



— GROW KIDS | VOLUME 8 —

# STRATEGY GUIDE



## OVERVIEW

We all love it when things are planned out and organized in kids ministry! But let's be honest. It can be a challenge to set aside the time we need to actually get organized. So how about we try something different this year? **How about we start planning our ministries an entire year at a time?** It only takes one day each year, and it's going to make the other 364 days of your year so much more fun, peaceful, and effective. And it's actually really doable with the Grow annual strategy!

## WHAT WE'VE PROVIDED

### ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING

Every year with Grow Kids, you get all the resources you need to host your own annual planning session (on your own or with your whole team). We give you . . .

- **The Annual Planning Meeting Guide**
  - Instructions
  - Suggested Schedule
  - Shopping List
- Physical **box of calendar cards**
- **Editable files** of the calendar cards
- **A walkthrough video**

*These will be mailed to you shortly after you purchase Grow!*

*Our team is here to guide you (and explain the Grow strategy in detail) every step of the way!*

### MORE PLANNING TOOLS

With your Grow Kids subscription, you'll also get . . .

- A **weekly planner**
- **Editable annual calendars** in multiple file formats
- Weekly and monthly **to-do lists**

*To help you stay organized and encouraged!*

And, of course, Grow isn't just a planning tool. With Grow, you get all the resources you need for an entire year of ministry in these six areas:

- DISCIPLESHIP**
- TEACHING**
- ENVIRONMENTS**

- EVENTS**
- VOLUNTEERS**
- FAMILIES**

## OVERVIEW

When planning your year, we always recommend you start with your discipleship strategy. That's because **spiritual growth should be the lens through which we see everything else we do in our ministries.** We believe there are four spiritual habits that help kids (and adults, too) grow closer to God. These four habits aren't anything new. They've been talked about in countless ways, by countless numbers of people. Your church is probably already talking about them in your own unique way, so feel free to change the language to fit your context if you need to. The words aren't important, but here's what is: if these four spiritual habits are the behaviors that help kids grow closer to God, **we need a strategy to help kids engage in these four spiritual habits on a regular basis, year after year.**



### **SPEND TIME WITH GOD**

If we want to grow spiritually, we need to spend time growing in relationship with God through personal times of prayer, reading Scripture, reflection, and worship.



### **USE YOUR GIFTS**

If we want to grow spiritually, we need to understand how God uniquely made us and then use those unique qualities to love God, love others, and impact the world around us.



### **SPEND TIME WITH OTHERS**

If we want to grow spiritually, we need to be engaged in healthy community and godly relationships with others — with people who share our beliefs, as well as with people who don't.



### **SHARE YOUR STORY**

If we want to grow spiritually, we need to make faith a regular, everyday, go-to topic of conversation as we learn to connect our stories with God's story and then share our stories with others.

## WHAT WE'VE PROVIDED

Since there are four spiritual habits we've identified as key to a kid's spiritual growth, **Grow Kids breaks the year into four quarters and focuses on one spiritual habit each quarter.** We provide you with one discipleship activity for that quarter's habit each quarter. While every activity we provide in our Discipleship Strategy is unique, every quarter of resources includes resources like ...



### **INSTRUCTIONS**

An **activity guide** for you, the ministry leader  
**Editable instructions** for your volunteers  
**Shopping lists**



### **GRAPHICS**

**Editable graphics** for each activity  
**Title images** in multiple formats and sizes  
**Background images** in multiple formats and sizes  
Additional **social media or screen graphics**

## + MORE RESOURCES

**Editable resources** for kids, like handouts, workbooks, and more

**Printable posters** for each spiritual habit  
The [Grow Habits App](#) to help kids develop more consistent spiritual habits

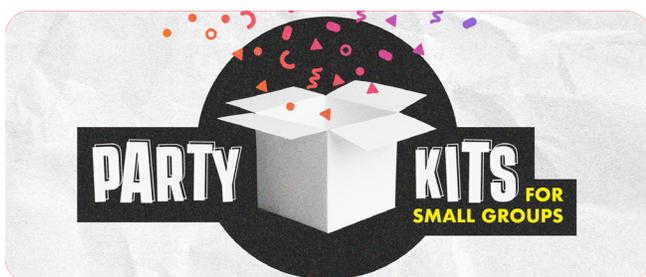
Weekly and monthly **Grow at Home handouts** for each teaching series to help families disciple their kids at home

**Volunteer devotionals** for each teaching series

### THIS YEAR IN GROW

Although we always focus on each spiritual habit at the same time every year, **how we practice these spiritual habits changes every year.** This year here's what you'll get with Grow Kids . . .

