring the learning for this session into focus.
  
- some **Resources:**
  - forms for writing up the learning insights,
  - extra content for the session.

## You as facilitator...

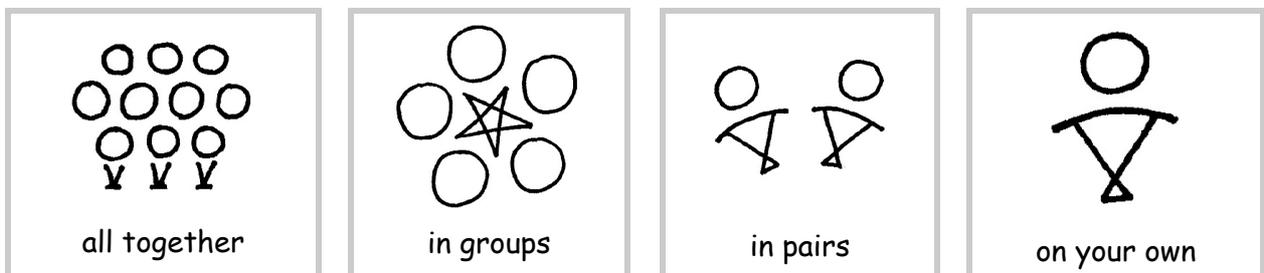
Your role is simply to guide the participants through the process so they can learn and apply the spiritual insights they gain from scripture and personal experience, and also from each other.

You will need to prepare, to set the scene for the participants, and to help draw the learning into focus at the close of each session. However, you do not need to be an expert or to have the answers!

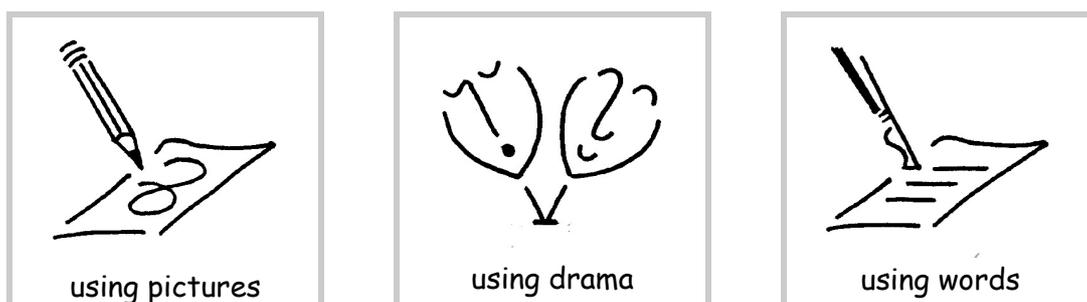
For each session, make sure you are familiar with the process, have selected which activities to include, and have all you need, including any extra inputs and resources.

Most activities require basic items such as marker pens, paper, bibles etc. For later sessions you may also need to have at hand the results from earlier sessions in the series. Some sessions and optional activities also require extra information, which is available on the accompanying cd-rom (or can be downloaded from the internet). These are indicated at the appropriate point.

Activities may occasionally require participants to work on their own, sometimes in pairs, and often in groups, or all together. These are indicated in the margin. Give instructions as needed. Activities in groups work best with about five people, unless stated otherwise. You may like to suggest different groups for each session to change the dynamics and encourage all to contribute ideas.

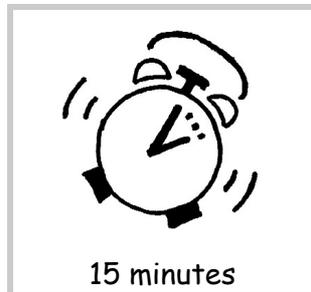


Outcomes may be using pictures or using words, or a mixture! Using pictures may encourage creative expression and can add interest to the process. This may be especially helpful if you are doing the activities with children and young people, but adults can enjoy using pictures too!



In two of the sessions there is also a short theatrical action or role play.

Some timings are offered as a suggestion only, and will depend on the number of participants you have, and the size of groups. Our basis has been to assume having about 20-25 people participating in the sessions. Synthesis timings will vary accordingly. If you have more than 25 people you will need to allow more time. If you have 10-15 or less, you can reduce it.



If you add in any optional inputs or extra activities, you will need to increase the overall time for the session. Ensure you allow enough time for each activity, plus time for people take a break when they need it, or to have refreshments.

Finally, we would be delighted if you would share your learning with others, and we have provided an easy way for you to do so. The vision for this initiative is outlined under "the Bigger Picture".

## Using the pack...

One question often asked about "Understanding God's Heart for Children" is: who is it for, and why? Or to put it another way: who might find it helpful, and for what purpose?

As this initiative has evolved, we have learnt that the session material has been used creatively in a variety of contexts, the common intentions being: for exploring childhood issues, and discovering God's desire and purpose.

Here are some example uses of the facilitation pack.

<b>sessions</b>	<b>audience</b>	<b>key objectives</b>
	for all contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• explore childhood issues</li><li>• discover God's purposes</li></ul>
		<b>further objectives</b>
<b>1, 2, 3, 4, 7</b>	church leaders and children's workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• unite in common vision</li><li>• holistic view of child needs</li><li>• intent to raise quality</li><li>• catalyse action</li></ul>
<b>1 to 7</b>	local NGO or CBO project workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• unite in common vision</li><li>• holistic view of child needs</li><li>• global standards awareness</li><li>• comparison with biblical view</li><li>• intent to raise quality</li><li>• principles for work</li></ul>
<b>1 to 9</b>	network members and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• unite in common vision</li><li>• overview of local situation</li><li>• identify priorities</li></ul>
<b>1 to 7</b>	students of theology and holistic child care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• theology of childhood</li><li>• global standards awareness</li><li>• comparison with biblical view</li></ul>
<b>1 to 4</b>	children and their primary caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• rootedness in God's care</li><li>• enhance self-esteem</li><li>• celebrate God's goodness</li><li>• compare child and adult view</li><li>• sense of purpose</li></ul>
<b>2, 3, and 4</b>	children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• rootedness in God's care</li><li>• enhance self-esteem</li><li>• celebrate God's goodness</li><li>• sense of purpose</li></ul>

## the Bigger Picture...

All over the world, different people, churches, communities, and child care agencies are doing this same set of learning activities, as weekly or monthly studies, as a weekend workshop, or in other formats. Our different experiences can be further enhanced if we share them.

“Understanding God’s Heart for Children” was born out of Cutting Edge 2001, as representatives from NGOs and CBOs working with children around the world raised questions about the theological response to practical issues that many children face everyday: poverty, neglect, abuse, exploitation, war, disability, and disease, to name a few. This facilitation pack is designed to help you begin to answer those questions in your local context.

Your outcomes and those from others will be shared through Cutting Edge events held regionally in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe. Insights may also be published through other media, such as a website or a paper.

In addition, the outcomes will contribute to the regional and international development of Child Theology, as theologians and practitioners learn, in a simple yet profound sense, to hear God’s voice speaking to us through the children.

We would be delighted to hear what you have learnt through the process.

If you wish to share your insights, please copy the outcomes onto the form provided for each session. (It would help us if you can write in either English, Spanish or French.)

Please also fill in the facilitator’s feedback form which you will find at the end of the pack. If you have any other comments about the pack or the process, you can write them on the form.

Please send these to: UGHFC, P.O.Box 633, Oxford OX2 0XZ, England, UK.  
or fax them to: +44 1865 320101, or email them to: < ughfc@viva.org >

You can also email us if you have any questions as you go along.

