



Bible App for Kids Curriculum: Transition from Play Time to Small Groups

Whether you've been leading through the Bible App for Kids Curriculum for a while, or you're new to the game, transitioning kids from free choice Play Time to the more structured small group format can be a challenge. But it's a key procedure that can be mastered!

To establish a smooth transition, try focusing on **modeling**, **consistency**, and **time**.

1. **Modeling:** Do the things you want kids to do.

Why does it matter? Giving direction and following it yourself demonstrates to kids what's expected of them and is much more motivating than simply giving orders.

Modeling Tips: Once you've given clear direction for kids to clean up the room and find a small group, begin to engage in the behaviors you want to see.

- Help clean up toys and put bins away.
- Move to the small group area and sit down.
- Praise kids and other leaders who are doing a great job. *Speak loud enough for other kids to hear, give them high fives, or say thank you.*

2. **Consistency:** Do things the same way every time.

Why does it matter? Kids will learn what you expect of them and will do it with very little direction from you in the future when you do things the same way every time.

Consistency Tips: Follow the same procedure every single time you transition. Here's an example procedure that may help you.

- Two minutes before Clean Up, all leaders prepare kids for Clean Up by letting them know it's coming soon. *This gives kids a chance to play with their favorite toy one last time or to put shoes on if they removed them during free play.*
- Get the attention of the whole room. *Use the same clapping pattern or hand motion all kids can do every single time, such as telling kids to point to their ears, wave their hands in the air, or clap three times with you.*

- Move the star to the Clean Up Picture Schedule Card and turn the Play Time card over.
- Play the Clean Up Song for kids to hear and challenge kids to finish before it's over.
- Help all kids clean while the song plays.
- Leaders sit in the exact same location each week for kids to join them in small groups.

3. **Time:** It takes time to establish a smooth transition procedure.

Why does it matter? Investing extra time initially helps kids learn that following the procedure matters, and it prepares them to be focused and ready for the remainder of the experience. *Good news: once your transition from Play Time to sitting in small groups is established, it will take very little time and leadership from you!*

Time Tips:

- When you're starting out or trying to retrain a group of kids, take as much time as you need to transition from Play Time to sitting in small groups for Prop Talk.
- Giving up on a procedure and moving on before kids are focused and ready might teach kids the procedure is not important to obey or complete. Take the time to hang in there.
- Smooth transitions take time to establish. Be prepared to invest four to five weeks of time to establish a smooth, consistent procedure with your kids.

A final note: If you've been trying consistently to establish a smooth transition procedure and you're still having trouble, find someone who is good at leading through transitions. They may be able to mentor you, step into the room with you, or let you observe them as they lead their group.

Discussion Questions

1. What challenges have you had, or do you think you might have, in transitioning kids from Play Time to sitting in small groups?
2. Which area of focus do you think will benefit you most in establishing a smooth transition from Play Time to sitting in small groups: modeling, consistency, or time?
3. What are some things you can do to get better at the area of focus you chose?

Prayer

God, please help us to model behavior for the kids that honors you, and thank You for giving us the strength to be consistent over time with the kids you have trusted us to lead. Open our eyes to the improvements our kids make week after week. In Jesus' name, amen.