#### FALL



Because we always focus on the spiritual habit of **spending time with others** during the fall quarter, this year, we've created the **Small Group Party Kits** to help kids have fun and grow their relationships within their small groups.

#### WINTER



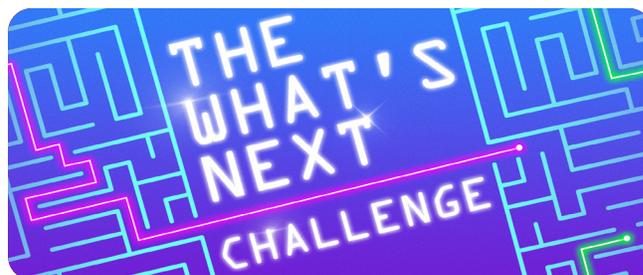
To focus on the spiritual habit of **using your gifts** during the winter quarter, this year, we're recommending an event called **The Joy Drive** to help kids partner with a local organization to gather donations, love, and serve their community.

#### SPRING



For the spring quarter, when we always focus on the spiritual habit of **spending time with God**, we've created a discipleship activity called **The Grow with God Experience** to help kids reflect on what Jesus has done and practice spiritual habits.

#### SUMMER



With a focus on the spiritual habit of **sharing your story** during the summer quarter, this year, we're providing an activity called **The What's Next Challenge** to help kids use their creativity to see how pieces of their lives fit together and how God can use their stories to help others.



AN ANNUAL  
STRATEGY FOR

**TEACHING**



## OVERVIEW

It's so important to have a strategy for what you'll teach kids. Without a strategy, we run the risk of missing important ideas, teaching only the topics that interest us most, and ultimately failing to give our kids a full and holistic view of God. The teaching strategy behind Grow Kids has been created, influenced, and written by hundreds (literally) of real kids pastors in real kids ministries from a diversity of church contexts, cultures, sizes, and denominations. Our goal is to help you help kids grow spiritually by **teaching and discussing Scripture in developmentally appropriate ways.**

### OUR AUDIENCE

Grow Kids is **designed with preschoolers through preteens in mind**, since we know most children's workers oversee preschool, elementary, and sometimes even preteens.

But we also know the age groups within that range are all really different! So here's how we balance that: **every month comes with a separate (but aligned) preschool and elementary series.** This means both your preschoolers and elementary-aged kids will be hearing the same Bible stories and Big Ideas at the same time, but in developmentally appropriate ways.

It also means **every series comes with Toddler Hacks and Preteen Hacks.** These tips are specific to each series and are designed to help you adjust the teaching to be more age-specific. We also know when you are ministering to kids with disabilities, it's important to adjust your teaching strategy in more specific ways. That's why **every series comes with Accessibility Hacks** to help you adjust the teaching and activities to make them more accessible to kids with physical, developmental, or learning disabilities.

### OUR STRUCTURE

Maybe you're wondering, "Is Grow Kids designed for small groups? Large groups? Classrooms? Small churches? Big churches?" The answer is this: Grow really is flexible enough to use in all of those contexts and formats!

**If your large group teaching and small group discussion happen together**, our **Teaching Guide** combines the large group teaching and discussion time all in one place.

**If your large group teaching and small group discussion happen separately**, we provide simple one-page **Discussion Guides** for each week so your small group leaders can easily lead those conversations after your large group teaching time.

### OUR SCOPE & SEQUENCE

The Grow Kids scope and sequence will take kids through every major Bible story in three years. At the end of three years, we'll start over! We spend an equal amount of time in the Old and New Testaments. For a detailed look at our three-year plan, check out our [Scope & Sequence](#).