## Now...

Turn the page for **Session 1**.

May God inspire you!

# Our Perception of Children



## Overview

In this opening session the activities help us to be aware of our own starting point when we think about children, providing an important foundation for the sessions which follow.

## Objectives

During this session, you as facilitator are enabling participants to...

- EXPLORE how they perceive and value children,
- REFLECT on these perceptions and values, and learn from them,
- APPLY this learning in how they relate to children.

## Outcomes

At the end of the session you (and the participants) will have...

- in PICTURES or WORDS, the attributes of children at different ages,
- a SUMMARY of key learning insights.

## Inputs

You will not need any extra information for this session. Just ensure you have enough basic materials (marker pens, large sheets of paper, etc.), appropriate for the number of participants.

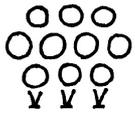
## Process

Begin with all the participants together. Use the lead-in section to introduce the session (either read it to the participants, or use your own words), then get participants involved in the activity you have chosen to do. Finally bring everyone together to a meaningful closure by allowing time for the synthesis.

Note: for this session

- Choose *either* activity 1a *or* activity 1b. They are similar, but use different questions to explore perceptions.
  - Activity 1c is an *optional* extra, to add in if you have a longer amount of time or wish to go into more depth. It is slightly more challenging, but can be particularly useful for those who have a good understanding of children and childhood issues.
-

## Opening (about 15 minutes)



Begin this initial session with an act of welcome to participants, and an introduction to the series, raising expectations of hearing from God as you work through the process together.



15 minutes

## Lead-in (about 2 minutes)

It might seem that the answer to the question “what is a child?” needs little exposition. However, our understanding of what it means to be a child is shaped by our own childhood and family experiences, our society and culture. These perceptions may influence how we imagine that God views children. So it is helpful first to clarify our own personal concept of a child.



2 minutes

## Activity 1a — Needs, Expectations, Aspirations (about 60 minutes)

Exploring participants’ perceptions of children.

Divide the participants into three, allocating to each an age range to consider for this activity:

- Children aged 0-5 years
- Children aged 6-12 years
- Children aged 13-18 years

Each participant should think of a child within the given age range. This could be a child within the project they work in, or a friend or family member.

Give instructions to the participants as follows...



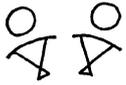
Individually: Picture this child in your mind. Write down some answers to the following questions:

- What qualities and characteristics does this child have?
- What is this child able to do?
- What does this child dream of, or hope for?
- What roles and responsibilities may the child have in the home, school and community?
- What you think this child needs for spiritual, social, emotional, and intellectual development?



7 minutes

Each participant should then pair up with another with the same age range.



Share your answers with each other, making a common list to describe the child in this age range.

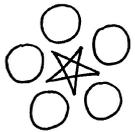
Discuss in your pair:

- In what ways would these needs, expectations and aspirations change depending on the social and cultural context of the child?
- In what ways does the gender of the child affect these things?



7 minutes

Pairs should then join together with others in their allocated age range.



In your groups:

- Share the key findings from your discussions.

As a group discuss:

- What have you learned about children's qualities and capacities as you have worked with them?
- How do culture and gender affect the expectations we have about what children can or can't do, and what their needs are?



10 minutes

Each group should write up key points on a large sheet of paper.



Alternatively they may:

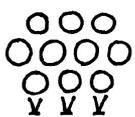
- draw a big outline of a child in the middle of the paper,
- invite each person to draw their findings on the outline.



(Idea: draw needs on the lower part of the page, expectations in the middle, and aspirations on the upper part.)



7 minutes



Display the outcomes from each group around the communal area. Give time for all participants to look at each other's insights.



10 minutes

Ask a representative from each group to present their findings. When all groups have presented, invite participants to comment on...

- notable differences for the children in different age ranges,
- any similarities, or things that remain constant as the child grows.



15 minutes

## Activity 1b – Reality, Risk, Resilience (about 60 minutes)

Exploring participants' perceptions of children.

Divide the participants into three, allocating to each an age range to consider for this activity:

- Children aged 0-5 years
- Children aged 6-12 years
- Children aged 13-18 years

Each participant should think of a child within the given age range. This could be a child within the project they work in, or a friend or family member.

Give instructions to the participants as follows...



Individually: Picture this child in your mind. Write down some answers to the following questions:

- What qualities and characteristics does this child have?
- What is this child able to do?
- What makes this child vulnerable?
- What makes this child resilient?



7 minutes

Each participant should then pair up with another with the same age range.



Share your answers with each other, making a common list to describe the child in this age range.

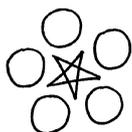
Discuss in your pair:

- In what ways would these vulnerabilities and resiliencies change depending on the cultural and social context of the child?
- In what ways does the gender of the child affect these things?



7 minutes

Pairs should then join together with others in their allocated age range.



In your groups:

- Share the key findings from your discussions.

As a group discuss:

- What have you learned about children's qualities and capacities as you have worked with them?
- How do culture and gender affect the vulnerabilities children face, and what their resilience to cope with life?



10 minutes



Each group should write up key points on a large sheet of paper.

Alternatively they may:

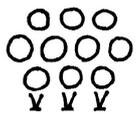
- draw a big outline of a child in the middle of the paper,
- invite each person to draw their findings on the outline.



7 minutes



(Idea: use two colours, red for risk and green for resilience.)



Display the outcomes from each group around the communal area. Give time for all participants to look at each other's insights.



10 minutes

Ask a representative from each group to present their findings. When all groups have presented, invite participants to comment on...

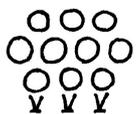
- notable differences for the children in different age ranges,
- any similarities, or things that remain constant as the child grows.



15 minutes

### Activity 1c – Child to Adult (about 40 minutes)

This is an optional activity, to include if you have extra time or wish to go into more depth.



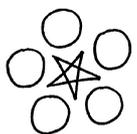
Explain that in today's world International Law commonly considers a child as anyone below the age of 18 years. However, this is a fairly arbitrary limit, as growing up is a process, not something that happens overnight!



2 minutes

Divide the participants into groups of about five people.

Give instructions to the groups as follows...

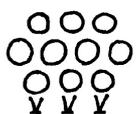


As a group discuss:

- at what age (in your culture) does a child become an adult?
- is this a gradual process or a clear-cut transition?
- are there any rites of passage (either formal or informal)?
- what does this tell us about our perceptions of the child?



15 minutes

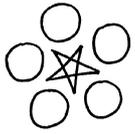


Invite participants to share any key insights they have discovered.

Divide into the same groups as before...



10 minutes



Explore these further questions:

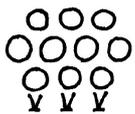
- on what basis should a person be considered a child or an adult?
- for what situations might you think an earlier age is appropriate?  
(for example: voting? giving consent to medical treatment? being prosecuted for criminal behaviour?)
- for what situations might you think a later age is appropriate?  
(for example: getting married? having children?)
- what advantages or disadvantages are there in having a clear transition at the age of 18 years?



15 minutes

### Synthesis (about 20 minutes)

Help the participants process the activity by asking the following questions and allowing them to share their feelings and reflections to the whole group.



Encourage everyone to participate.

Application questions:

- What did you feel and think while going through the activity?
- How did your responses to the activity questions reflect the way you perceive and value children?
- What insights or learning did you have?
- How can you apply your learning in the way you relate to children?



20 minutes

Conclude by affirming the key learnings that have been shared.

