



# CHARACTER & LEADERSHIP

## BACKYARD KIDS CLUB PLANNING GUIDE

We're excited you will be leading activities for kids in the community! Use this document as a guide to plan and prepare. We have filled in many areas for you, but fill in the blank spaces before camp. It is always a win for kids to hear several different voices leading activities (old, young, guy, girl, etc.). If you need additional assistance in preparing, reach out to your Mission Project Specialist!

### PLANNING GUIDE SECTIONS

**Ice Breaker:** Introduce everyone through an interactive game or task. The goal is to break down walls and help the kids warm up to new people. There will always be new kids join each day.

**Lesson:** Each day you will have two pictures of leadership and character traits to discuss with the kids.

**Craft:** Student Life will provide a box of assorted craft supplies (think kids ministry resource room at church). See the Craft Guide for additional ideas not listed here!

**Snacks:** At each Backyard Kids Club, Student Life will provide a snack sized treat each day for the kids. A great way to involve your church is to have others donate additional snacks or juice drinks.

**Games:** Student Life will provide rec supplies to use. See the Game Guide for additional ideas not listed here!



## DAY ONE

### ICE BREAKER

**Leader:**

**Activity:**

**Instructions:**

**Supplies Needed:**

### LESSON

**Leader:**

**Supplies Needed:** Laminated images (included in lesson folder at camp)



#### PICTURE 1: THE COMPASSIONATE COMPANION

Good character shows empathy and compassion to others.

Man's best friend has commonly been recognized for their ability to make any sad moment better with their playful spirit. Dogs connect to their owner in many ways. They can sense when they are hurting, tired, sad and respond.

Like dogs, good character includes caring for others and showing empathy to those in need. This can look different

depending on the situation. Just as a dog can make a sad moment happy or a celebrate a joyful moment alongside their owner, so can we with good empathy and compassion acknowledge the feelings of others and seek to encourage them. Dogs understand when to comfort and when to celebrate.

*Note: This would be a good time for students to further explain the image through stories of their own. Do they own a dog? Have they seen this behavior before? Can they share how the dog's response made them feel? Take this image and further pull out how impactful such behavior would be if given by a friend.*



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you ever experienced the empathy of a dog?
- How can you show compassion like a dog at home?
- How can you care for others at school?

**Big Take Away:** Look for ways to care for others and show empathy for how they are feeling. **Good character shows empathy and compassion for others.**



## PICTURE 2: THE HUMBLE SHOREBIRD

Good character includes humility and sacrificially serving others.

The shorebird is a sacrificial and humble creature. They travel in flocks, one bird in front of the other. As they walk along the shoreline the first bird uses their foot to kick up food for the bird behind it. This continues as every bird walks along the shore, picking up what the bird in front of them left behind and serving the bird behind them by repeating the process.

Each bird relies on the bird in front of them to eat and serves the bird behind them. The first bird sacrificially waits its turn, serving the others until it's time to switch who is in the lead.

Like the shorebird, good character involves serving and caring for others. A person of good character seeks out opportunities to serve and care for others. Serving others takes many forms, from obeying our parents to helping out a classmate at school. Choosing to serve others always starts with having humility.

Being humble means being modest and recognizing the importance of others. The person of humble character seeks to put others before themselves.

*Note: We recognize the difficulty of teaching humility as a character lesson outside scripture. Think of a skit or story example to further flesh out this idea. This is almost a version of the "golden rule."*

Serving others is an important lesson to learn for all of life. To serve others means to find their needs and desires and work to help meet those.

