



The Evangelical Covenant Church

Kids Helping Kids



orphans and
vulnerable children



A LOVING FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD

12-PART RESOURCE ENCOURAGING
CHILDREN TO SERVE GOD & OTHERS



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ISAIAH 1:17

Through the Kids Helping Kids resource, children will learn from and be inspired by children from around the world. The following resource shares stories from orphaned and vulnerable children and the ways that Covenant partners are showing the love of Christ by caring for and supporting children and families.

Kids Helping Kids enables us to partner with children on their spiritual journey to:

- fulfill Christ's commandment to love God and our neighbor,
- foster a larger kingdom view,
- provide a shared faith experience to build community,
- learn from the faith stories of other children around the world, and
- reflect and share their own stories of faith and what it means to respond thoughtfully and responsibly to other children's stories.

How can the children in your church learn from and be inspired by these stories?

This booklet contains the stories of twelve children, each with unique and often difficult family circumstances. It is our hope that these voices—representing the 140* million children who are orphans or waiting to be united with loving families—will help shape the children in your care as they become sensitive to other's needs, inspiring them to respond thoughtfully and generously while at the same time being inspired by the lives of other children. Pay special attention to the sentences in each story that highlight the unique traits of each child and the ways that the children themselves are being helpers.

Special Note: Please be sensitive to the children in your care who may be experiencing similar family situations or are orphaned or vulnerable. Remember to provide extra care for them as you explore this

resource together. Additionally, remind all children that each story is a unique experience and if their own family is experiencing difficulty, including divorce, that it does not necessarily mean they will be sent to a children's home or separated from their family.

Why take an offering each week?

Before taking an offering with the children each week, please read one of the stories, explore where it takes place in the world, engage in the cooperative game or craft, talk through the reflection, and pray for the child whose story was read using the prayer prompts. In this way, your children will connect with the bigger picture of God's kingdom and ways Covenant partners are walking alongside children.

We invite all churches to take an offering to begin teaching financial stewardship to children—what God has blessed us with, let us share with others. However, please remind children that even if they are unable to give money, their prayers are also offerings to God.

Gifts should be made out to

Kids Helping Kids: Orphans and Vulnerable Children
Mail to: The Evangelical Covenant Church,
attn: Covenant World Relief, 8303 W. Higgins Road,
Chicago, IL 60631

**Give online or download additional
Kids Helping Kids resources at:
CovChurch.org/kidshelpingkids**

**Thank you for joining us this year in providing
children hope for a brighter future.**

Email Questions To: CWR@covchurch.org
or steve.burger@covchurch.org

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*UNICEF, https://www.unicef.org/media/media_45279.html



Creative Ideas for Helping Others

Children involved in Kids Helping Kids have thought of some creative ways of raising money and praying for children around the world.

Here are some ideas to share with the children in your ministry.

Neighborhood Fair

Children set up a neighborhood fair with a variety of games, shows, and food.

Odd Jobs

Children work in teams to clean up yards, garages, and basements.

Reading Marathon

Children find people to sponsor them for each book they read.

Recycling

Children and families gather recyclables and turn them in for money.

Lemonade and Brownie Stand

Children sell lemonade and brownies made with fair-trade chocolate.

Bible Reading

Children find people to sponsor them for each chapter or book of the Bible they read.

Challenge

Children challenge an adult class or small group(s) to match their offering.

Prayer Ideas

- Spend some time during each ministry gathering to pray for the children.
- Encourage a child to pray for children whose stories they read during the worship service.
- Make prayer journals for children and families to use at home.
- Make a bracelet as a reminder to pray daily.

We hope these ideas will inspire the creativity of the children in your church. We would love to hear about how the children in your church use these or other ideas. Please send your stories to steve.burger@covchurch.org.

Thank you for partnering with us in ministering to children all over the world and especially for your ministry to the children in your church.

Sebastian's Story

ECUADOR

I am Sebastian and I live in Ecuador. God has made me strong and I have learned lots of things even though I am only nine years old. I can honestly say that I am happy. I love to read, especially the Bible. I also love to draw and paint. I am very creative and spend lots of time making art. I also love to do gymnastics with my friends.

When I was eight years old, I came to live at the Children's Home because my home had become unsafe. The Children's Home, Casa Hogar, is operated by local staff and Covenant missionaries and is a place where kids can be safe and families that have been separated can get help so that they can be reunited with their children. It was not easy for me to go and live there. I had a lot of difficulties expressing myself and was sometimes angry when I first came to the home, but I am thankful for the people at the Children's Home who spent time with me and worked with me and my mom. I learned new ways of reacting and responding to my mom and the other kids and adults who lived in the home, ways that were more loving and not so angry. They showed me love and taught me about God's love for me as they cared



for me each day. God used them to help heal my relationship with my mom. I was able to move back to live with my mom and my younger brother and this makes me so happy. It is so good to be with my family and know that they love me and will take care of me.

*And he took the children in his arms, placed
his hands on them and blessed them.*

— MARK 10:16



orphans and vulnerable children

A LOVING FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD

Read Mark 10:13-16

The Bible makes it clear that God loves children. We see this in the way Jesus welcomes children to come to him. Jesus shows how important they are, receiving them in his arms and blessing them. This was very different than what everyone else was doing at that time. Imagine that you are one of the children in this scene. What would you feel? What would you say?

Reflection

Look at a globe or map and find the country of Ecuador. How has Sebastian experienced God's love in a very real way? What things make you feel special and loved? What would you say or do to share Jesus's love with a friend who felt unimportant and unloved?

Cooperative Craft: Portraits

OBJECT: To create a gallery of portraits to remind the children that they are special and to celebrate God's love of them.

SET-UP: Write "Jesus Loves..." on a large poster. Hang the poster on one of the walls, leaving space below it.

CREATE: Divide children into pairs and give them each a piece of paper and drawing materials. Each child will draw a picture of their partner. Remind them that they are each created in God's image and loved by God and that should come through in their drawings.

Make sure they include the child's name on the picture. Some children might finish drawing their pictures quickly. Ask for a volunteer to also draw a portrait of Sebastian from the story that can be included in the gallery. When all the children's portraits are finished, come together and begin to create a portrait gallery under the "Jesus loves..." sign. Begin by asking a volunteer to hang up Sebastian's picture while saying, "Sebastian, Jesus loves you and you are special." Have each pair tape up each other's picture. Take turns having one child at a time hang up the picture they drew of their partner while saying, "(Name), Jesus loves you and you are special."