---

### Bigger Picture reminder...

Don't forget: to be a part of the bigger picture, please copy your outcomes onto the form in the Resources. You could ask for a participant to volunteer to do this after each session.

After you've done this for all the sessions, please send or email the forms to us.

## Resources

### Outcomes Form 1

Use the form to keep a copy of all of the key learning insights from the activities of this session.

Session 1 – Our perception of children...

key insights

When you have the Outcomes Forms for all the sessions please send them with the Facilitator's Feedback Form to: UGHFC, P.O. Box 633, Oxford OX2 0XZ, England or fax: +44 1865 320101 or email: < ughfc@viva.org >

# God's View of Children

session

2

## Overview

For the next three sessions we will be looking at scripture, and reflecting on our own understanding and experience in the light of what scripture tells us.

## Objectives

During this session, you as facilitator are enabling participants to...

- DISCOVER how God views children, by searching the biblical text and using their own spiritual insight.
- COMPARE this with the participants own perceptions of children (as explored in session 1).

## Outcomes

At the end of the session you (and the participants) will have...

- a LIST of statements of how God views children, accompanied by biblical references supporting the statements,
- a PICTURE of a child with Jesus, and words of insight inspired by reflecting on this.

Each participant will also have...

- some NOTES of their own personal reflections on the challenges and changes

## Inputs

Each participant will need a bible. Ensure you also have marker pens and paper to hand. For activity 2a you will need cards of four different colours, enough for each participant and group.

For the synthesis you will need the summary sheets from session 1.

For those who need some help getting started on exploring bible verses (activity 2a), there is an extra resource page below with examples on it.

For the initial part of activity 2b, you may provide each participant with a copy of worksheet 2b.

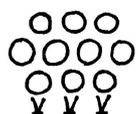
## Process

Use the lead-in section to introduce the session, then get participants involved in the activities *both* exploring the bible *and* reflecting on life. Finally bring everyone together to a meaningful closure by allowing time for the synthesis.

Note: for this session...

- You should do *both* activity 2a *and* activity 2b
- 

### Lead-in (about 2 minutes)



Having thought about our own understanding of what it means to be a child, we now want to try to discover how God views children. This will involve exploring biblical passages and sharing our insights.



2 minutes

We will then apply this perspective to our own context by reflecting on our experience in working with children.

At the end we will have our collective learning written up, and a visual image representing our reflections.

### Activity 2a – discovering God’s perspective on children (exploring the bible) (about 60 minutes)

Ensure every participant has a bible available.



- Ask everybody to look for passages in the bible that show how God views children. From each passage ask them to make a statement reflecting how God values children. Ask the participants to make at least 4 statements. Provide pink cards (1 per person) and coloured pen for them to write their answers.



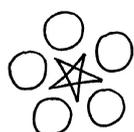
10 minutes



- Ask people to pair up and share their 4 statements. Give each pair a blue card to write an agreed 5 statements with references.



10 minutes

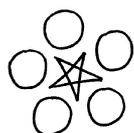


4 persons

- Ask pairs to join to form groups of 4, and give them yellow cards, and write an agreed 5 statements with references.



10 minutes



8 persons

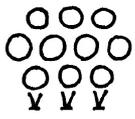
- Finally, ask them to group into 8s, and give them green cards and repeat the process.



10 minutes



Then give them a sheet of large paper to copy the final 5 statements onto with verses, and some glue or tape to stick the coloured cards around the edge.



Ask each group to present their final 5 statements, by holding up their poster and reading it to the others.

Display the posters (with the attached cards) around the communal area and give time for all to read them.



10 minutes

### **Activity 2b – children in the centre of our work (reflecting on life) (about 40 minutes)**

Explain the context for the next activity as follows...

Once when Jesus was talking with his disciples he invited a child to come and stand in the middle in order to show them God's way of doing things (see Mark 9:33-37, and Matthew 18:1-5). We have already given some thought to how God sees a child.



2 minutes

Ask the following questions:

- If you invite this child into the middle of your activities and planning, how would you do things differently from what you do now?
- What would you want to change? ...in your understanding, actions, and in the structures of your ministry or organisation?
- Are there any statements from activity 2a that you would now like to alter or reconsider?



Provide a copy of worksheet 2b for each person.

Allow participants several minutes to think about this on their own, writing down their thoughts.



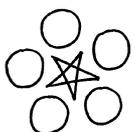
7 minutes



Ask participants to share their thoughts with another, and then to pray for each other.



7 minutes



Ask the participants to form groups of about five people. Give each group a large sheet of paper and some marker pens.

In the middle of the paper, one member of the group should draw a picture of a child standing next to Jesus. In the space around this picture each member of the group should draw a person representing themselves.



15 minutes



In each group ask one participant to read the scripture passage (either Mark 9:33-37, or Matthew 18:1-5) out loud to the others.

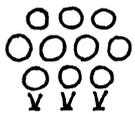
Keeping this scripture and their insights in mind, each person should draw two speech bubbles on the picture. In the bubbles ask them to write the words they are saying...

- to Jesus, and
- to the child.

Display the posters around the communal area.

### Synthesis (about 20 minutes)

Now help the participants process the activity by asking the following questions and allowing them to share their feelings and reflections to the whole group.



Encourage everyone to participate.

Application questions:

1. What did you feel and think while going through the activity?
2. How did your own perception and value of children compare with what we have learnt God perceives and values children?
3. What insights or learning did you have?
4. How can you apply your learning in the way you relate to children?



20 minutes

Conclude by affirming the key learnings that have been shared.

## Resources

### Outcomes Form 2

Use the form to keep a copy of all of the key learning insights from the activities of this session.

Session 2 – God's view of children...	
how God views children	biblical reference

When you have the Outcomes Forms for all the sessions please send them with the Facilitator's Feedback Form to: UGHFC, P.O. Box 633, Oxford OX2 0XZ, England or fax: +44 1865 320101 or email: < ughfc@viva.org >

## Worksheet 2b

How God's view of children applies to my life and work...

God's view of children	changes my...		
	understanding	action	organisation

## Examples for activity 2a

### God's View of Children – example verses and statements

From the Psalms...

Psalms 139:13-16 *"God knows us intimately from before birth, and each child is full of God-given creative potential."*

Psalms 127:3-4 *"Every child is a special gift from God, to be valued."*

From Character Studies...

Miriam (Exodus ch 2) ensured survival of Moses, God's chosen liberator.

Esther (Esther ch 2, 4, 5) young person who saved a nation from death.

Josiah (2 Kings ch 22, 23) king at 8 years old, restored the covenant.

*"God uses children to forward his purposes at significant points in history."*

Servant girl (2 Kings ch 5) spoke God's message to Naaman.

Samuel (1 Samuel ch 3) heard God's voice, message to Eli.

*"Children have a prophetic role and priestly calling in God's purposes."*

*"Often a child has God-given insight that adults fail to see."*

From the Gospels...

Jesus raises a girl to life (Mark 5:35-42)

Jesus heals a demonised boy (Mark 9:14-27)

*"God cares deeply about children's lives, health and wellbeing."*

Jesus feeds 5000 with a boy's lunch (Mark 6:32-44)

*"Children have something to offer, which God can use."*

From the Letters...

2 Timothy 1:15 and 1 Timothy 4:12 *"If children are spiritually nurtured from a young age, God can use them as pioneering leaders in his church."*

**Note to facilitator:** many more verses tell us about God's view of children, these are just a few examples. Encourage participants to find references for themselves and make statements about God's view of children.

