

# More Tools For Your Toolbox

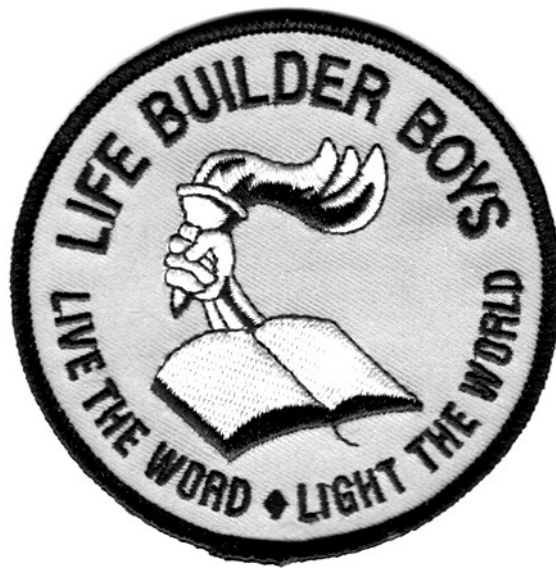
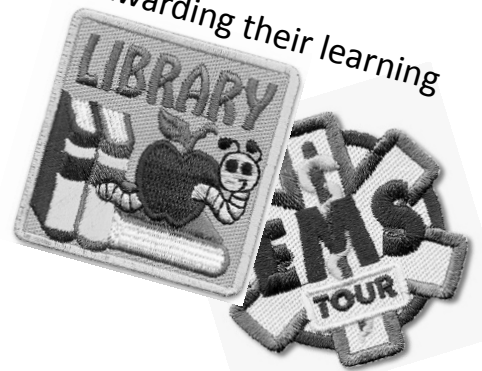
Bringing boys to Jesus



Learning and discipline



Awarding their learning



**Guiding boys from Calvary to Christian service**

# Love To Tell The Story – sharing stories that stir their hearts

As your boys prepare for another adventure filled meeting, your first and most important thought should be **“How can I inspire them to enjoy Christian fellowship with one another and, more importantly, fellowship with Christ Himself? Of all the special things they may learn in our meeting today, what new thing can I help them to learn about Jesus, about walking with Him, about living for Him?”** This is the lesson that can last forever (eternity!) All the skills we teach, activities we do, and awards we present will always be less important than this first part of our meeting! Make it as good as you can!!

Share with them a story - or your story - or **our Lord’s story**. Just remember: the best sermons in church are those with the best endings. Brief but enthusiastic will keep everyone’s attention! If the purpose of your words is to bring light to troubled or confused hearts, hope and help to those willing to receive it, then this is it – your moment to make the whole meeting matter. Apply this important suggestion: know where you want to get to, then get there quickly! Consider these following guidelines:

**Prepare With Prayer.** Your leadership tools from Life Builder Boys will offer some story suggestions, but the words which flow from your own anointed heart (seasoned with your own life experiences) will take root, grow, and bear precious fruit! Review the prescribed story, or have one of your own, then put prayer into it – BEFORE meeting night. Nothing moves forward without prayer behind it!

**Prepare early.** Most pastors know that a good sermon can be written just after the last one is preached, while the anointing is fresh. Then live it all week. Don’t wait until just before next week’s meeting to try to ‘stir up something from the Lord’ !!

**Prepare How To Begin.** You may open with a scripture (sort of “What could this mean?”) Maybe try a “What would you do?” life situation story that encourages self-inspection. Or simply “Once upon a time...” where the story characters allow the boys to see themselves played out by others. Whichever approach, let this be where your best preparation is applied. As an old fisherman might say, “If you don’t catch ‘em you can’t keep ‘em” (and, yes, you are fishing for young men!) Start well – you will end well!

**Present in Imaginative and Descriptive Ways.** Make every character feel real, every setting close by, every event in the story ‘possible’ in the imaginary world of a young boy’s mind. Believe in the eternal importance of your words. Act out the personalities you are telling about (vary your voice, put emphasis into your delivery.) They may laugh at some of your comic behavior but that’s good – you’ve got their attention!!

**Know When To Close.** Make eye contact with as many as you can. Those eyes will tell you that your words are being understood, accepted, believed. Don't hesitate to rephrase yourself or simplify, but do keep things short because when they're ready you need to be too! Every story should have a purpose, and that purpose becomes the point of your prayer. Pray for results!!