Plus, if your church uses a lectionary to help guide the Scripture you study each week, **every week of Grow Kids uses at least one passage of Scripture from The Revised Common Lectionary.** Our curriculum for teenagers does too, so if your church uses Grow Kids your kids and youth ministries can get more aligned!

## WHAT WE'VE INCLUDED

While every series in our Teaching Strategy is unique, we always provide you with the same core tools and resources to make each one happen. With each series, we'll include . . .



### TEACHING

A **preschool series guide** and **elementary series guide** for each month  
**Editable preschool teaching guides** and **elementary teaching guides** for every week in multiple file formats  
**Preschool teaching videos** and **elementary teaching videos** for every week  
**Editable discussion guides** for every week in multiple file formats  
**Engaging teaching techniques** in every week, like activities, object lessons, music, reflection, polls, stories, and more  
 Free access to the [Grow Lesson Builder](#) for editing your curriculum or writing lessons from scratch  
**Volunteer devotionals** every month  
 A **memory verse** every month with a **sign language translation**  
**Toddler hacks** for each series  
**Preteen hacks** for each series  
**Accessibility hacks** for each series to help you accommodate kids with disabilities  
 Weekly **coloring pages, handouts, images,** and **activity sheets**  
 A printed **preschool coloring book** and **elementary coloring book**, available by download or [in print](#)  
**Shopping lists** and **prep lists** for each series



### GRAPHICS

**Editable graphics** for each series  
**Title images** for each series in multiple formats and sizes  
**Background images** for each series in multiple formats and sizes  
 Weekly **Big Idea images** in multiple formats and sizes  
 Weekly **Lower third images** in multiple formats and sizes  
**Memory verse images** for each series in multiple formats and sizes  
**Printable posters** for each series in multiple formats and sizes  
 Additional **printables and screen graphics** as needed  
**Style guides** for every series with font names and suggested color swatches  
 Free access to [Grow Slides](#) to help you streamline your presentations



### VIDEOS

**Preschool teaching videos** for every week  
**Elementary teaching videos** for every week  
 Free access to the [Grow TV App](#) to help you share the teaching videos with families  
**Bumper videos** and **countdown videos** for each series



### ENVIRONMENT

**Room design** ideas to complement each series theme  
 Themed **decor, snack, prize,** and **giveaway** ideas to complement each series theme  
**Music suggestions** for each series  
 Free access to the [Grow Games & Icebreakers app](#)



### COMMUNICATION

Weekly **volunteer emails** in multiple formats  
 Monthly **parent emails** in multiple formats  
 Weekly and monthly **Grow at Home handouts** to help families disciple their kids at home  
**Marketing checklists, social media posts,** and **social media captions** for each series  
**Promotional cards and posters** for each series  
 Free access to [Grow Hubs](#) to help you streamline your communication

THIS YEAR IN GROW

This year, here are the series we'll be covering in Grow Kids . . .



4 WEEKS ON SPIRITUAL HABITS



4 WEEKS ON DAVID & THE PSALMS



5 WEEKS ON SOLOMON



4 WEEKS ON ISRAEL & THE WILDERNESS



4 WEEKS ON RUTH



5 WEEKS ON CHRISTMAS



4 WEEKS ON JESUS' EARLY LIFE AND MINISTRY



4 WEEKS ON JESUS' MIRACLES



5 WEEKS ON JESUS' TEACHINGS



4 WEEKS ON EASTER



4 WEEKS ON THE EARLY CHURCH



5 WEEKS ON ELIJAH



4 WEEKS ON ELISHA



## OVERVIEW

The things you teach each week are really important—but we all know the experience we create can often make or break the effectiveness of what we teach. On top of your weekly teaching time, there's a lot that goes into your weekly environment. Between the decor, graphics, music, activities—there's a lot to do. But here's a strategic and easy way to think about your weekly environment: **determine a monthly theme that complements your teaching. Then, create an environment around it!** We like to think of environments like this: music, room design, and visual aids (like graphics and videos).

## WHAT WE'VE PROVIDED

Because our Environments Strategy is tied to our Teaching Strategy, we provide you with a new set of the same core tools and resources for each teaching series. With each series, we'll include . . .