# God's Vision for a Child-friendly World



## Overview

In this session we continue to consider our understanding and experience in the light of scripture, looking beyond the child to the family, community and world in which children live.

## Objectives

Your role as facilitator is to help participants to...

- DISCOVER God's vision and intention for children and God's plan for a world that is acceptable for children to live in.
- COMPARE this with the participants own understanding of the situation of children in the world today.

## Outcomes

By the end of this session participants will have created...

- a LIST of statements identifying God's vision of for the world, accompanied by biblical references, supporting the statements.
- a PICTURE of God's idea of a child-friendly world, visually representing their insights.

Each participant will also have...

- some NOTES reflecting on their own personal concerns for children in the world today.

## Inputs

Once again, bibles, marker pens and paper are the basic requirements. You will also need a variety of craft paper and art materials for activity 3a.

Unless your participants are already very familiar with children living in high risk situations then choose at least one of the optional inputs from the resources for this session.

You may do more than one optional input if you have time, and you think it would be helpful to participants.

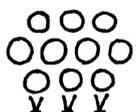
## Process

Use the lead-in section to open the session, then introduce the optional input. After this, get participants involved in the activities *both* reflecting on life *and* exploring the bible, and finish up with the synthesis.

Note: for this session...

- You should choose *at least one* optional input.
  - You should do *both* activity 3a *and* activity 3b.
- 

### Lead-in (about 2 minutes)



We are going to think about the situation of children in our world and our community today. This will involve reflecting on the experiences of children living in risky situations.

We will then compare that with God's intention for a world acceptable for children to live in, by exploring the bible, and then expressing our insights in a creative way.

In order to help set the scene, we will begin with...



2 minutes

### Option – Information on children's lives (about 15 minutes)

Use the optional input of your choice here, selected from the resources which accompany this session.

After the optional input, bring the participants together again to introduce the following activity.



15 minutes

### Activity 3a – Children living in risky situations (reflecting on life) (about 25 minutes)

Explain the context for the next activity as follows...

When Jesus said, "let the children come to me, and don't get in their way," (see Mark 10:13-16 and Matthew 19:13-15) he was emphasising how highly he valued children, and how important they are to him. Yet today life is often difficult for our children. Around the world many children suffer.



2 minutes

In this activity we are going to think about children who are at high risk due to the adverse situations in which they have to live today. We can find such children around the world, and also in our own locality. Poverty, exploitation, neglect, abuse, illness, war and displacement, may be some of the factors.

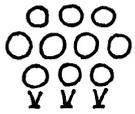
Provide a copy of worksheet 3a for each person.



Ask the participants to think about and write down four things that have concerned them personally about children living in high risk situations.



5 minutes



Invite each person in turn to share just one item, explaining it to the group. Affirm, but do not do any synthesis. You may go round a second time.



15 minutes

After this, summarise that there is so much that hurts children, that makes us feel angry, powerless, upset.

Lead the group in a short prayer to entrust God with all those issues, and asking for help that all will understanding God's heart about those things.



2 minutes

### **Activity 3b – discovering God's intention for children (exploring the bible) (about 60 minutes)**

Explain the context for this next activity as follows...

What was God's original intention for children?

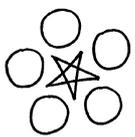
In the world God created there was wholeness in human relationships, and people were to be good stewards of creation which would provide for the needs of all. Sin has marred and broken what was once untainted and whole.



2 minutes

Despite this, we have the assurance that God's intention for all humankind, including children, is still at work today through the redeeming, reconciling and restoring power of Christ's death on the cross and rising to new life.

We need to explore the bible to discover God's vision and intention for children.



Divide the participants into groups of about five to seven people. Provide each group with large piece of paper and marker pen.

- Ask them to describe God's vision and intention for children. This should be supported with bible references. Each group should write their answers on the paper.



20 minutes



Next, provide each group with craft paper and enough art materials for them to use creatively.

- Ask them to draw God's idea of a child-friendly world, based on their descriptions of God's vision and intention for

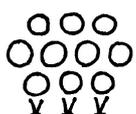


15 minutes

on their descriptions of God's vision and intention for children.

(Idea: Begin with an outline representing your locality or region of the world. Imagine what sort of activities are happening which show God's desire for a child-friendly environment. Add these to the picture.)

When they have finished the task ask all of the groups to come together.



Invite each group in turn to read out their list of statements indicating the biblical references, and to present their picture of a child-friendly world.

Invite participants to comment on the statements particularly noting...

- anything to be clarified?
- any common themes or striking differences?

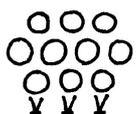


20 minutes

At the end of your discussion, encourage everyone to go and read the worksheets then find a person or two they would like to share with, affirm and pray for.

### **Synthesis (about 20 minutes)**

Bring the participants back together again for the final part of the process.



Ask participants the following questions to help process their reflections:

- What were your thoughts and realisations when the group discussed the most concerning issues for children?
- How close is this to God's vision and intention for children?
- What are your reflections and learning?



20 minutes

Conclude by affirming the key learnings that have been shared.

## Resources

### Outcomes Form 3

Use the form to keep a copy of all of the key learning insights from the activities of this session.

Session 3 – God's vision for world...	
how God envisions world	biblical reference

When you have the Outcomes Forms for all the sessions please send them with the Facilitator's Feedback Form to: UGHFC, P.O. Box 633, Oxford OX2 0XZ, England or fax: +44 1865 320101 or email: < ughfc@viva.org >

## Worksheet 3a

Concerns I have about children and childhood in today's world...

## Optional Inputs

If your participants are familiar with children living in high risk situations, then go straight on to activity 3a. Otherwise, there are some optional inputs here, of which you can use one or more. The purpose is to let people know the suffering which many children experience.

- **Children's Voices**  
Some children are very articulate in explaining the issues that children face, either by themselves or with the support of an adult. They may choose to speak from personal experience, or peer research (where they ask other children of the same age what their concerns are). Ask a local community project if a few children would be willing to share their perspectives.
- **Photo Gallery**  
Put up a series of photos of children or of the environment in which children find themselves. Each photo should be accompanied by a short description of the relevant issues.
- **National Context**  
Using pictures and statistics from your own sources, give a presentation of the situation of children in your nation. Include relevant historical trends, both positive and negative and conclude with the key issues for today.
- **Local Research**  
You can ask one participant, or someone else with knowledge or research on the situation of children in your chosen locality, to do a 15 minute presentation. Ensure they are informed to prepare in advance.
- **Video Clip**  
Use a short piece of informative video, perhaps from a documentary or news sources, which portrays the difficulties many children face.

## Other sources of information...

- "State of the World's Children" published annually by UNICEF and also available on their website at < [www.unicef.org/sowc03](http://www.unicef.org/sowc03) >
- Resources from development agencies or government departments.
- World Wide Day of Prayer pack, available from Viva Network's website at < [www.viva.org/wwdp](http://www.viva.org/wwdp) >

## Examples for activity 3b

### Child Friendly World – *example verses and statements*

from the Prophets...

Isaiah 65:17-25 *"No child's life should be cut short by early death, or marred by experience of intense suffering and pain."*

Isaiah 49:15-18 *"Children will be valued and celebrated. They will never be marginalised, forgotten or overlooked."*

Isaiah 58:6-12 *"God does not want any children to go hungry or thirsty, naked or homeless."*

**Note to facilitator:** many more verses tell us about God's vision for the world, these are just a few examples. Encourage participants to find references and make statements about God's vision for a child-friendly world.

