

CHILDREN'S LEADER

S U M M E R

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A NEWSLETTER FOR THOSE WHO LEAD CHILDREN IN THE CONGREGATION.

I Don't Have to
Wait Until...

2

VBS 2001: A
Summary

2

Kindergarten,
Beginner Resources

3

News & Notes

3

GL Comes to KG!

4

GraceLink Myths

4

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Bug Safari Gives VBS a New Look

You asked for it, you've got it! The North American Division and Review & Herald Publishing are proud to announce their cooperation with Group Publishing to bring you a brand new Vacation Bible School program for 2002: *Bug Safari*.

At Bug Safari, kids swarm to the Bible like bees to honey as they explore the life of David, a little guy who did big things with God's help. Life-changing lessons from God's Word are reinforced through Bible stories, games, Bible point crafts, and collectible Bible bugs that kids will clamor for. The Bible bee-comes real to kids and sticks with them long after they leave the nest!

If you've used a Group VBS before, you know what kind of great program to expect. Bug Safari has a special Seventh-day Adventist edition that will be available directly from your ABC. NAD Children's Ministries director Noelene Johnsson affirms, "We have read every word of the materials in your starter can. I feel confident that Bug Safari is appropriate for a Seventh-day Adventist setting, and will make a significant contribution to the spiritual development of our children."

Want a sneak preview bee-forehand? Watch the VBS section of our website, www.childmin.com, and keep your antennae tuned for a Bug Blast Party near you.

What is a Bug Blast Party? It's a 3-4 hour training event for Bug Safari VBS! Call your Adventist Book Center or your Conference Children's Ministries director to find out if they're planning to stage one of these fun-filled events in your area.

At the party you'll get to see the new materials, watch the Bug Safari videos, try out crafts, and share ideas for everything from decorating to fundraising for your Bug Safari. Your Adventist Book Center will bring along a starter can (Yes, the whole VBS fits into a can—admittedly, a large one!) and order forms. Ask your conference Children's Ministries Director to demonstrate what goes on at a Bug Safari VBS. If the conference can't send a representative, don't let that bug you; open the can and explore what's inside together!



I Don't Have to Wait Until I'm Grown-up

Children's Ministries director Feryl Harris reports that children in the Mountain View Conference are participating in ministry in their own unique ways.



When 12-year-old Susanna Krone from Morgantown, WV, attended a weekend event put on by Mountain View's self-supporting *Youth'N'Us* team, she decided that she wanted to help. She sold her Nintendo and donated

\$45 in support of the team and their ministry.

Jonathan Greenberg, another 12-year-old, lives in Summersville, WV. He was also inspired to contribute to *Youth'N'Us*. His \$50 donation came from the sale of his green bean crop.



Four-year-old Gabrielle Truitt of Pennsboro, WV, has found a most effective



way of spreading Jesus' love. She's captured the hearts of local nursing home residents with special hugs and little gifts. It doesn't matter to Gabrielle if the residents look or act a bit "different."

Barry Scott isn't waiting until he's an adult to influence others, either. Eleven-year-old Barry spoke for church when his school presented a worship service in Buckhannon, WV. He also asked for copies of *Winner* and other children's materials to give away at a local health fair.



Once children like Barry and Gabrielle and Jonathan and Susanna get a taste for service, nothing can hold them back. What kinds of creative children's outreach do you see in your church?