### MUSIC

**Worship song suggestions** to complement each series topic

**Spotify playlists** of our recommended songs



### DECOR

**Pinterest boards** with inspiration for every series

Themed **decor, snack, prize, and giveaway** ideas to complement each series theme

**Instructions and links to purchase supplies** for each room design

**Promotional posters** for each series



### GRAPHICS & VIDEO

**Bumper videos** and **countdown videos** for each series

**Editable graphics** for each series

**Title images** for each series in multiple formats and sizes

**Background images** for each series in multiple formats and sizes

**Big Idea images** for every week in multiple formats and sizes

**Lower thirds images** for every week in multiple formats and sizes

Additional **social media and screen graphics** as needed

**Style guides** for every series with font names and suggested color swatches

Free access to [Grow Slides](#) to help you streamline your presentations

THIS YEAR IN GROW

This year, here are the themes we're pairing with our teaching series in Grow Kids . . .



**OUTER SPACE**



**SPORTS**



**CONSTRUCTION**



**TRAVEL**



**SUPERHEROES**



**TOYS**



**CAMPING**



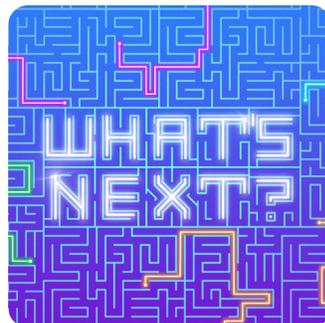
**AQUARIUMS**



**MOVIES**



**LARGER-THAN-LIFE GARDENS**



**MAZES AND PUZZLES**



**BAKING**



**ART CLASS**



## OVERVIEW

Events are a pretty big deal for most kids ministries. They're a way to have fun, connect with families, get new people in the door, and create some excitement. Events matter, but we've got to keep things in perspective. That's why we're fans of keeping your event strategy really simple: You can make a bigger impact each year if you choose to do fewer events with more intentionality. Here's our recommendation: **do one event each quarter, plus a VBS (vacation Bible school) over the summer.** Here's what that looks like each year . . .



### FALL

Every fall, we recommend doing an event that aligns with the fall discipleship focus (Spend Time with Others) by helping kids connect with each other, their families, and their adult leaders. In Grow Kids, this is usually a **just-for-fun** event.



### WINTER

Every winter, we recommend doing another fun event that gets kids and families together before the busyness of the holidays really kicks in. In Grow Kids, this is usually a **Christmas-themed event.**



### SPRING

Every spring, we recommend doing an event that aligns with the spring discipleship focus (Spend Time with God) by giving kids and families an opportunity to engage with and learn more about Jesus. In Grow Kids, this is usually an **Easter-themed event.**



### SUMMER

Every summer, we recommend planning a family fun event that gets kids and families together before the busyness of the summer begins, followed by a VBS-style event. This is usually a **just-for-fun event** in Grow Kids, followed by a **week-long VBS for the community.**

## WHAT WE'VE INCLUDED

While every event in our Event Strategy is unique, we always provide you with the same core tools and resources to make each one happen. With each event, we'll include . . .



### PLANNING

An **event guide** for you, the ministry leader

Suggested **schedules**

**Shopping lists**

**Volunteer roles**

**On-theme ideas for each event for:**

**Decorating**

**Food**

**Activities**

**Prizes & giveaways**

Additional **handouts, images, and activity sheets**



### GRAPHICS

**Editable graphics** for each activity

**Title images** in multiple formats and sizes

**Background images** in multiple formats and sizes



### MARKETING

**Editable flyers** in multiple formats

**Family handouts** in multiple formats

Free access to **Grow Hubs** to help you streamline your communication series

THIS YEAR IN GROW

Although we always use the same rhythm for our events every year, the events we provide always change. Here's what you can expect with Grow Kids this year . . .

**FALL**



This year's fall event, **Step Into The Game**, is made up of a variety of larger-than-life station and all-play games designed for kids to put their best foot forward while winning points for their teams.

**WINTER**



This year, our winter event is **Merry Mini-Golf**, and it's sure to be a hole lot of fun. This do-it-yourself, Christmas-themed mini-golf event is sure to get your kids into the Christmas spirit.