DEBRIEF: How did it feel to have another person draw your picture? When you were drawing, did you notice anything special about your partner? Why was it important to tell each other that Jesus loves you? How did it feel to be reminded of Jesus's love?

Prayer Focus

Let's pray that Sebastian would continue to experience God's love as he lives with his mom and as he grows up and continues to learn about Jesus. Let's thank God that children are very special to him and that he loves each one of us. Pray for your friend who you drew a picture of to be reminded of God's love. Pray that God would give you ways to share his love with your friends.

CRAFT MATERIALS: One poster-sized paper, pieces of paper (white and colored), crayons or colored pencils, tape

Mikael's Story

ECUADOR

My name is Mikael and I live in Cayambe, Ecuador. When I was three years old my parents were going through a very hard time and decided to get a divorce. Unfortunately, many times I was left alone at my house and one day I had a very serious accident. In order to keep me safe and cared for, I had to leave my house for a little while and go to the Children's Home in Cayambe that is run by local staff and Covenant missionaries.

I was one of the first children to arrive at the home when it opened in May 2017. It is a very special place because they help kids like me and families who need care. I loved the Children's Home. I received love and attention from the people who worked there and took care of us. The Children's Home, Casa Hogar, also worked with my parents to bring healing to them because they were hurting from the experiences they had. Thanks to the help of the people at the home, I was able to be reunited with my parents after only five months. I now live with my dad and I am so happy to be back with him. I get to see my mom on a regular basis, but she doesn't live with us since she and my dad are divorced.

I have wonderful memories from my time at the Children's Home. One of the workers there, Cecilia, continues to visit us and we love it because she shares with us about Jesus and helps us to continue to learn new ways of getting along. I love learning about Jesus and I love to pray before meals. When I am home, I



like to play with balls and cars. I create race tracks for my cars and race them all over. I have a little brother and I like to help take care of him and we play together. I still like to go back to the Children's Home and visit my friends there. It is a special place for my family.

*And the child grew and became strong;
he was filled with wisdom, and
the grace of God was on him.*

— LUKE 2:40



orphans and vulnerable children

A LOVING FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD

Read Isaiah 9:6, Luke 2:1-21

God loves children, like Mikael. We saw in the Scripture last week that God identifies with children. And even when others in the culture didn't value children, God did. One of the ways we see this is that God became human and entered the world as a baby. Jesus was born as a small, vulnerable baby, dependent on a family for care.

Reflection

Take out the globe or map and locate Ecuador and Bethlehem. Jesus was born a baby, cared for and raised by a family. Mikael was very young when he went to live at the Children's Home because he needed someone to care for him until his parents were able to. We thank God Mikael can now live with his dad. Have you ever spent time with a little baby or toddler? What kind of care do they need? How do you feel cared for by your family? Can you think of a specific time when you felt loved by your family, maybe it was when they comforted you after a nightmare, or they sat with you when you were sick?

Cooperative Game: Caring for a child

OBJECT: To work together to recognize the needs of a child and as a group (or family) care for that child.

SET-UP: Make a set of scenario cards for each group. On each of the cards write one of the following scenarios.

1. I am hungry.
2. I am crying because I have a messy diaper.
3. I am cold.
4. I am crying because I am tired.
5. I fell down and scraped my knee.
6. I want to play.
7. I am scared because I had a nightmare.

8. My stomach hurts and I have a fever.

9. I am hot and thirsty.

PLAY: Divide the children into two groups (or more if you have a large group). Let them know that each group is a family. And in their family they are caring for a baby who grows into a toddler. They have to work together to figure out the needs of the child. One person will pick one of the scenario cards and either act out or draw the scenario. The rest of their team needs to guess what the baby/child needs. When they guess correctly, then they need to say how they would respond. For example, they guess, "I'm hungry." Now, they have to say how they would respond to the baby or child. For example, "I would get them some nutritional food." There should be enough scenario cards for each child to have a turn acting it out or drawing it and having the group guess.

DEBRIEF: How did it feel to try and figure out what the baby or child in your family needed? How would you feel if you couldn't respond to the child with what they need? What makes a baby or child vulnerable and why do they need the care of a loving family? While families aren't perfect and sometimes parents need help, God loves children and wants families to be a safe place where children can be cared for and nurtured.

Prayer Focus

Let's pray for Mikael and his family. Thank God that Mikael is able to be back with his father. Pray for children at the Children's Home in Cayambe and pray that God would show them love and allow their parents to receive help so they can offer a loving home for their children. Thank God for his love and for becoming a baby to identify with us. Thank God for his love and care. Pray for our own families.

CRAFT MATERIALS: Flash cards with scenarios on them, paper and markers if the children choose to draw

Zikhona's Story

SOUTH AFRICA

My name is Zikhona and I am thirteen years old. I live in South Africa near the city of Durban where Covenant World Relief partner, Zimele Wethu Foundation is working in rural communities. I am in fifth grade at the local elementary school. I have decided that I want to be a doctor. I want to use my love of the medical profession to help other people. I want to show others love and give to others in the same way that I have received so much love and assistance through my life. I love helping people. Being a doctor will be the best way for me to help sick people in the community.

One of the people who has most shown me love and care is Momma Mdabe. She took me and my two siblings to live with her and her three children when our parents died. Momma Mdabe does not make a lot of money, but she is dedicated to helping change the lives of orphaned children like me in her community. I could not have asked for a better home and family. They have loved us and created a safe place for us to grow up. My brother Khanyisani who is twelve spends most of his time at school and he says that he wants to become a pastor. My little sister who is in grade one is very energetic and brave and she wants to become a police officer. Like my brother and sister, I don't think there is anything that can stand in the way of my dreams. Momma Mdabe says she wants to help us see our dreams come true. I thank God for Momma



Mdabe and our family. I have been given so much and I want to use what I have to help others.

This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.

— 2 CORINTHIANS 9:12



orphans and vulnerable children

A LOVING FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD

Read Deuteronomy 24:17-22, 2 Corinthians 9:12

God cares for the orphans, for those who do not have parents. He calls people to care for orphans and vulnerable children and not mistreat them. God reminds the people that he has been faithful to them, so they can be generous with others. What are the good gifts that God gives? What does it look like for us to give to others?