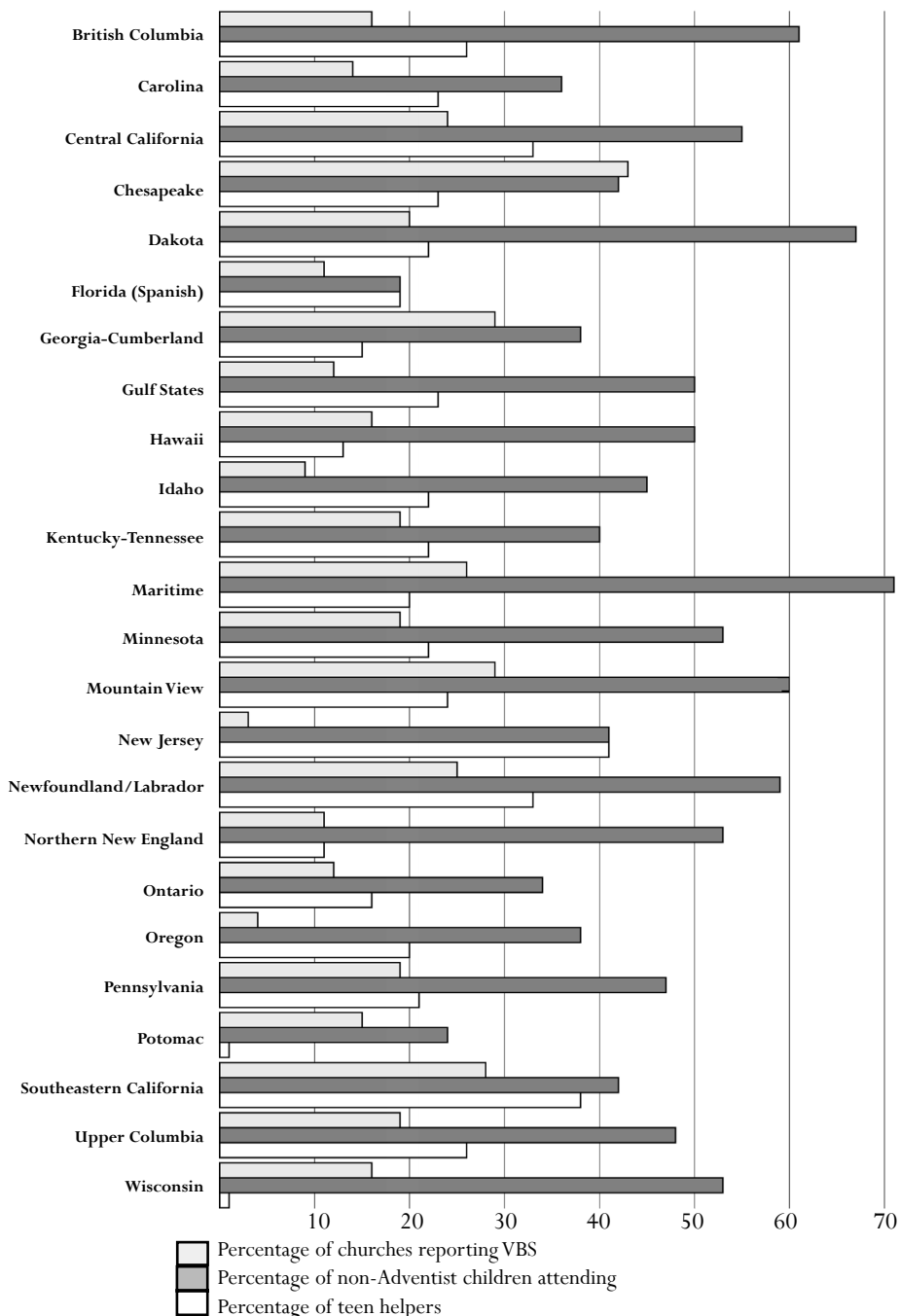
2001 Vacation Bible School Statistics

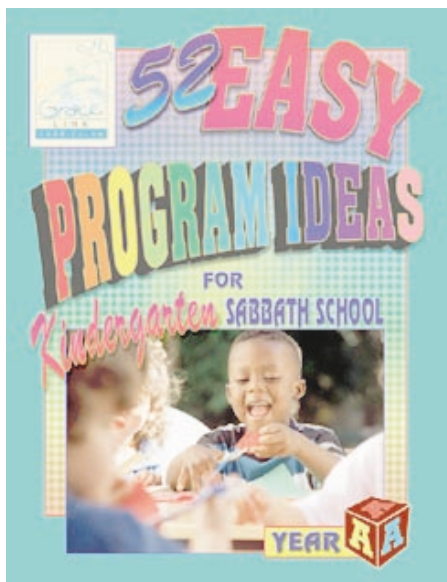
Each year the North American Division collects information about Vacation Bible School programs. Whether you used *The Amazing Creation Station* or *Polar Expedition* this year, your conference director should be able to brag about the fact that **your church did Vacation Bible School**. (Are you sure that your church reported? Report forms are available in the VBS section of www.childmin.com. They're due in to your conference by September 1.)

In 2000, churches reported an atten-

dance of 9,618 children at VBS, compared with 15,862 this year. Twenty-four conferences submitted complete reports for 2001 (eighteen last year).