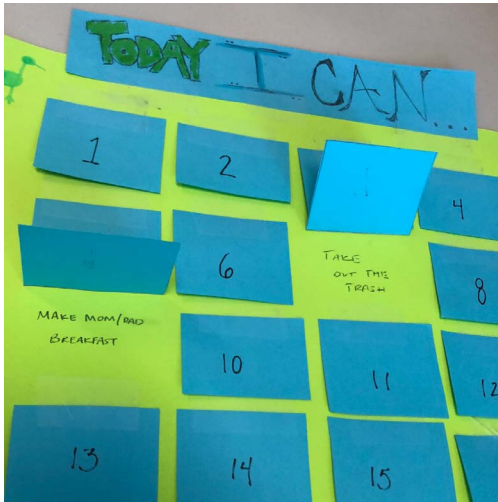
*Note: Help the kids understand that they can serve and help others even now. Chores, homework before their parents ask, picking up trash when they see it and more are all ways they can serve those around them.*



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How can you be a shorebird at home? Who can you serve?
- How can you be a shorebird at school?
- What does it mean to you to be humble and sacrificial?

**Big Take Away:** Look for ways to serve others and show humility in your interactions with others. **Good character includes humility and sacrificially serving others.**



## CRAFT

**Leader:**

**Supplies Needed:** Construction paper, markers, glue

**Activity:** "Today I Can..." Calendar

**Instructions:** Have a leader draw lines to make a calendar grid and cut out squares that fit each block. Pass out the calendar grid and squares to kids. Have them glue the top of the square to the calendar grid so it is only attached at the top. On each square have them write a day of the month. Under the flaps have them write a way they can serve someone on that day. Brainstorm with the kids to help them think of ideas! Add stickers and decorate the calendars when completed.

## SNACKS

**Leader:**

**Supplies Needed:**

## GAMES

**Leader:**

**Game 1:** Line Tag

**Supplies Needed:** None

**Instructions:** In this game one or two people start as 'it.' When they tag someone, that person is added to their line. These people link arms to catch the others. The game is over when everyone is in one line. Play multiple rounds with different leaders or rules (hop on one leg, you can only walk, walk backwards, etc.) This can help illustrate the servant minded character. The winner is the person who started. To win requires the teamwork of all, but only one may get the 'credit.'



### **Game 2:** Empire

**Supplies Needed:** Paper, bowl or hat, markers

**Instructions:** Everyone writes down the name of a character or famous person. You then take turns guessing who is which character. If you guess right, they are added to your 'empire' (your team). The game ends when everyone is in the same empire and all the characters have been guessed.

### **Game 3:** Biggest Fan

**Supplies Needed:** None

**Instructions:** Play rock, paper, scissors. The loser follows around the winner chanting their name as loudly as possible. This continues until two people faceoff as their 'biggest fans' cheer them on to victory.



## DAY TWO

### ICE BREAKER

**Leader:**

**Activity:**

**Instructions:**

**Supplies Needed:**

### LESSON

**Leader:**

**Supplies Needed:** Laminated images (included in lesson folder at camp)



#### PICTURE 3: THE FLOWER

Good character encourages others.

Flowers need a lot of tender loving care and attention to bloom and grow into the beautiful creation they are. When the gardener waters the flower or allows for sunlight this strengthens the flower and helps it grow strong and tall. Without these things the flower will wither and fade. It cannot reach out and water itself, it relies on the rain or the gardener to help it grow and bloom.

Like the flower, we too need certain things to help us grow strong and tall. Some are obvious: food, drink, etc. Others aren't as visible. One of the most important things we can give others that helps them bloom and grow is encouragement. By encouraging others with our words we lift them up and help them stand strong. Our encouragement can be like fresh water to a parched flower.





The word encouragement has been called the oxygen of the soul. The word encourage literally means to inspire courage. To encourage another can mean and look like many different things. This can be a kind word or a smile. It can be a positive remark or compliment for something they did. Even showing up and being present around them can encourage and show you care.

*Note: Help the kids see how wide and broad encouragement can really be. Allow them some time to think through how they can be encouraging or are. Maybe have an activity (depending on the age group) where they pair up and work on encouraging each other. This is a great time to do a simple yet silly skit to help illustrate how easy, yet powerful, an encouraging word can be.*

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What/who are some flowers you can 'water' in your life?
- How can you encourage those around you at school?
- What does it mean to encourage others?