Reflection

Find South Africa on a map or globe. Think about Zikhona's story. Even though Zikhona and her brother and sister lost their parents, someone showed them love and care. Momma Mdabe took them in and made them part of her family. She may not have had a lot of material possessions or a big house, but she shared what she had generously. She made sure they had food to eat and clothes to wear. And now Zikhona wants to share what she has to help other children. What has God given you to share with others? Why does God ask us to give generously to others? How do we give thanks to God when we give generously and care for others?

Cooperative Game: Caring by Sharing

OBJECT: Work together to share with others

SET-UP: Prepare a plate with bunches of grapes on it. Have a cup or bowl for each team. Make sure you have one spoon for each child. With tape, mark a start and finish line on opposite sides of the room for each team.

PLAY: Divide the children into two groups. Instruct each group to choose a recipient who will receive the grapes that the group gathers. This person symbolizes someone in need of food and it's up to your group to

harvest the grapes and get them to him or her. The recipient goes to the finish line and holds the cup/bowl for the group. Instruct each group to line up at the start line, give each child a spoon that they will place in their mouth, holding the handle with their teeth. Taking turns, the children will each pick a grape, put it on their spoon and carefully walk it to the finish line where they will drop it in the cup. If it falls, they have to put it in a separate pile and try again. Each child can take multiple turns. Allow them to play for five minutes to see how many grapes they can get in the cup/bowl. When the five minutes is up, have them sit down in a group. The recipient in each team starts by choosing a couple grapes to eat, then shares the fruit with the rest of the group.

DEBRIEF: When each group has finished and is sitting down and eating their grapes, reflect on the experience. How did it feel to work together to get the grapes to someone who needed them? What motivated you to keep going and working to get more grapes? What was your reaction when the recipient shared the grapes with you? Why is sharing with each other so important?

Prayer Focus

Let's pray for Zikhona. Thank you for bringing Momma Mdabe into her life and showing her care. We pray for other children who have lost their parents. We pray that you would bring people into their lives that can care for them and love them. Thank you for the ways you care for us. You give so generously to us, and like Zikhona, we want to give generously to others. Help us to find ways to give of our time, our talents, and our belongings, as a way of saying thank you for your faithfulness to us and as our way of caring for others in our own schools, neighborhoods, and church.

CRAFT MATERIALS: Grapes, cups or bowls, spoons, tape

Nyajuok's Story

SOUTH SUDAN/ETHIOPIA

My name is Nyajuok. I live with my mother and one brother in the Kule 2 Refugee Camp near Gambella, Ethiopia. My mother is a widow. When I was only two years old my father got very sick and died. At the same time the place we lived in South Sudan was experiencing a terrible war. Three of my brothers and sisters were killed. My mom is so strong and brave. She walked for over one month with me to find us a place that would be safe to live. My mom and I arrived at the Kule 2 Refugee Camp in 2014.

My mom is very compassionate and loving. She is always finding ways to help other people. Because of that, I now have another brother, Gatwech. My mom met him when he was eleven and he was wandering the streets of the camp where he lived. Both of his parents had been killed in South Sudan and he had been living with distant relatives, but they got sick and passed away. My mom didn't want him to be all alone and neither did I. We recently adopted Gatwech and now he is part of my family. We all live together and we are able to go to school.

My mom is able to care for me and my brother because she is able to work. She was chosen to be part of the tailoring program at the Covenant World Relief supported Vulnerable and Orphan Children Project and was able to learn how to sew. Now she owns her own sewing machine and is able to make 300 Birr



(eleven dollars) per day sewing for other people. She also sews for our family. The project helps my brother and me afford our school supplies. I am in first grade and my brother is in third grade. I am thankful to God for my mom and my brother. I am thankful that we can live together and that my mom has a job that allows her to make money to take care of us.

*The Lord watches over the foreigner and
sustains the fatherless and the widow,
but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.*

— PSALM 146:9



orphans and vulnerable children

A LOVING FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD

Read Psalm 146:9, Deuteronomy 10:12-19

God cares for the children who are orphans like Gatwech and asks his people to do the same. Think about these verses and what they tell us about God. Who does God defend? How does God care for those in need? God reminds the people that he is the Lord of heaven and earth, that he loves them, and wants them to follow in his loving ways. This includes defending those who are vulnerable, like children who are orphans.

Reflection

Find South Sudan and Ethiopia on the map. Imagine the journey that Nyajuok and her mother had to face to escape danger. What does it mean to be vulnerable? What made Nyajuok and her mom vulnerable? What makes you feel vulnerable? The Bible says that God cares for those who are vulnerable. How did God show this family care when they got to Ethiopia? How did they show care to Gatwech? Can you think of ways that God has cared for you?

Cooperative Game: Undefended vs. Defended

OBJECT: Identify those things that make orphans vulnerable versus those things that help protect and care for orphans.

SET-UP: Run a piece of masking tape or rope down the middle of the room, to divide the room. On one side, tape up the "Undefended" sign. On the other side tape up the "Defended" sign. Make a few example index cards of situations that make children vulnerable and other index cards of situations that help care for children.

PLAY: Explain that the word vulnerable also means "undefended" or "unprotected." God's word tells us that God defends those who are "undefended" and God tells us to show love by doing the same. We know from Nyajuok's story that there are things

that make a child who doesn't have a parent vulnerable. Brainstorm together those things that make children vulnerable or undefended (ex. parent died, sick and no medicine or doctor, house is destroyed, no food, violence in town) and write each one down on an index card. Then brainstorm together those things that help protect or care for children (ex. school, food, a parent who has a job, training for a job, a house, a person who takes the child into their family, medical care) and write each of those down on an index card.

The teacher takes the index cards and invites the students to stand on one side of the rope. The teacher will read the situation on the index card. The children have to decide if this describes an "undefended/vulnerable" situation or a "defended" situation and then jump to the corresponding side of the room. For example, if the index card says "sick and there is no medicine," they would jump to the side of the rope with the "undefended" sign.

DEBRIEF: What was it like to put yourselves in the shoes of other children, like Nyajuok? Was there anything that surprised you? Why are things like school and a good job for parents so important to helping to defend and care for children? What can you learn from Nyajuok's story and example? How might these same things be true for children in your community?

Prayer Focus

Let's pray for Nyajuok and her brother Gatwech. Praise God that their mom was able to learn how to sew and can work to provide for her family. Pray that Nyajuok and Gatwech would continue to do well in school. Pray for other children who live at the Kule 2 Refugee Camp. Pray that others like Nyajuok's mom would find ways to care for and defend the children and that God would continue to use the Vulnerable and Orphan Children Project to help widows and orphans.