Special congratulations to Chesapeake Conference. They reported the highest percentage of constituent churches conducting VBS (43 percent). The Maritime Conference reported that 71 percent of children attending VBS programs were non-Adventist! A total of 5,977 adults and 1,397 teen helpers were involved throughout the Division.





New Resources for Kindergarten & Beginner Leaders

52 Easy Program Ideas for Kindergarten Sabbath School (Year A): Packed full of simple, effective, and fun suggestions to accompany the *GraceLink Kindergarten Resource for Leaders/Teachers*, this book is full of creative new options that will involve all the children in your class! Ideas include...room decorations, bulletin board suggestions, learning center instructions, simple memory verse songs, creative snack ideas, interactive Bible story ideas, patterns, recipes and much more. Order from AdventSource; 800-328-0525.



Little Voices Praise Him: Beginner - Kindergarten Songbook: You'll enjoy this delightful collection of more than 300 songs, complete with topical, textual, and title indexes. All the old favorites are here, along with lots of new music. *Little Voices Praise Him* will help children get excited about praising Jesus. This is the official songbook for GraceLink beginner/Kindergarten Sabbath School. Order it now from your Adventist Book Center--or call 800-765-6955!

News & Notes

Coming Events

- ◆ **April 24-27, 2002**--North American Division *Festival of the Laity* will be held in Orlando, FL. One track of Children's Ministries seminars will be offered, featuring Judi Rogers, Steve Case, and Wilma Kirk-Lee. For more information, visit phone 301-680-6430 or visit www.plusline.org/events/events14.htm.
- ◆ NAD-sponsored Children's Ministries & Family Ministries training convention will be held **September 12-15, 2002** in Charlotte, NC. Watch our website (www.childmin.com) for details.

Year-End Reporting

Each year, the General Conference department of Children's Ministries collects information from the world divisions about Children's Ministries. Has your church stood up to be counted? There's still time! We want to know about your ministry and outreach programs. For a copy of the information that your local conference needs from YOUR church, go to www.childmin.com (see RESOURCES).

Once a Member, Always a Member!

Did you know that a lifetime membership to the Adventist Children's Ministries Association (ACMA) is now available? For a one-time price of \$35, you can take advantage of a resource discussion group, NAD lending library, free one-year subscription to *Kids' Ministry Ideas*, member discounts and more! Registration information available at www.acma-online.org.

Baby-sitting Co-op?

If your church includes families with pre-school-age children, this may be the ministry for you. *Smart Mom's Baby-sitting Co-op Handbook* provides a complete startup kit. This system is all about doing something simple to support each other and strengthen families. Available from Tukwila Publishing (128 pages, paperback). For more information, call 888-947-2667, e-mail TukwilaPres@cs.com, or visit www.babysittingcoop.com.

Barna Revisits Childhood

How seriously does your church take its ministry to children? The November 5 update from George Barna Research poses this question and offers some interesting observations:

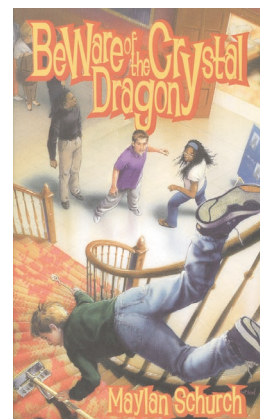
- ◆ Adults who attended church regularly as children are three times as likely to be attending a church today as are their peers who avoided the church during childhood.
- ◆ Denominational loyalty remains surprisingly strong among those who were church-ed as children, but those who were unchurched have a somewhat different slate of church preferences.
- ◆ There is a significant generational decline taking place in church involvement, but the decline is especially evident among those who were unchurched as children.
- ◆ Adults who frequented church as a child are more likely to engage in several core religious practices than are adults who were unchurched as children.

You can view or print the complete report at www.barna.org.

Project Kids Hope

Review & Herald Publishing Association has set the goal of giving a copy of *Beware of the Crystal Dragon* to every 10-14-year old in America!

Written by pastor Maylan Schurch in response to the Harry Potter mania sweeping the world, this book shares the dangers of spiritualism and helps kids connect with the One who can help them slay the dragon. Many



conferences have agreed to subsidize this project--call your ABC for details, 800-765-6955.