**Big Take Away:** Look for ways to encourage others and lift them up today. **Good character encourages others.**



## PICTURE 4: THE DOMINO EFFECT

Good character stands up for others and what is right.

Dominoes are easy to knock over and once they begin to fall they will continue until the whole train has crumbled. Individually, the domino isn't that influential or powerful. The first domino never even touches the last. However, each domino takes its lead from the last and falls over continuing the pattern until the entire system has fallen over.

In life there are many times where we will be influenced to "knock" others over with our words or actions. Like dominoes this can become a destructive pattern as mindlessly one follows the others until everything has fallen. However, if something comes in between the falling dominoes it can stop the pattern. This is the role of one with good character. Bullying, rumors, peer pressure, are all very real struggles we face on a daily basis. It is very easy to be caught up in the pattern and just fall in line (dominoes pun intended). However, the one with good character stands up for others and what is right, and stops the pattern of falling.

There will be moments in life where you are faced with a choice: to go with the flow and let the dominoes fall, or to stand up for others and stop the pattern. This can be done in many different ways. Refusing to participate in a joke or rumor, standing besides the one being made fun of, telling others to stop, etc.



*Note: It's commonly thought that just one vote can't do anything. This isn't true. One voice can pierce the chaos and turn the tide. Of course this isn't easy. This is the nature of change. Sympathize with the kids as they ponder the idea of standing against the stream.*

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you seen bullying before?
- Have you seen people try and hurt others through rumors?
- Have you been bullied? How did those make you feel?
- How can you stand up for what is right and others?

**Big Take Away:** Look for times to stand up for others and refuse to partake in the pattern of rumors or bullying. **Good character stands up for others and what is right.**



## CRAFT

**Leader:**

**Supplies Needed:** Paper plates, markers, green construction paper, popsicle sticks, glue

**Activity:** Paper Plate Flower

**Instructions:** Pass out a paper plate and green construction paper to each child. Have them decorate the plates as a flower and cut out sections to make the petals. Color the popsicle sticks for the stem and cut out leaves from the green construction paper. Glue the pieces together. Instruct the kids to write the Big Takeaway (Good character encourages others) in the middle of the flower.

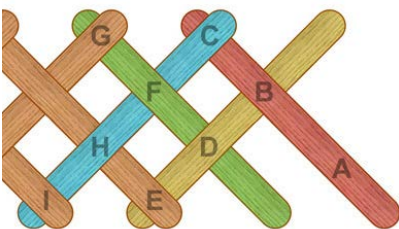
## SNACKS

**Leader:**

**Supplies Needed:**

## GAMES

**Leader:**



**Game 1:** Cobra Dominoes

**Supplies Needed:** Jumbo popsicle sticks

**Instructions:** Design the Cobra Weave domino set. Follow the diagram below to build your own line of dominoes. This is a very active and exciting chain reaction. YouTube this idea to see it in action.





**Game 2:** Flower Tag

**Supplies Needed:** None

**Instructions:** Basic freeze tag, only you get unfrozen by being watered by the 'doctor'. Choose someone to be it and someone to be the doctor (this one can be hidden at the beginning) or everyone can be a doctor. When frozen you are to stand like a flower and wait to be watered.

Note: This can be a great water day game. Use a bucket, small cup, or an actual watering can to pour water over the frozen to unfreeze them.



## DAY THREE

### ICE BREAKER

**Leader:**

**Activity:**

**Instructions:**

**Supplies Needed:**

### LESSON

**Leader:**

**Supplies Needed:** Laminated images (included in lesson folder at camp)



#### PICTURE 5: THE PATIENT DOG

Good character has self-control.

The patient dog waits for the treat on its nose. It holds until it is given permission to move.

*Note: Realistically, not many dogs are like this one here. Take some time to ask the kids how they see this image. Have they ever seen a dog act like this? Walk them through how this dog got this way. Allow for time to embrace the*

*funny in the image as the idea of holding a cookie over one's own nose seems silly. Maybe use a snack to help illustrate the dog's behavior.*

Self-control is an important aspect of good character. Like the patient dog, those of good character are able to control their reactions, emotions, frustrations and respond calmly or in good time. Similarly, self-control waits for the proper time and place to act and speak. In the area of anger and frustration this can be seen clearly. One with good character does not explode in anger at any moment or anytime



they become frustrated. Rather, they understand the importance of patience, and are able to think before they speak or act.