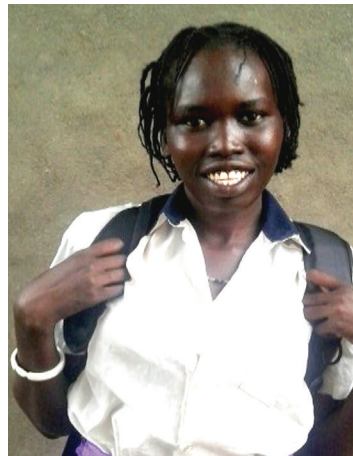
CRAFT MATERIALS: Paper or index cards, markers or pens, tape or rope to divide room, "Undefended" sign, "Defended" sign

Nyaduol's Story

SOUTH SUDAN/ETHIOPIA

My name is Nyaduol and I am seventeen years old. My family and I are refugees from South Sudan who moved to the Kule 2 Refugee Camp near Gambella, Ethiopia. I am studying at Gambella High School and I am one of the top students in my class. I especially love science and I dream about becoming a pilot or a medical doctor. I am also a member of the choir and I love to sing, especially in church. People tell me I have a wonderful voice and that I am one of the best singers. I thank God for the talent he has given me both as a student and a singer and I want to use it to be a blessing to others.

One of the ways God allows me to use my talents to help others is at home. I live with my mom and six brothers and sisters and help out at home with housework. I also help my younger brothers and sisters with their homework. My dad, Joseph, was a pastor until he died in 2006 when he got sick with typhoid fever. We receive help from the Covenant World Relief sponsored Vulnerable and Orphan Children Project, which allows me to go to school. They also provided my mom with loans to be able to run a mini restaurant that brings in income for our family. My mom works hard and I am learning so much from her.



We are thankful for the Vulnerable and Orphan Children Project, which helps us stay together as a family. Many children in similar situations have had to go to orphanages because their families who are very poor, or who are refugees like us, feel it is the only way for their children to receive care. This is so hard for children to not be with their parents. I thank God I can live with my mom and that we receive help to work and study and care for our family.

*But you, God, see the trouble of the afflicted;
you consider their grief and take it in hand.
The victims commit themselves to you; you are
the helper of the fatherless.*

— PSALM 10:14



orphans and vulnerable children

A LOVING FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD

Read Psalm 10:14, Deuteronomy 14:28-29

God sees our pain, the Bible says. God cares about those who have experienced suffering and helps children who have lost their parents, and women who have lost their husbands. God instructs his people to care for those who have lost their family and instructs us to make sure that they are taken care of and have what they need.

Reflection

Find Ethiopia and South Sudan on a map. Imagine what it must have been like for Nyaduol and her family to have to leave their home in South Sudan and move to a refugee camp in Ethiopia. Have you ever had to move? What made that difficult? Nyaduol had to go to a different country and she lost her dad. Have you ever lost anyone important to you? How did that make you feel? Even with all the loss in her life, Nyaduol makes it clear that there have been people helping them make a new life. The Vulnerable and Orphan Children Project has made it possible for them to stay together as a family, for her mom to work, and for her to go to school. Why are these things important for Nyaduol? Why are they important for you?

Cooperative Game: Staying Together

OBJECT: Try to stay together as a group and keep balloons in the air.

SET-UP: Have 4 balloons blown up per group. The balloons should be labeled "education," "job," "food," and "shelter."

PLAY: Divide into two or more groups depending on the number of children. Instruct the groups to make a

circle and hold hands. Tell them that they are a family. You will be introducing a balloon into their family that represents a basic need they have. They have to work together to keep the balloons in the air, while holding hands. They can use their bodies to keep the balloon up. Start by introducing the balloon that says "food." Let them play for about a minute and then add the "shelter" balloon. Let them continue to play for another minute or two. Then add the "education" balloon. Let them continue to play. Finally add the last balloon. See how long they can keep them in the air. If they let any of the balloons fall have them lift them back in the air and try again.

DEBRIEF: How did it feel to work in a group? Was it hard to stay together? Did it get harder as more balloons were added? What would have made it easier? Can you imagine being Nyaduol's family in a new country, without a father, trying to find a place to live and food to eat? Thankfully Nyaduol's mom was able to get a loan and start a business and she had Nyaduol's help at home. These things all helped their family stay together, but it is challenging for families to stay together sometimes as each one takes on so much work.

Prayer Focus

Let's pray for Nyaduol. Pray that her family would be able to stay together and that she would be able to use her gifts and talents to help her family and others. Pray for other children in the refugee camp who are without parents. Pray that other families would care for them. Pray for peace to come to South Sudan so the refugees can return home.

CRAFT MATERIALS: Balloons, marker

Tabitha's Story

NORTH CAROLINA

My name is Tabitha and I am from North Carolina. I am a smart, hardworking eighteen-year-old who is so thankful for the opportunity I have right now to be studying and living in a stable group home. Growing up, I lived mostly with my grandmother who raised me until she became sick and had to go to live in a nursing home. Then I spent time living with different family members and friends, sometimes sleeping on their couches. I even spent three months living on the street, because I didn't have anywhere to go. But now I have had a safe place to live and I am even studying in a community college to get my certificate as a medical technician. My goal is to become a nurse and work with the elderly, like my grandma.

I am able to study thanks to the help I have received from the Launch ministry of Church in Motion. Launch received a ministry development grant from Love Mercy Do Justice to help teens like me. At Launch they want to build relationships with foster teens



For privacy reasons we are unable to show a picture of Tabitha. This photo shows several students in a Launch workshop.

and foster families. They are like a family to me. At Launch I am also able to develop the skills that I need to study and find a job. I am able to receive tutoring and mentoring and they even helped me purchase my books and supplies for school for two semesters. But the best part is that they helped me to get my own car. Now I can get to school and my part-time job without having to ask people for rides. I am thankful for the Launch family and the ways they have showed me love and care.

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

— JAMES 1:27



orphans and vulnerable children

A LOVING FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD

Read James 1:27, Ephesians 2:17-22

As you read James 1:27, what does it say to those of us who are Jesus's followers? Care for widows and children without parents is an important expression of our faith in Jesus. We care, because Jesus cares. And the Bible tells us that those who have faith in Jesus are part of God's family. Being the church means that we are a family and we care for each other, but we also care for others whether they are in our community or other parts of the world.