Materials List

The North American Division is putting together a quarterly *Materials List* which will be posted online. Watch for ideas of ancillary products you can use with beginner, kindergarten, or primary Sabbath School, coming soon to www.childmin.com.

GraceLink Comes to Kindergarten

At last the new GraceLink materials for Kindergarten and Beginner children have been printed! Your church should receive its first-quarter shipment by the beginning of December.

Parents will be aware of the change, because the December 29 issue of *Our Little Friend* doesn't include a Bible story for either age group. Instead, editor Aileen Sox announces the new program to begin the following Sabbath, and provides special activities for the "in-between" week.

A second grade teacher teaches the math lesson on metric units before assigning it for homework. As Sabbath School teachers, we should do the same thing.

So the first Sabbath of January, teachers will grab Alex's attention by introducing a new story and fun activities in class--then send him home to explore further by following the lesson in the quarterly. He'll be bursting with enthusiasm to share what he learned and have the family try some of his lesson activities.

Imagine Jessica's disappointment, however, if the lesson story she hears at home sounds word-for-word the same as the story

GraceLink Myths

Statistics show that one or two people out of ten are likely to resist change. You may have heard myths like the following from "resistors" in your church:

1. Some of the writers of the GraceLink materials are not Seventh-day Adventists. This is not true. All of the writers who contribute to the lessons and teacher helps are Seventh-day Adventists.

2. Many churches are choosing alternatives to the GraceLink materials. This is not true. The vast majority of the 5000-plus churches in the North American Division are using GraceLink.

3. NAD is recommending alternative materials for those who choose not to use GraceLink. This is not true. While we respect the right of local churches and individual families to choose what their children study, the North American Division stands solidly behind the GraceLink program.

For more about these and other GraceLink myths, see www.gracelink.net.

you told in class! But that won't happen if you follow the GraceLink *Sabbath School Resource for Leaders/Teachers*. It shows you how to involve the class in dressing up and reliving the story. Now as she hears the lesson story read to her on Sabbath afternoon or later in the week, it sounds fresh and believable. Every day Jessica and Alex experience a new activity that gets them thinking about the story and about God.

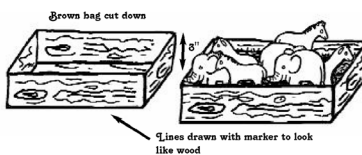
Prepared by the General Conference, the GraceLink Bible lessons were written by teams of dedicated Seventh-day Adventist writers from around the world. They have been designed to preserve the uniqueness of our message and include all 27 fundamental Seventh-day Adventist beliefs as age appropriate. Jesus Christ is central to every story.



Bible Times Center PAPER BAG BOATS

Children do: Cut the tops off the bags, leaving the bottom section about 3 inches high as shown. Decorate the bag to look like wood. Shred clean paper to line the ark. Count out ten animal crackers to march into the ark. (Crackers are eaten at snack time.)

Teacher talk: Talk about how God thought of the needs of each different animal. He told Noah how to prepare. Ask children to tell ways that God takes good care of them. Say or sing today's Bible words from Psalm 52:9.



OPTION 2: Follow Me!
Trace your shoe onto colored construction paper and cut out multiple copies. Tape the footprints to the floor in a path around your room. Children follow the path, stopping at each footprint to repeat a word from the day's Bible words.

We'll Be There to Hold Your Hand

Do you shiver when you hear the word "NEW"? The North American Division has prepared a kindergarten resource book that will hold your hand all year. *52 Easy Program Ideas for Kindergarten* offers support information for leaders within a GraceLink Sabbath School.

In a GraceLink program, the leader is the teacher. Instead of having to line up five different adults to teach the lesson to small groups of children, all you have to do is recruit volunteers who are willing to shepherd five or six kindergartners through the activities that the whole group is doing together. The volunteers have nothing to prepare--no memory verse cards to color and cut out, no

worries about sharing felt sets. As you prepare your GraceLink program each week, you are actually preparing the lesson. If you don't see enough activities listed in the teacher's quarterly to keep your brightest four- and five-year-olds busy--or if you question whether an activity will work for your group--*52 Easy Program Ideas* offers help. At left you'll see a couple of sample activities from first quarter. Each month features five learning centers and offers three different options for learning memory verses. And there's a special added bonus: you can look ahead at the lessons for the whole year!

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