# Our Part in Making God's Vision a Reality



## Overview

This is the fourth session in the series, and concludes the essential learning sessions. After session 4 you may choose to do the two optional sessions (5 and 6) for those who wish to look deeper at their work in the light of global perspectives and local expressions. If these are not relevant to your context, then go directly to session 7.

## Objectives

By the end of this session you will have helped participants to...

- CONSIDER the various roles Christians may have in making God's vision a reality.
- IDENTIFY practical expressions of these roles.

## Outcomes

By the end of this session you will have...

- a LIST of statements and biblical references identifying the various roles of Christians in realising God's vision and intention for children,
- a PICTURE showing an ideal of what this might look like in reality,
- some EXAMPLES of local expressions of these in practice.

## Inputs

For this session you will need sufficient basic items (paper, marker pens) for all of the group work.

For those who need some help getting started on exploring bible verses (activity 3b), there are some examples in the resources for this session.

Unless your participants are familiar with different expressions of Christian work with children then choose at least one of the optional inputs from the resources for this session.

You may do more than one optional input if you have time, and you think it would be helpful to participants.

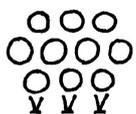
## Process

Use the lead-in section to open the session, then introduce the optional input. After this, get participants involved in the activities, and the synthesis.

Note: for this session...

- You should choose *at least one* optional input.
  - You should do *both* activity 4a *and* activity 4b.
- 

### Lead-in (about 2 minutes)



Having thought about God's view of children and vision for a child-friendly world, we are now going to consider in more depth our own role in God's purposes for children.

We will explore ideas as to how Christians can respond personally or together to make God's purposes a reality.

In order to help set the scene, we will begin with...



2 minutes

### Option – Information on churches' work (about 15 minutes)

Use the optional input of your choice here, selected from the resources which accompany this session.

After the optional input, bring the participants together again to introduce the following activity.



15 minutes

### Activity 4a – Sources of inspiration (about 60 minutes)

Explain the context for the next activity as follows...

God has planned the gift of childhood to be a special time for nurturing the God-given personalities, gifts and abilities of children. It is meant to be the time when children discover the person God created them to be. As adults, we have been given the vital role of ensuring this will happen.



2 minutes

Ensure each participant has a bible to refer to.



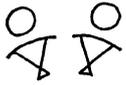
Ask participants to reflect individually on the following...

- What scriptures have been most useful in guiding, motivating, and inspiring you in your work and relationship with children?
- Why have they been useful? How have they helped you?



7 minutes

Each participant should make a note of these scripture references.



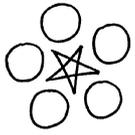
Ask participants to move into pairs and share their findings.

- Are there scriptures that both have in common?
- What do these tell us about how Christians should work with children?



? minutes

Divide the participants into groups of about five people.



Ask each participant to share one of the scriptures identified in the previous activity with other members of the group.

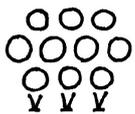
As a group discuss the following:

- What do these scriptures tell us about the role God gives Christians in making his vision for children a reality?
- How do you think this should work in your own local situation (family, community, church, school, project)?



15 minutes

Have them write their ideas onto a large sheet of paper



Bring all the participants together with their written ideas. Invite each group in turn to share one of their responses.

As they do so note the response on a large sheet of paper for all to see. Have the paper divided into columns as follows...

- Verse reference
- Role of Christians
- Practical example



20 minutes

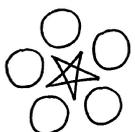
Continue inviting all groups to share ideas until no new ideas emerge. Link together any points that express the same application.

Invite participants to comment on the statements particularly noting...

- any new points to be added?
- any clarifications to be made?

### Activity 4b – Church into action (about 20 minutes)

Divide the participants into groups of about five people. Provide a large sheet of paper and marker pens to each group.



Ask one member of each group to draw an outline of a church building in one corner of the page, leaving plenty of space inside the church and more space outside to represent the community.

Ask the participants to consider the following questions:

- What is happening inside and outside the church?
- What are the people of the church doing?



20 minutes



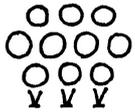
Invite them to draw these things on the picture.

Then ask the participants:

- Where is God's heart for children being made a reality?

Ask them to mark a heart shape in each location.

### Synthesis (about 20 minutes)



After the summary of the activity, ask the participants the following question to help process their reflections:

- How faithful have you been in carrying out your role personally?
- How faithful has your organisation or ministry (church, project, etc.) been in carrying out the roles assigned to it?



20 minutes

Give participants a couple of minutes to reflect on this. Ask if anyone wishes to share some thoughts with the others. Allow for 2 or 3 people to share their reflections, as time permits.

## Resources

### Outcomes Form 4

Use the form to keep a copy of all of the key learning insights from the activities of this session.

Session 4 — Our part in making God's vision a reality...		
role of Christians	bible reference	practical example

When you have the Outcomes Forms for all the sessions please send them with the Facilitator's Feedback Form to: UGHFC, P.O. Box 633, Oxford OX2 0XZ, England or fax: +44 1865 320101 or email: < ughfc@viva.org >

## Optional Inputs

If your participants are familiar with possibilities for working with children living in high risk situations, then go straight on to activity 4a. Otherwise, there are some optional inputs here, of which you can use one or more. The purpose is to let people know the scope of creative potential.

- **Photo Gallery**  
Put up a series of photos each showing the specific response of a local church to an issue concerning children. Each photo should be accompanied by a short description of the action, whether an event held occasionally, or an ongoing project.
- **Local Initiatives**  
Personal testimonies or case studies of local initiatives can show how churches have applied the biblical insights to their particular settings. This can spark interest and provide the impetus for new ideas. Have ready at hand several simple suggestions of small acts of mercy.
- **Global Picture**  
For a broader view you could use encouraging examples of how the church is working with children in other parts of the world. However, make sure the examples are simple and practical, such as you could use in your own context.

## Other sources of information...

- Papers on theology of childhood may provide further input, particularly for activity 4a. You can find these on the accompanying cd-rom, or on Viva Network's website at < [www.viva.org/ughfc](http://www.viva.org/ughfc) >.

## Examples for activity 4a

### Role of the Church – *example verses and statements*

from the Wisdom literature...

Proverbs 31:8-9 *"God wants us to advocate on behalf of children who are exploited or abused."*

from the Letters...

James 1:27 *"Children who are orphaned or abandoned are a priority to God. He wants us to look after them."*

**Note to facilitator:** many more verses tell us about the role of Christians in God's purposes for children, these are just a few examples. Encourage participants to find references and make statements for themselves.

# Comparing God's View of Children with UN Convention on the Rights of the Child



## Overview

This is the first of two optional sessions. It explores secular perspectives on children and childhood, and then reconsiders these views in the light of our Christian understanding.

An alternative approach would be to choose a selection of activities from sessions 5 and 6, condensing them into a single session.

## Objectives

By the end of this session you will have helped participants to consider how we can use our own perspective to contribute to other understandings of the value of children.

## Outcomes

By the end of this session participants will have created a comparison of the Convention on the Rights of the Child with God's view of children from Session 2.

## Inputs

For this session you will need the summary sheets from the first four sessions. It will be helpful if these can be clearly displayed for all participants to see, perhaps around the area where the discussion groups will meet.

You will also need...

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child summary. A copy of this is located on the cd-rom which accompanies this facilitation pack.