Reflection

Find North Carolina on a map or globe. How far away do you live from Tabitha? What stands out to you about Tabitha's story? How did the people at Launch ministry become a family for Tabitha? Have you ever thought about your church as your family? What does it mean for you to be a part of this family? How do you show care for this family? How does your church show care for others?

Cooperative Game: We Are Family

OBJECT: As a family, work together to complete a task.

SET-UP: Make sure there is one straw per child and about 20 cotton balls per group. Tape a starting line and a finish line to the floor. Place a bowl at the starting line and a bowl at the finish line.

PLAY: Divide the children up into small groups of five people. Form a relay line between the start and finish lines. Give each child a straw. Explain that one person in each group, the one closest to the start line, has a

job to do and he or she needs the help of the entire team. Together, as a "family," they need to help him or her move cotton balls, as many as possible, from the start bowl to the finish bowl by passing them down the line. They can only use the straw in their mouth. They cannot use their hands. They will have three minutes to work together to get as many cotton balls from the bowl at the start line to the bowl at the finish line. If a cotton ball falls, the child can pick it up, get it on his or her straw and continue to pass it down the line.

DEBRIEF: Why was it important to help one another to complete the task? What if just one person had to do it and the others just stood around and watched? In Tabitha's story, we heard how the church, through Launch ministry, helped her take steps towards her goals. God used different people in the church to help her study, prepare for a job interview, and even provide her with a car so she could get to her job and to school. In the game you each played an important role, working together to support your teammate. You were a family.

Prayer Focus

Let's pray for Tabitha. Pray that God would keep allowing her to study and become a nurse, like she dreams about. Thank God for Launch ministry and for the group home, where she has a place to live and where she is not alone. Pray that your church would be a family that cares for each other and for those children and youth who are vulnerable.

CRAFT MATERIALS: Cotton balls, bowls, straws, tape

Jerome's Story

NORTH CAROLINA

My name is Jerome and I am seventeen years old. I live in Raleigh, North Carolina. I can't believe that I am in the process of getting ready to go to college. I really want to study computer programming. I actually received my first laptop when I started going to the Launch program at Church in Motion. One of the mentors there is the one who started teaching me basic computer programming. Launch is supported by Love Mercy Do Justice and is a place for kids like me who live in foster families, to receive extra support through tutoring and mentoring.

You see when I was twelve years old, I was placed in foster care because my biological parents were unable to care for me, since my dad was in prison and my mom was struggling with drug abuse. I lived in seven different foster homes before coming to the Hodges family. While I still talk with my mother and father by phone, the Hodges have shown me love and are committed to making me a part of their family. I am so thankful for the support of this family and the Launch program, which helped me with



For privacy reasons we are unable to show a picture of Jerome. This photo shows several students in a Launch workshop.

job interview skills, study skills, and learning how to manage money and be independent. They have inspired me to help younger kids like me who are also in foster care and go to Launch. I have become a tutor for them. I consider the people at Launch a part of my family as well.

*A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows,
is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the
lonely in families...*

— PSALM 68:5-6



orphans and vulnerable children

A LOVING FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD

Read Psalm 68:4-6, 1 Peter 4:8-11

What do these Psalms tell us about who God is? God is a father and defender. He cares for children without parents and widows and he places the lonely in families. As God loves us, we love others. 1 Peter 4:8-11 tells us how Jesus followers like us should show love for others.

Reflection

Find North Carolina on a map or globe. For different reasons Jerome has not been able to live with his biological mom and dad. How has Jerome experienced Jesus's love from others? How has this inspired him to care for children who are in similar situations as his? What inspired you as you heard Jerome's story? How can you show love and care to other children around you?

Cooperative Game: Musical Chairs, The Sharing Version

OBJECT: Children share chairs, making sure everyone has a place.

SET-UP: Put chairs in a circle, facing outwards. If you have a large group, divide the chairs into smaller groups and have children get into smaller groups. Get music ready to play.

PLAY: Invite the children to stand by one of the chairs around the circle. Instruct them to walk around the chairs in the circle when they hear the music. When the music stops, they must find a chair to sit on. Practice once. Then explain that every time, before the music plays, you will take away one chair from the circle. Everyone must still be sitting down when the music ends, so they must be willing to share their chair with someone else. Everyone stays in the game, even when there is just one chair remaining and all the children have found a way to share it.

DEBRIEF: How did it feel to try to find a chair? What would it have felt like if no one shared with you? What was it like to share with other people? Why is it important to belong to a group or a family? How can you, as part of the church, be a family to each other and other children who are looking to belong?

Prayer Focus

Let's pray for Jerome. Thank God for Jerome's life and his family. Thank God for the foster family that is caring for Jerome and has provided a home for him. Pray for his biological parents to receive the care and help they need. Thank God that Jerome is part of Launch ministry and can use his experiences and education to care for other kids. Pray that your church would be a place where children feel like they belong to part of a family.

CRAFT MATERIALS: Chairs, music

Santiago's Story

COLOMBIA

My name is Santiago and I was born in Medellín, Colombia. I am eleven years old and just finished fifth grade. My family lives in the San Blas neighborhood, which is known for being a little dangerous. I live with my dad and two brothers in a small house.

I came to stay at the Peace House (Casa de Paz) for a while because at home my brothers and I spent a lot of time by ourselves. My dad had to work a lot. One day he had an accident and now he has a physical disability. It wasn't easy for him to try to keep us out of trouble while working to provide what we needed, like food and clothes. My dad knew he needed help and went to the House of Life Covenant Church to see what options he had. They told him about a ministry of Shalom Covenant Church called Peace House, a temporary home especially for boys where they could help take care of me and my brothers and keep us safe, allowing my dad to work.

During the week we got up each morning to pray and eat breakfast. We went to school and came back to the house for a delicious lunch. My favorite foods are broccoli, potatoes, and arepas, which are corn patties. In the afternoon we had time for homework and play. At the Peace House, I had a very important role. I was one of the "big brothers." I was proud to be a big brother and helped the younger boys who were newer to the house. I helped them learn the routine and helped when they had questions or felt lonely. One day one of the younger kids didn't want to eat his lunch so I sat with him and helped him eat.



The Peace House was a great place to live because I learned about God and learned to pray. The volunteers and caretakers at Peace House treated us with love and patience. I'm thankful that the Peace House helped my dad and now we can live together as a family.

The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of Samuel's words fall to the ground.