This dog has been trained and worked with time and time again to wait and listen to its owner before enjoying the treat. In self control the same idea applies. It will take time, practice, patience and experience to learn how to respond well and think before one speaks or acts.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When have you seen someone exercise good self-control?
- What does it look like to have self-control at home?
- What does it look like to have self-control at school?

**Big Takeaway:** As you go about life remember to think before you speak and act and exercise self-control over your frustrations and emotions. Good character has self-control.



## PICTURE 6: THE WOODWORKER

Good character involves creating change using your gifts.

Woodworking is a long, detailed, and demanding task. Patience, talent, and a steady hand are all required to mold and shape a block of wood into a piece of art. The woodworker practices their gift and talent repeatedly to grow and strength their craft. The plain, shapeless block of wood that they begins with no longer exists. They now reveals to the world their art, a beautifully sculpted piece.

We are all born with unique gifts and talents. Some are athletic. Some are artistic. Some are mathematical. Some are administrative and organized. Each of us has individual talents and gifts that we can use to create and mold the world. These gifts and talents influence the way we see the world. Just like the woodworker, who sees a masterpiece in the middle of a block of wood, waiting to be uncovered, our gifts and talents can change the way we look at the world.

*Note: This is a great lesson in leadership. We are each unique, and move, think, talk differently. This is ok. This is diversity and there is beauty within that. Help the kids to see what gifts and talents can be: from acting, to speaking, to working with hands, to sports, math, science, etc. there are so many and each influences us in our lives. Use the gifts and talents of your own group to help teach this lesson. Is there a student who likes to speak or teach? One who likes to direct or act? Draw or design? Allow the perspective the students have from their own gifts to influence how this lesson is taught.*



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What gifts and talents do you have?
- What gifts and talents does your family have?
- How can you use those?

**Big Take Away:** Look for ways to use your gifts and talents and shape the world. Good character involves creating change using their gifts.



## CRAFT

**Leader:**

**Activity:** Handprint Fish Puppets

**Supplies Needed:** Construction paper, markers, crayons, googly eyes, white glue

**Instructions:** Trace one hand of each child. Have either kids or leaders cut out the hand. Kids can add a googly eye and draw on their hand. When they are finished, glue the popsicle stick to the back of the hand.

## SNACKS

**Leader:**

**Supplies Needed:**

## GAMES

**Leader:**

**Game 1:** Obstacle Course

**Supplies Needed:** Use the environment around you, rec supplies, blindfold.

**Instructions:** This can be played many different ways. Use what is around you and in your rec supplies to have a student design an obstacle course. Blindfold a kid and designate a leader or team of people to give directions to get around the obstacles.

**Game 2:** Red Light Green Light

**Supplies Needed:** Use the environment around you, rec supplies, blindfold.

**Instructions:** Simple game of patience. Designate someone to be 'it.' They stand off and have their back turned to the rest of the group. When they call out green light everyone runs, red light, everyone stops. Get creative with other colors or moves.



## **SUPPLIES PROVIDED**

You will receive these items on before you leave for your mission site. Label any additional supplies you bring with your church name.

### **RECREATION**

Basketball  
Beachballs  
Blindfolds  
Chalk  
Cones  
Football  
Frisbees  
Jump Ropes  
Kickball  
Parachute  
Rip Tag Flags  
Soccer Ball  
Wiffle Ball Set

### **CRAFTS**

Assorted Coloring Sheets  
Beads  
Construction Paper  
Crayons  
Glue Bottles  
Glue Sticks  
Googly Eyes  
Hole Punch  
Magnets  
Markers  
Masking Tape  
Paper Plates  
Scotch Tape  
Yarn