(In preparation for activity 5a you should print out the summary, then cut the paper into strips each with one article on it. Also print out the three category headings required. You will need one set of these for each group.)

Unless your participants are very familiar with standards and functions of secular agencies such as the UN, you should choose at least one optional input from the accompanying resources.

## Process

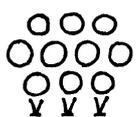
Follow through the lead-in, optional input, activities and synthesis in the usual sequence. Make sure you have prepared all your inputs to the activities before you begin.

If participants are unfamiliar with the UN CRC, they will need time in advance to read it through. If you are doing these sessions over a period of time, you can give a copy to people at the end of the previous session. However, if you are doing the sessions all as one workshop you will need to allow extra time.

Note: for this session...

- Allow time *in advance* for participants to read the UN CRC.
  - You should choose *at least one* optional input.
  - You should do *both* activity 5a *and* 5b.
  - Activity 5c is an *optional* extra, but can help the participants to move from abstract ideas towards practical responses.
- 

### Lead-in (about 5 minutes)



It is not only Christians who are trying to ensure that children are cared for in the best possible way! Almost every government around the world has signed and ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child as a commitment to improving the lives of children.



5 minutes

Originally conceived in the early 1900s by a visionary Christian named Eglantyne Jebb, the document went through many revisions before finally being adopted by the United Nations on November 20th 1989, and entered into force almost a year later.

This document has developed into the most influential global legal instrument for ensuring children are protected and have all they need to thrive and flourish, and achieve their God-given potential.

We are going to look at how the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child compares with our understanding of God's view of children. This will help us to see how a right-based approach might be helpful to inform our work.

### Option – Information on child rights (about 15 minutes)

Use the optional input of your choice here, selected from the resources which accompany this session.

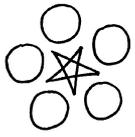
After the optional input, bring the participants together again to introduce the following activity.



15 minutes

## Activity 5a — Getting to know the Convention on the Rights of the Child (about 30 minutes)

Divide the participants into groups of about five people.



Give each group a copy of the CRC divided up into separate articles, and also the three headings given below. Ask them as a group to allocate each of the articles to one of the three categories, coming to a consensus on the answer.



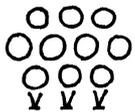
20 minutes

The three category headings are:

- Protection (keeping children from harm)
- Provision (giving what children need to live and develop)
- Participation (engaging children in their world)

(Note: an alternative would be to use the categories of Participation, Survival and Development.)

After sufficient time, bring the participants back together.



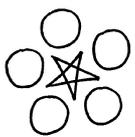
Invite people to share their reactions to the exercise.



? minutes

## Activity 5b — Biblical comparison with CRC (about 50 minutes)

Make sure that each group has two copies of the Convention on the Rights of the Child for reference. Also ensure that the outcomes from session 2 are visible for all to see. (If necessary, you can provide copies of your outcomes form for session 2.) Each group also require a large sheet of paper to write up their response.



Ask each group to write up a comparison between God's view of children and the view expressed in the CRC. The response statements should reflect the priorities and values of the group, the most important clauses coming first.



30 minutes

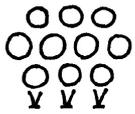
The following questions will help the group to think through the exercise:

How does your Christian understanding...

- differ from the CRC?
- agree with the CRC?
- improve upon the CRC?

Explain that the responses must be specific. Participants must compare rights articles in the CRC with particular statements from the previous sessions.

Each group should then write up their findings on a large sheet of paper.

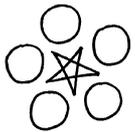


Bring the participants back together. Invite each group in turn to present their findings to the others.



15 minutes

### Activity 5c – Acting on children’s rights (about 20 minutes)

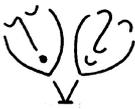


Each group should select one of the rights from the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and prepare a short piece of theatre (about 2-3 minutes in length), acting out...

- how the child’s right is violated, and
- the positive response of a Christian agency or church.



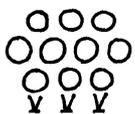
20 minutes



Give each group a little time to prepare (about 5-7 minutes), then invite each group to perform their drama for the others.

### Synthesis (about 15 minutes)

Once the participants have completed the activity, bring them all back together, and use the following questions to help draw out some of the key points that have been learnt. Encourage all to participate.



Use these questions to stimulate discussion:

- How do you feel that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child benefits our understanding of God’s heart for children?
- How could it be useful to your work?
- If a government official or donor agency asked you to demonstrate that your work with children complies with Convention on the Rights of the Child, how could you show that and be true to your Christian understanding at the same time?



15 minutes

Affirm each contribution, emphasising the positive points raised.

## Resources

### Outcomes Form 5

Use the form to keep a copy of all of the key learning insights from the activities of this session.

Session 5 – Comparing God's view of children with UN CRC...	
God's view of children	UN CRC

When you have the Outcomes Forms for all the sessions please send them with the Facilitator's Feedback Form to: UGHFC, P.O. Box 633, Oxford OX2 0XZ, England or fax: +44 1865 320101 or email: < ughfc@viva.org >

## Optional Inputs

If your participants are already familiar with UN standards and functions, then go straight to activity 5a. Otherwise, there are some optional inputs provided here. The purpose is to provide basic awareness of the scope of child rights influence.

- **Local Advocate**

Invite a representative of a local Christian project (either a community-based or non-governmental organisation) to give a short presentation on the UN CRC, its history and usage.

- **Mini Debate**

In advance ask two persons to be prepared to put the case for and against Christians getting involved in secular child rights movements. Invite them to face the audience. Keep the timing under control (warn the two persons in advance, use a bell to indicate when time is up)! They have four minutes each to present their case, then two minutes each to respond to an issue raised by the other. Finally invite the audience to express their appreciation with applause.

## Other sources of information

Available to print on the accompanying cd-rom you will find:

- Convention on the Rights of the Child text and summary
- A child-friendly version
- Papers on children's rights

# Comparing God's Vision for a Child-friendly World with UN World Fit for Children



## Overview

This is the second of two optional sessions. It explores secular perspectives on the world children live in, and then reconsiders these views in the light of our Christian understanding.

An alternative approach would be to select activities from sessions 5 and 6, condensing them into a single session.

## Objectives

Your role as facilitator is to help participants to consider how we can use our own perspective to contribute to other understandings of what a world good enough for children would be like.

## Outcomes

By the end of this session you will have a comparison of the World Fit For Children with God's vision for a child-friendly world from Session 3.

## Inputs

For this session you will need the summary sheets from the first four sessions. It will be helpful if these can be clearly displayed for all participants to see, perhaps around the area where the discussion groups will meet.

You will also need...

- UN World Fit for Children summary. A copy of this is located on the accompanying cd-rom.

(In preparation for activity 6a you should print out the summary, then cut the paper into strips each with one article on it. Also print out the four key goals indicated. You will need one set of these for each group.)

Unless your participants are very familiar with UN standards and functions, you should choose at least one optional input from the accompanying resources.

## Process

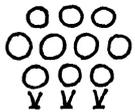
Follow through the lead-in, optional input, activities and synthesis in the usual sequence. Make sure you have all the inputs prepared beforehand.

If participants are unfamiliar with the UN WFFC, they will need time in advance to read it through. Either give out a copy at the end of the previous session, or else allow extra time.

Note: for this session...