— 1 SAMUEL 3:19



orphans and vulnerable children

A LOVING FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD

Read 1 Samuel 1:20-28, 3:1-21

God sees children as valuable and gives them responsibilities and gifts to help in his kingdom. Samuel's mom recognized that her son was a gift from God and dedicated him to God. She wanted him to live in a place where he could learn more about God and serve God. Imagine what it would have been like for Samuel. In what ways is God inviting you to use your gifts to serve God and others?

Reflection

Find Colombia on a globe or map. What do you think it would have felt like for Santiago to go to live at the Peace House? What were some of the challenges that Santiago's dad faced which made him decide to ask the Peace House for help? Can you think of a time when you had to ask someone for help? What about a time when God used you to help someone else? Even though Santiago was in a new place, he was cared for and loved, and he discovered that he had a special role in the house. Why was it important for Santiago to be a big brother to others in the house? Why is it important for you to recognize your talents and gifts and how God can use them?

Collaborative Game:

Using What We Have to Help Others

OBJECT: Recognize that God values us and gives us ways to help others, even when we see limitations or face challenges.

SET-UP: Make a simple model of a tower or structure built with 10-15 building blocks or Legos. Have enough blocks for each group to be able to make a replica of that figure. Make sure you have blindfolds for half of the kids.

PLAY: Explain to the children that God values kids. He gives us talents and abilities and invites us to use them to help others. We all may have certain limitations

or face challenges, but God wants to use us and will place others around us who can also help us. Divide them into small groups and explain that half of the small group will be blindfolded, while the other half will have to place their hands behind their back and not use them. Together they will have to build a replica of the model. Give each group the blindfolds and the blocks. Once half of the group has their blindfolds on, instruct everyone to be quiet and bring out the model. Those without the blindfold may come up to the table with the model to look at it for a few minutes. They must then quietly return to their small group, with their hands behind their backs. When the teacher says go they can begin to give instructions to the others who can use their hands to build the structure. Those without blindfolds can take turns going back to see the model, to be able to give clearer instructions to their group. They can take their time as it is not a race, but an experience of using what they have to work together.

DEBRIEF: What did it feel like to either not be able to see or not be able to use your hands? How were you able to use what you did have available? What did you do to help each other? Think about how hard Santiago's dad had to work to provide for his boys and then how difficult it must have been to have an accident, which made it even harder to work. It was courageous for him to ask for help and for Santiago to go to the Peace House. And there, Santiago learned that he could be a helper. How can you be a helper?

Prayer Focus

Let's pray for Santiago, his brothers, and dad. Pray that his father would continue to be able to work to provide a stable, safe home for Santiago and his brothers. Thank God for places like the Peace House, where children can be cared for and learn about God's love. Pray for the other boys that live at the Peace House, that they could learn from Santiago's example and be helpers for each other.

CRAFT MATERIALS: Blindfolds, building blocks or large Legos, a model that is already built

Jeison's Story

COLOMBIA

My name is Jeison and I live in Bogotá, Colombia. I am eleven years old and live at Bethlehem Foundation. Before coming here, I was living with my stepfamily and two younger brothers. I wasn't going to school, because I was too old for my grade and I needed to help make money for my family. I was working as an assistant to a bus driver. I spent a lot of time on the streets, hanging out with adults. I'm pretty smart and I would make money. I would give my family some of the money and use the rest to buy sweets and fast food. I got upset when my mom didn't want me to go out. I had a hard time following the rules and I didn't really ever have any friends my own age.

I am temporarily living at Bethlehem Foundation, a ministry of Belen Covenant Church, because my family was worried about my safety and wanted me to be in a place where I could concentrate on studying and learn to respect others. It has been great! Here I have been able to be a kid. I get to play with friends my own age, go to school, and I don't have to work to help provide for my house. The people who live and work at the home help me with my studies, so I can do better at school. I realize now how unsafe it was for me to be on the streets and not in school. I want to keep studying and become a policeman when I grow up.



I am committed to being able to help my mom when I grow up. I want to show her love and care. I am thankful that she is getting help from Bethlehem Foundation too and we are praying she can get a good job so she can take care of me and I can move back home. Please pray with us. I know my mom misses me and wants to provide a loving, safe home for us.

*And whoever welcomes one such child in
my name welcomes me.*

— MATTHEW 18:5



orphans and vulnerable children

A LOVING FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD

Read Matthew 18:1-5

Jesus loves children and says that there is something very special about being a child. When the adults were having a conversation about what it took to be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, Jesus called over a child to teach them a lesson. He made it very clear that children were to be welcomed and cared for.

Reflection

Find Colombia on the map or globe. Jeison shared that he spent most of his time on the streets, working with adults, even though he is only eleven years old. He wasn't going to school. Why do you think that made his mom worry? Have you ever wished you were older to do more grown up things? What do you think is so special about being a child that Jesus said even adults need to learn from you? The Bethlehem Foundation understands how important children are to Jesus and welcomed Jeison into their home for boys, showing him and his family Jesus's love. Here Jeison gets to be a kid again. What makes you feel welcome in your family, or your school, or here at church?

Cooperative Craft: Kids Are Welcome Here

OBJECT: Celebrate how special it is to be a child and be welcomed by Jesus.

SET-UP: Make one or more puzzles according to how many children there are in your group, enough to distribute one puzzle piece per child. If you have a large group of children, consider making two puzzles. Have the puzzle pieces already cut out and ready to go. On the middle puzzle piece, which will stay with the teacher, write the words "You are loved. You are special. You are welcome here."

CREATE: Explain to the children that in the story we read how Jeison belongs to a family who loves him

and wants the best for him. They also learned that Bethlehem Foundation loves kids and welcomed Jeison. Kids need to know that they are loved and that they belong. Remind them that their church is their family too. When they choose to follow Jesus and become his disciple they are part of God's family and it's important to remember that they are loved and welcomed here. Give each child a piece of the puzzle. Provide markers and instruct them to write their name on their piece and to decorate it however they like. Make it clear which side of the puzzle piece they are supposed to decorate. Encourage them to think about what makes them special and to include that in their picture with a word or a drawing. Once everyone has finished decorating their piece of the puzzle, work together to put the puzzle together. The teacher can start with his or her piece. Once the puzzle is put together have the kids spend some time admiring the work of their friends and seeing how all the pieces came together.

DEBRIEF: What was it like to use your creativity to decorate your puzzle piece? What came to mind when you thought about what makes you special? What was it like to see the puzzle come together? Was it hard to see how the pieces fit?