**SPRING**



Our spring event, called **The Egg-cellent Easter Scramble**, is a station-based activity where kids can compete, create, and celebrate the Easter season with some egg-citing activities.

**SUMMER**



This summer, kids will get to compete in **Ready, Set, Race!** They'll be challenged to solve problems and make decisions as a team, competing against other teams to reach the finish line first.



## OVERVIEW

If we want to be effective as kids ministry leaders, we need to get really serious about investing in and empowering the volunteers we lead. When we do that, we multiply our influence, increase the capacity of our ministry, and give kids a better shot at building a lifelong faith. Research shows that young people need not just one kids pastor, but a community of adults who invest in them and their faith. So, if you want volunteers to invest in kids, **it's probably a good idea for you to invest in your volunteers first.** With this annual Volunteer Strategy, you'll learn a system for investing in your volunteers in seven different ways throughout the year. Here they are . . .



### EVENTS

**ONCE A YEAR:** A major vision-casting opportunity you'd want every volunteer to attend.



### COMMUNICATION

**WEEKLY:** Communication is anything you do to connect or share information with your volunteers outside of your weekly program.



### MEETINGS

**EVERY OTHER MONTH** or **AS NEEDED:** An opportunity to teach your volunteers about a very specific topic.



### TOOLS

**AS NEEDED:** A tool is any resource you provide to help your volunteers make their jobs happen.



### DISCUSSION GROUPS

**AS NEEDED:** A gathering with a small group of volunteers who all serve in a similar role.



### CELEBRATION

**EVERY MONTH:** A celebration is anything that celebrates your volunteers for what they've accomplished or who they are.



### CONVERSATIONS

**AS NEEDED:** A conversation is a one-on-one connection with a volunteer for building relationships and giving and receiving feedback.

WHAT WE'VE PROVIDED



## EVENTS

A **Volunteer Kick-Off event guide** for you, the ministry leader

A **suggested schedule** and **shopping list**  
**Decor, activities,** and **food ideas** to complement the event

A **teaching guide** for a time of vision-casting

**Editable graphics** for the event

**Editable flyers** in multiple formats



## MEETINGS

Access to a collection of **meeting guides** on a variety of topics, with **discussion questions**

**Suggested schedules** and **shopping lists**

**Editable graphics** for each meeting

**Editable flyers** in multiple formats



## DISCUSSION GROUPS

Access to a collection of **discussion group guides** on a variety of topics

A **suggested schedule** and **shopping list**

**Editable graphics**

**Editable flyers** in multiple formats



## CONVERSATIONS

Access to a collection of one-on-one **conversation guides** on a variety of topics



## COMMUNICATION

A **communication guide** for you, the ministry leader

50 pre-written weekly **volunteer emails** in multiple formats

**Marketing checklists, social media posts,** and **social media captions** for each teaching series

**Volunteer devotionals** for each teaching series

Access to the a library of **volunteer tip videos** and **scripts** in case you want to film new versions on your own

**Promotional cards and posters** for each teaching series

Free access to **Grow Hubs** to help you streamline your communication



## TOOLS

A **volunteer tool guide** for you, the ministry leader

An editable **volunteer survey** in multiple formats

An editable **volunteer handbook** in multiple formats

Editable **volunteer goals** in multiple formats

Editable **volunteer business cards** in multiple formats

**Volunteer t-shirt designs** in multiple formats



## CELEBRATION

**Monthly celebration ideas** based on weird holidays

**Shopping lists** and **prep lists** for each month

Blank **thank you cards**

THIS YEAR IN GROW

Although the strategy stays consistent every year, each year in Grow Kids, **we provide new resources every year to help you invest in your volunteers.** This year, here's a preview of what's included in Grow Kids . . .



OVERVIEW

When it comes to families, let's be honest—we could all do a better job of engaging them. But no matter how new or how seasoned you are at engaging families in your ministry, we hope this strategy we're about to unpack will give you a framework for investing in families that you can replicate and improve year after year. With this annual Family Strategy, **you'll learn a system for investing in families in different ways throughout the year.** Here they are . . .