- Allow time *in advance* for participants to read the UN WFFC.
  - You should choose *at least one* optional input.
  - You should do *both* activity 6a and 6b.
  - Activity 6c is an *optional* extra, but can help the participants to work through from theory to practice in their own context.
- 

### Lead-in (about 5 minutes)



It is not only Christians who have big plans! Governments around the world, working together in the forum of the United Nations, set targets for poverty reduction and development, among many other concerns. Such targets, while not always achieved, are well intentioned and have a lot of influence on governments who participate in the community of nations.



5 minutes

Currently, the United Nations is driving the agenda towards the Millenium Development Goals, targets which governments are aiming to achieve by the year 2015.

Many of these targets could have a positive impact on children directly and indirectly. One of the key inputs to this process is the World Fit For Children plan, which outlines an agenda for improving children's lives.

We are going to look at how the UN World Fit For Children plan compares with our understanding of God's vision for a child-friendly world.

### Option – Information on world plans (about 15 minutes)

Use the optional input of your choice here, selected from the resources which accompany this session.

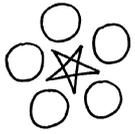
After the optional input, bring the participants together again to introduce the following activity.



15 minutes

### Activity 6a – Getting to know the World Fit For Children plan (about 30 minutes)

Divide the participants into groups of about five people.

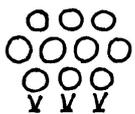


Give each group a copy of the WFFC divided up into statement points, and also the four headings given below. Ask them as a group to consider which of the four key goals each statement point contributes to. Allocate the statements as appropriate, coming to a consensus on the answer.

- Promoting healthy lives
- Providing quality education
- Protecting against violence, abuse and exploitation
- Combating HIV and AIDS



20 minutes



After sufficient time, bring the participants back together.

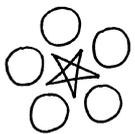
Invite people to share their reactions to the exercise.



7 minutes

### Activity 6b – Biblical comparison with WFFC (about 50 minutes)

Make sure that each group has two copies of the World Fit For Children plan to use for reference. Also ensure that the outcomes from session 3 are visible. (If necessary, provide copies of your outcomes form for session 3.) Each group also require a large sheet of paper to write up their response.



Ask each group to compare God's vision for a child-friendly world with and the view expressed in the WFFC plan. The responses should reflect the priorities and values of the group, the most important clauses coming first.



30 minutes

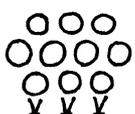
The following questions will help the group to think through the exercise:

How does your Christian understanding...

- differ from the WFFC?
- agree with the WFFC?
- improve upon the WFFC?

Explain that the responses must be specific, comparing points in the WFFC with particular statements from previous sessions.

Each group should then write up their findings on a large sheet of paper.

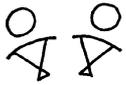


Bring the participants back together. Invite each group in turn to present their findings to the others.



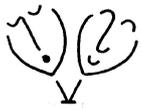
15 minutes

## Activity 6c – Acting on the secular agenda (about 15 minutes)



Each pair should imagine the scenario of an interview with a representative of a government department or funding agency. One member of the pair should question the other as follows...

- Funding agency: *"We really like the work you are doing in the community. However, we can only support organisations whose work is contributing towards national objectives, based on the UN World Fit For Children plan. How does your work contribute?"*



7 minutes

The pair should then swap roles. Here is an alternative question to try...

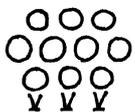
- Government department: *"We are concerned about religious groups. We will only allow organisations to operate who tackle child welfare from a rights perspective based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. How does your work do this?"*



7 minutes

## Synthesis (about 15 minutes)

Once the participants have completed the activity, bring them all back together. Use the following questions to stimulate participation and help draw out some of the key learning points.



Use these questions to stimulate discussion:

- How do you feel that the UN World Fit For Children plan benefits our understanding of God's heart for children?
- How could it be useful to your work?
- If a government official or donor agency asked you to demonstrate that your work with children contributes to a World Fit For Children, how could you show that and be true to your Christian understanding at the same time?



15 minutes

Affirm each contribution, emphasising the positive points raised.

## Resources

### Outcomes Form 6

Use the form to keep a copy of all of the key learning insights from the activities of this session.

Session 6 – Comparing God's vision for world with UN WFFC...	
God's vision for world	UN WFFC

When you have the Outcomes Forms for all the sessions please send them with the Facilitator's Feedback Form to: UGHFC, P.O. Box 633, Oxford OX2 0XZ, England or fax: +44 1865 320101 or email: < ughfc@viva.org >

## Optional Inputs

If your participants are already familiar with the standards and functions of secular agencies such as the UN, then go straight to activity 6a. Otherwise, there are some optional inputs provided here. The purpose is to increase awareness of the scope of child rights influence.

- **District Spokesperson**

If there is a spokesperson for children on the national or district governing council, you could invite them to give a short presentation of the government's plans of action for children, and how faith-based organisations can be involved.

- **National Plan**

If your government has a published plan of action for children, or targets for areas such as education, child health and welfare, then you (or another participant) could prepare a presentation of the key points.

## Other sources of information

Available to print on the accompanying cd-rom you will find:

- World Fit For Children text and summary
- A child-friendly version
- Papers on children's rights

# Guiding Principles for our Work

session

7

## Overview

In this concluding session we take the learning insights and apply them to the immediate context of our work. We do this by formulating a framework of principles and deciding on some practical steps for action.

## Objectives

You as facilitator will encourage participants to...

- IDENTIFY guiding principles that impact their work with children,
- OUTLINE practical steps they can take to act on these reflections.

## Outcome

- a SET of guiding principles that will have an impact on the work of the participants with children,
- a PLAN of practical steps to act on this learning,
- a COMMITMENT to action.

## Input

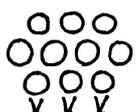
You will need the summary sheets from sessions 1 to 4, plus the optional sessions 5 and 6, if you included these.

## Process

The lead-in for this session is a review of the previous learning, then there is one activity, which requires an extended period of time. Finally, the synthesis aims to encourage participants to commit to putting the learning into action.

---

### Lead-in (about 20 minutes)



For these sessions we have been trying to understand the heart of God for children by searching the scripture and with spiritual insight reflecting on our own experiences.

We have explored:

- God's view of children
- God's vision and intention for children
- Description of God's child friendly world
- Role of Christians in carrying out this vision



20 minutes

And optionally:

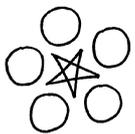
- Secular perspectives on children

**Note to facilitator:** review output from previous sessions in each of these topics.

From all of our learning we can now identify principles that would guide us in our work, ensuring that children are nurtured and encouraged into God's purposes for them as we work with them and relate to them, and so they may sense God's touch in their lives.

### Activity 7 – Key principles (about 60 minutes)

Divide the participants into groups of about five people.



Ask each group to develop guiding principles in working with children based on the output of the preceding sessions.

Here are some questions that may help to guide the discussion:

- What have we learned about children's capacities and needs?
- What have we learned about what God's desires for children?
- What have we learned about what needs to be done to ensure that children reach their God given potential?

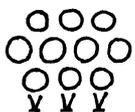
In the light of these...

- What key principles can we identify that guide us with respect to how we work with children?

Participants should seek to identify principles which would guide their work with families and communities, or in programmes and projects, that affects the lives of children.



30 minutes



Bring all of the participants together. Invite each group in turn to present the key principles they have identified.

As each group shares, write down their answers on a large sheet of paper for all to see. Continue until each group has shared their findings. Link together any points that express the same principles.



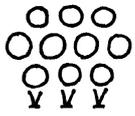
30 minutes

Invite participants to comment on the statements particularly noting...

- any new points to be added?
- any clarifications to be made?