Prayer Focus

Let's pray for Jeison. Pray that he would continue to do well at school and that his mom would be able to find a job so he can go home and not have to work. Thank God for how special Jeison is and how wonderful it is that he has felt safe to be a kid at Bethlehem Foundation. Pray for other children who find themselves having to do adult things like work, to help their families make money for food and housing. Pray for children that you know who might need a place to go where they feel welcomed and loved.

CRAFT MATERIALS: A large puzzle made out of poster board or cardboard, markers

Luis Miguel's Story

COLOMBIA

My name is Luis Miguel. I am ten years old and was born in Medellín, Colombia. I am in fourth grade and I really like my Spanish and math classes, but I'm not a big fan of science.

I live in Medellín with my grandma, my brother, and a few of my uncles. My mom lives in a different city with my two youngest sisters. My dad lives somewhere else, but we don't have much contact with him. While it's really difficult to not live with my mom, my grandma loves me very much.

Still, it hasn't been easy for my grandma to care for me and my brother. I was hanging out on the streets around my house, sometimes getting into trouble. A friend of my grandma's told us about the Peace House, which is part of Shalom Covenant Church. In 2016 I went to live there with my brother Uber. The Peace House is a place for boys to live temporarily when their families need a little help. I really like being at the Peace House because they love us kids and take care of us. The house has nice furniture and beds, a soccer field, lots of trees, and beautiful flowers. I have learned how to help take care of the house, play soccer, and roller skate. We wake up each morning and pray together, then we get ready for school and eat breakfast. We can walk to our school, which is close by. After school we walk back to the house, have a delicious lunch, do our homework, play, have a devotional time, eat dinner, and go to bed. I like that we get to go to soccer and roller-skating practice on weekends.



I still spend time with my family and I love when we talk on the phone and when they come and visit. I know that my family loves me and wants the best for me and I'm thankful for the Peace House. I pray that someday soon I will get to live with my family again.

At that time Moses was born, and he was no ordinary child. For three months he was cared for by his family. When he was placed outside, Pharaoh's daughter took him and brought him up as her own son.

— ACTS 7:20-21



orphans and vulnerable children

A LOVING FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD

Read Exodus 1:22-2:10, Acts 7:20-22

The new king in Egypt had a terrible plan to make the people of Israel suffer. From the time he was born, Moses was in danger and his family had to do what they could to find a safe place for him. It wasn't easy for them, but they knew they had to be brave. God saved Moses and placed him in a family where he wouldn't be in danger, even while he was able to be nurtured by his birth family. Imagine that you are Moses's sister, watching your little brother in the basket in the river, praying for him to be safe.

Reflection

Find Colombia on a map or globe. Think about Luis Miguel's story. How are you similar to Luis Miguel? How are you different? If you have ever had to be away from your family for a period of time, how did that make you feel? Both Moses's family and Luis Miguel's loved them very much and wanted them to be in a place where they would be safe and receive care. Luis Miguel's grandma was doing everything she could to take care of him, but like other families sometimes life's circumstances make that very difficult. That's why places like the Peace House exist, to offer families a safe place for their children, while trying to make it possible for families to be reunited and live together.

Cooperative Craft: Torn Paper Collage

OBJECT: Reflect on the stories together and create a collaborative collage.

SET-UP: Make sure to have enough materials for children to work in groups of three or four. You can also use scraps of construction paper or recycled paper. Divide the children into groups of three or four and give each group glue and one larger sheet of white paper. Provide colored construction paper on a table that all the kids can access.

CREATE: Explain that while Luis Miguel and the other boys don't have a lot of toys or craft supplies at the Peace House, they love to be creative. They are always playing together, going on walks together, creating things together. Today with just a few materials, the children will get a chance to be creative together. Depending on the age of the children you can do this a couple different ways. 1) Either as a whole group or in smaller groups, come up with a word that best describes the children in these stories. Write that word on their white sheet of paper and then tear up pieces of construction paper and glue them on the letters to make a paper collage. 2) Ask the children what most impacted them from these stories or what they learned from Luis Miguel and his story. Represent what they learned together by making a collage. Invite them to tear up pieces of construction paper and glue them onto the larger piece of white paper to create an image or a word. They will work together to make their collage.

DEBRIEF: Have each group show their collage to the rest of the children. Have them take turns describing what they created and what it was like to work together. What did you first think when you started and saw that there were only a few materials to use? How did you use your creativity? Imagine that you were able to meet Luis Miguel, what encouraging words would you want to say to him?

Prayer Focus

Let's pray for Luis Miguel. Pray that God would always remind him that he is not alone. Pray for Luis Miguel's family that they would be able to have the resources necessary to take good care of him. Thank God for the Peace House, where Luis Miguel and the other boys can receive love and care until they can go back to their homes.

CRAFT MATERIALS: Colored construction paper, glue or glue sticks, one larger sheet of white paper per group

Corado's Story

MOZAMBIQUE

My name is Corado and I am a ten-year-old boy. I was born in Mozambique and I am from the Ndaou Tribe. My parents died because of HIV when I was only five years old. My three brothers and I went to live with my aunt. But it was not a good situation. Our uncle treated us badly. He used us to work for him, chopping wood, so he didn't have to pay other people for the help. My brothers and I were tired of being mistreated and went back to the small hut our parents left to live on our own. We would have to work for our neighbors or try and make money on the streets for food. It was not a safe situation.

Thank God our story changed. My brothers and I were able to move to the Melanie Center, a place where children receive care and are connected with families who can offer a good home. Living there changed our lives completely. The Covenant missionaries and people at the Melanie Center became my family. I was no longer hungry. I slept in a decent house and had what I needed like education, healthcare, and protection. I studied hard and now I have moved up to the third grade in school. I am learning so much and I am a good student. My dream is one day to finish school and become a doctor. We need doctors in Mozambique. I know that God can use me to make a difference.



Today, I thank God for placing me in a Christian family that loves me. When I was living in the Melanie Center, I would visit this family at their home and then they asked to adopt me. They wanted to be my family. My life has been completely changed and I can see my future. I go to school every day with my beautiful schoolbag with my snack inside. At night before bed I tell my little brothers the Bible stories I learned at the Melanie Center. I have a good memory and I am a good example for my brothers.

...and the Lord said to him, "What Zelophehad's daughters are saying is right. You must certainly give them property as an inheritance among their father's relatives and give their father's inheritance to them."