## EVENTS

**4 TIMES A YEAR:** An event for families is an environment that provides value to families and connects them with their child, your church, or both. Each year in Grow Kids that includes . . .

- A **Move-Up Day** to graduate kids to the next grade level
- A family **Open House** to begin the school year
- The **Parent and Small Group Leader Breakfast** to connect parents and volunteers
- An annual **Parent Workshop** to train parents on something helpful



## MEETINGS

**AS NEEDED:** An opportunity to talk to kids' parents and guardians about a very specific topic.



## DISCUSSION GROUPS

**AS NEEDED:** A discussion group is a gathering with a small but diverse group of kids' parents or guardians.



## CONVERSATIONS

**AS NEEDED:** A conversation is a one-on-one connection with a parent for building relationships, providing support, or giving and receiving feedback.



## COMMUNICATION

**WEEKLY:** Communication is anything you do to connect or share information with families outside of your weekly program.



## TOOLS

**AS NEEDED:** A tool is any resource you provide to help families connect with your ministry or with their kid.



## CELEBRATION

**EVERY MONTH:** A celebration is anything that celebrates families (and especially parents and guardians) for how they're caring for the kids they parent.

WHAT WE'VE PROVIDED



## EVENTS

**Event guides** for you, the ministry leader  
**Suggested schedules** and **shopping lists**  
**Decor, activities,** and **food ideas** to complement each event

**Editable graphics** for the event

**Editable flyers** in multiple formats

And for events that include a teaching time . . .

A **teaching guide** for a time of vision-casting

Free access to the [Grow Lesson Builder](#) for writing lessons from scratch

Additional **handouts, images,** and **activity sheets**



## COMMUNICATION

A **communication guide** for you, the ministry leader

Monthly pre-written **parent emails** in multiple formats

**Marketing checklists, social media posts,** and **social media captions** for each teaching series

Access to the a library of **parent tip videos** and **scripts** in case you want to film new versions on your own

**Promotional cards and posters** for each teaching series

Free access to [Grow Hubs](#) to help you streamline your communication



## MEETINGS

Access to a collection of **meeting guides** on a variety of topics, with **discussion questions**

**Suggested schedules** and **shopping lists**

**Editable graphics** for each meeting

**Editable flyers** in multiple formats



## TOOLS

A **family tool guide** for you, the ministry leader

An editable **parent survey** in multiple formats

An editable **parent handbook** in multiple formats



## DISCUSSION GROUPS

Access to a collection of **discussion group guides** on a variety of topics

A **suggested schedule** and **shopping list**

**Editable graphics**

**Editable flyers** in multiple formats



## CELEBRATION

**Monthly celebration ideas** based on weird holidays

**Shopping lists** and **prep lists** for each month



## CONVERSATIONS

Access to a collection of one-on-one **conversation guides** on a variety of topics

THIS YEAR IN GROW

Although the strategy stays consistent every year, each year in Grow Kids, **we provide new resources every year to help you invest in families.** This year, here's a preview at what's included in Grow Kids ...

The image displays a collection of 12 event cards arranged in a grid, each with a unique color and icon. The cards are:

- OPEN HOUSE** (Purple): Includes a house icon and a ticket icon.
- PARENT AND SMALL GROUP LEADER BREAKFAST** (Purple): Includes a person icon and a ticket icon.
- MOVE-UP DAY** (Purple): Includes a person icon and a ticket icon.
- PARENT WORKSHOP** (Purple): Includes a pencil icon and a ticket icon.
- PARENT COMMUNICATION** (Red): Includes a megaphone icon.
- PARENT DISCUSSION GROUPS** (Pink): Includes a speech bubble icon.
- PARENT CONVERSATIONS** (Light Blue): Includes a person icon.
- PARENT CELEBRATIONS** (Green): Includes a heart icon.
- PARENT MEETINGS** (Blue): Includes a speech bubble icon.
- PARENT TOOLS** (Yellow): Includes a wrench icon.

The **PARENT TOOLS** card is highlighted with a callout graphic. This graphic features a green arrow pointing to a pink circle containing a **Parent Handbook** (a spiral-bound notebook) and a **Parent Survey** (a document with checkboxes).