Encourage people to continue to hone the statements, seeking a consensus on a common set of shared principles.

### Synthesis (about 20 minutes)



Ask the participants the following question to help process their reflections:

- How do these principles impact your work with children?

Allow several participants to comment.



15 minutes



Provide copies of worksheet 7, and ask participants to identify some very practical steps they can take in the light of what they have been learning, and to note these under three headings...

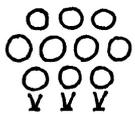
- things which I will stop doing,
- things I will start doing,
- things I will continue to do.



7 minutes

Allow participants several minutes to think about this on their own, writing down their thoughts.

### Closing (about 15 minutes)



Bring this final session to a close with a collective symbolic act of commitment and worship.



15 minutes

---

### Bigger Picture reminder...

Don't forget: if you would like to be a part of the bigger picture, please send or email your forms to us. We would be delighted to hear from you.

Even if you decide not to send these, please...

### Facilitator Feedback reminder...

Please fill in the facilitator's feedback form. This is helpful for us to see how useful the process has been, and how we can improve upon it.

## Resources

### Outcomes Form 7

Use the form to keep a copy of all of the key learning insights from the activities of this session.

#### *Session 7 – Guiding principles for our work...*

When you have the Outcomes Forms for all the sessions please send them with the Facilitator's Feedback Form to: UGHFC, P.O. Box 633, Oxford OX2 0XZ, England or fax: +44 1865 320101 or email: < [ughfc@viva.org](mailto:ughfc@viva.org) >

## Worksheet 7

Steps I can take to put these principles into practice in my work...

Practical steps...

things I have been  
doing that I will now  
stop

things I have not  
been doing that I will  
start

things I have been  
doing that I will  
continue

--	--	--

# Needs and Actions



## Context

Here we have included, as an optional extra, a suggested way of finding out more about the participants and their work. It could also be useful for keeping in touch with people and contacting them about future events.

You could send this to participants before the first session, and ask them to complete it and bring it with them. Alternatively, hand it out after the first session and collect it in later.

## Content

### Needs and Actions Survey

Create a survey form to find out the kind of work with children that each of the participants is currently involved in, and to discover what they hope to achieve in the near future.

Also include questions to ascertain what they feel they need help with in order to implement the principles they have learnt, and what they feel they may be able to offer others.

As you review the responses to the survey, you may find that skills or services offered by one person or agency could meet a need of another. This will help identify opportunities for working together.

An example survey form is included on the next page.

### Exchange Pinboard

Another way of exchanging information is to have a notice board or wall space where participants can pin up the needs they have and the services or skills they can offer to others.

Provide cards of two different colours. Remind people to put their name on the cards they use! Encourage people to read what others have written.

## Example:

### Needs and Actions Survey

information for sharing

Please answer the following questions:

- 1 Does your church have a Sunday Club for children?
- 2 From where do you get your lesson material?
- 3 Does your church have a programme for youth?
- 4 From where do your leaders get their training?
- 5 Do you work with children living in risky situations?

If your answer to question 5 is YES, then...

- 6 In what kind of situations are these children?

For those who do not have an initiative for reaching these children, then...

- 7 What kind of project would you like to have?
- 8 What would you need to begin such a project?
- 9 Are you interested in linking up with others to exchange ideas on how to begin initiatives for reaching children in risky situations?

For those who already have an initiative for reaching these children, then...

- 10 What kind of project do you have?
- 11 What do you need to continue helping these children?
- 12 Are you interested in linking up with others to exchange ideas on how to further develop initiatives for children in risky situations?

For everybody...

- 13 Are you interested in the Local Conference for Pastors and Children's Workers about reaching children in risky situations?
- 14 Are you interested in joining the Local Network?

If you are willing to join the Local Network, then...

- 15 What do you feel you may be able to offer?

# Insights into Abuse



## Context

Here is another optional extra. If you have a group of people who are open to sharing more personal information anonymously, it can give some real insight into the immediacy of child abuse issues.

This must be carried out namelessly. Participants will not respond if they feel any information they give will be identified with them personally.

Provide an anonymous way of collecting the forms, such as blank envelopes or using a sealed 'drop box' with a slot in the top.

Once collected, you will need some time to process the responses and summarise the information.

At an appropriate stage in the session, the summary information can given to all the participants. Invite comments, but ensure any issues raised are handled sensitively.

## Content

### Abuse Insights Survey

This survey form should include a range of scenarios of encounters children may have which are potentially or actually abusive. Some of the scenarios may be intentionally uncertain or ambiguous. Include both familiar and unfamiliar situations.

Use a simple rating system to determine how participants perceive each situation, and their reaction to it.

Two final questions encourage participants to identify whether they have experienced any of these forms of abuse as a child.

An example survey form is included on the next page.

## Example:

### Abuse Insights Survey

to be completed anonymously

How do you rate each of the following scenarios? Circle the relevant answers.

- A A child being teased by other children in the child-care centre  
extremely serious | quite serious | less serious | not serious
- B A child being bullied by other children in the child-care centre  
extremely serious | quite serious | less serious | not serious
- C Child-care worker making the child stand in the corner for an hour  
extremely serious | quite serious | less serious | not serious
- D Child-care worker beating a child with a stick, leaving red marks  
extremely serious | quite serious | less serious | not serious
- E Parent beating a child with a stick, leaving red marks on the skin  
extremely serious | quite serious | less serious | not serious
- F Parent beating a child with their hands  
extremely serious | quite serious | less serious | not serious
- G Child being sold by parents  
extremely serious | quite serious | less serious | not serious
- H Child being raped by a care-giver  
extremely serious | quite serious | less serious | not serious
- I A 2 year-old child being touched by an adult on the genitals  
extremely serious | quite serious | less serious | not serious
- J A 12 year-old child being touched by an adult on the genitals  
extremely serious | quite serious | less serious | not serious
- K Child being tied to a bed or chair as a form of restraint  
extremely serious | quite serious | less serious | not serious
- L Child-care centre not giving the child good health care  
extremely serious | quite serious | less serious | not serious
- M Child-care centre not giving the child enough food  
extremely serious | quite serious | less serious | not serious
- N A 12 year-old child having to care for eight children aged 2-5 years  
extremely serious | quite serious | less serious | not serious

Did any of these happen to you as a child?

If your answer is YES , then which ones? Circle the relevant letters.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N

# APPENDIX A

## Facilitator's Feedback Form

Please fill in this 2-page form and send us a copy to let us know how you made use of this facilitation pack, what you found helpful, and any problems you had, or suggestions for improving it. Thank you.

Please tell us about yourself as facilitator.	
Your name:	
Your email address or phone number:	
Your church or organisation:	
Other relevant contact details:	
Location of event:	
Please tell us about your event.	
Why did you decide to run an event? What was your purpose?	
How did you run your event? What was the process?	
What was the timescale for the event?	

Please tell us about the participants.

How many people participated in your event?

How many were children?

How many were adults?

Please tell us about the facilitation pack.

Which resources and activities did you use?

How helpful or useful did you find them?

How could we improve them?

Please tell us about any extra resources or activities you added in.

What did you include that wasn't already in the facilitation pack?

Any other reflections or comments?

...continue on another sheet of paper if necessary

Please send the completed Facilitator's Feedback Form, along with the Outcomes Forms for all of the sessions to:

UGHFC, P.O. Box 633, Oxford OX2 0XZ, England / Angleterre / Inghilterra

or fax: +44 1865 320101 or email: < ughfc@viva.org >