— NUMBERS 27:6-7



orphans and vulnerable children

A LOVING FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD

Read Numbers 27:1-9

We know from Scripture that God cares about orphans, recognizing the vulnerable situation they are in without parents to care for them. Still, we see how God uses others to care for those without parents. In this story these girls were orphaned but they were courageous and sought out justice. In their culture, when the father died only the boys received an inheritance. They were left with nothing. The daughters knew this wasn't fair. What do they ask the leaders in the community? What is God's reply? Why is this so important? Their courage not only changed their lives, but it would be used to change the lives of others in similar situations.

Reflection

Find Mozambique on a map or globe. What difference has it made in Corado's life to have a new home and a family? How does Corado want to use his life and his education to serve others? Just like the girls in our Bible story and Corado in Mozambique, God wants you to make a difference in the lives of others, to stand up for others when they are not being treated fairly, to offer help when someone needs it. Is there a way that you can use what God has given you to serve others? God wants us to give what he has given--our time, our talents, our testimony, our money. God doesn't want us to keep it to ourselves, because loving is giving.

Cooperative Craft: Loving is Giving

OBJECTIVE: Recognize that God wants us to use our lives, our experiences, our talents, and our education to serve others.

SET-UP: Make sure to have art materials ready to go.

CREATE: Give children a few minutes of quiet to spend listening to God. Start by asking the question, "God here I am, what talents, abilities, experiences

have you given me that you want me to use to show others your love? Is there a specific person or situation you want me to respond to?" Allow them to sit in silence for a minute or two. Then invite them to take modeling clay, playdoh, or pipe cleaners, and create a sculpture that represents one way God is inviting them to use their talent or abilities to serve others and show love. Remind them of how Corado uses his love of reading to tell his younger brothers stories of God before bed and how he wants to study and be a doctor. Give them time to make their creations then invite them to get into a small group and share their creation with the other kids. Give each small group a thick piece of poster board where each person can place their creation after they have shared with the group, creating a collective creation. They should come up with a title for their collective creation. Then they can choose one person to share their collective creation with the other groups.

DEBRIEF: Was it easy or hard to think about your talents, or the ways God has created you to serve others? How does it require you to be courageous? What did you notice when all of your group's creations were placed together?

Prayer Focus

Let's pray for Corado. Thank God for Corado's experience at the Melanie Center that led him to a family that has chosen to care for him. Pray for the children like Corado who have lost one or both of their parents. Pray that they would be cared for and defended by people like Corado who want to use their education and gifts to serve others. Pray that Corado's dream of being a doctor would come true. Pray that God would show us how we can serve others and defend others when they are being treated unjustly.

CRAFT MATERIALS: Thick poster board (one for each small group), modeling clay or playdoh or pipe cleaners

Ana's Story

MOZAMBIQUE

Hello, my name is Ana. I am fourteen years old and was born in Mozambique from the Sena Tribe. I am the third of six children in my family. When I was very young, both of my parents died due to a disease called HIV.

When my dad died, even though my mother was very sick she worked hard to support her family. She did everything she could to work at home running a small business, but eventually she became too sick to work. My twelve-year-old brother, Luis, took care of us all because he was the oldest. We didn't go to school, because we all needed to work to support our family.

My mother wanted us to go to school and be cared for. When she heard about the Melanie Center run by Covenant missionaries, she asked the Jone's, Pastor John and Pastor Maria, to take care of her children. I thank God that the door opened for me to live at the Melanie Center, because within a few days of our arrival my mother died.

At the Melanie Center my life changed. God has given me back the dream of going to school. I am now in the eighth grade. The Melanie Center took care of all my school supplies (books, notebooks, pens) clothes, shoes, and everything a child needs for their day to day activities. Through the Melanie Center I was connected to a family that decided to adopt me.

I thank God for putting me in this family that loves me and cares for me as a daughter. I am not alone. Now I have my own bedroom, something I never expected! I have all my meals and I continue to go to school.



I feel very sad for the children in Mozambique without homes or parents because I remember what it was like to live with fear and hunger. My dream is to be a nurse so that I can help other children in the future and be able to help my brothers. God is preparing me for my future.

Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.

— ISAIAH 1:17



orphans and vulnerable children

A LOVING FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD

Read Esther 2:5-7

Esther was a young orphan. She came from a Jewish family, but both of her parents died and her people were forced to leave their land and move somewhere else where another king ruled. This left her very vulnerable, but she was not alone. God provided someone to care for her when it was dangerous to be a Jew. She was kept safe and even grew up to be queen.

Reflection

Find Mozambique on a map or globe. What does it mean when we say a child is an orphan? In both stories, Ana and Esther were orphans. Their parents died. But, in these stories we see God's care for both girls as people chose to adopt them, provide for them, and raise them as their own children. Imagine how Ana's life changed. What is she thankful for and what is her dream? Think about your family, what are you thankful for? What is your dream? What might be some ways you and your family could help care for those who are alone?

Cooperative Game: You Are Not Alone

OBJECT: Work together to get through an obstacle course, remembering that despite the obstacles you are still together.

SET-UP: Make an obstacle course that kids can go through with a partner. Along the way there should be a couple special challenges, with posters indicating what they should do. For example, set up something short they have to jump over (it could even be a line made with masking tape), a table they have to crawl under, or a baseball bat they have to spin around.

PLAY: Sometimes there are obstacles in life that we have to face. In the game today, the kids will face obstacles, but they will not be alone. Each child must have a partner. They will stand side-by-side and go through the obstacle course together. Choose a pair that will start and have the others line up behind them. They will line up at the start line and then work together to get through the obstacle course. Give each pair a minute to advance through the obstacle course before the next pair starts. The objective is to get home together. Once they get home, they can give each other a big hug or high five, then sit down and wait for the rest of the group to get home.

DEBRIEF: What was difficult about the obstacle course? How did you work together? What was helpful about knowing you didn't have to do it alone? Imagine what Ana and her siblings had to go through when their parents died and they had to find ways to work and get food. The Melanie Center was a place that Ana was reminded that she is not alone. Now she wants to use her experiences to help other children who are orphans, so that they don't have to grow up alone. How can you recognize when a child is lonely or alone? How could you respond?

Prayer Focus

Let's pray for Ana in Mozambique. Thank God for the family that God has given her and that her needs are being taken care of. Pray for children like Ana who have lost their parents. Pray for others to care for them so that they would not have to face the obstacles in life alone. Thank God for the Melanie Center and pray that the children there would soon be able to be with a family.

CRAFT MATERIALS: Chairs and tables to make the obstacle course, a few posters with instructions