Some of you may choose to have your boys standing, seated (church sanctuary style), squatted on the floor, or sitting around a 'campfire' (maybe a make-believe one inside.) Help the boys to know this is a reverent moment, the opportunity when God Himself wants to speak to them. The way you pray, speak to God, will establish that respect!

## Leading Boys to Jesus

Enjoy this little bit of humor: At the close of a children's Sunday School class the teacher decided to gleefully ask her young students, "How many want to go heaven?" With the same enthusiasm every hand was anxiously raised except one – little Bobby, in the back corner. Noticing that, she asked once again and got the same result. So, as the class ended and children filed out, the teacher touched Bobby's shoulder and gently asked, "Bobby, when I asked the children 'who wants to go to heaven' you didn't raise your hand. I asked twice, and still you didn't raise your hand. Don't you want to go to heaven?" Bobby beamed up and announced, "Well, yeah, sure...I want to go to heaven! But I thought you meant right now and I got a ball game this afternoon!"

We chuckle at comical stories like this, but embedded in it is a very important fact: that a child's perception of spiritual things may often be quite different than ours! One of the greatest challenges for an adult is to discuss faith and salvation at a young person's level. This you need to be able to do, and can do, with prayer and preparation. Consider the 'essential Biblical facts' in the following devotion boys can understand even in your first meeting:

When God placed the first man and woman in a special-made garden called "Eden", he allowed them unlimited freedom of choice, with one exception: do not eat from this tree! **Why?** Because, without at least one rule to obey, they could never show their loving obedience. **Why?**

[Ok, men...now you're catching on. Welcome to the world of evangelism where "why" is the question boys most often ask]

Well, when you are not allowed to make your own choices then what does that make you? **A prisoner! A slave!** God did not want us to be prisoners! He wanted us to be able to choose to love Him and obey Him. So, He gave us rules (called 'commandments') and the freedom to make choices, every day, whether to obey them and God - or not!

Even though everything that God did for Adam and Eve was “good”, still they disobeyed his only commandment and sinned. Because of that sin God, who is righteous, could no longer be with them (even look upon them!) and so they had to leave the garden.

They had children, and those children sinned, too. And people have been doing the same ever since. The Bible says that “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God” and that “The wages of sin is death...” But it also says “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 3:23 & 6:23)

So, what does that mean? We earn death - but God gives life. Not to just anybody, but to those who are willing to believe in Him, obey Him, and be willing to make only right choices! This is why John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but will have everlasting life.” (have your crew recite the verse again with you)

These above words (started off with the humorous story before) would give you an ideal devotion for opening your meeting and entering into a few moments of genuine prayer. The **need** is explained, the **solution** is offered, and all that is left is a **decision** to be made. But it will take your genuine sincerity (that which tone of voice and gesture of body can speak better than words) to persuade a young heart to trust what you have spoken and follow you into prayer. Once there, get the job done!! Pray together for forgiveness, washing of heart, newness of life, and name written in Glory - this boy's name added to the Lord's Book of Life!!



# Boys Being Boys - Closing your meeting as well as it began

How sad it would be to have had a great opening to your meeting, a wonderfully productive lesson time, and then see everything come apart as boys release their day's bottled-up energy in ways embarrassing (if not harmful) to your LBB site, your church (especially if outside), and (most regrettably) any new boys visiting with you that day. A little recreation can be useful – like a steam locomotive just letting off some 'steam' – BUT KEEP IT ON THE TRACKS!!

The following guidelines will help, but only if the 'referees' stay on the field! Whatever you do, don't just give the boys a ball, point them towards the parking lot, and hope for the best. Be there – be prepared – and the best is what you'll get!! Consider these five objectives that should be included in the planning of all physical activities:

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT** - A variety of sport-like games and physical activities will help develop young bodies evenly. The same game, week after week, really has little to offer except convenience for those who don't care to plan. But just as you are considering a variety of games remember you have a variety of 'players'. Be sure there will be (often enough) something that 'fits everybody'!

**SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT** – Team-type games will improve relationships so long as winning is not the primary goal (having fun is!) You as referee will be the driving force behind whether the boys are enjoying the game and each other's company.

**MENTAL DEVELOPMENT** - Not all of the best games require quick feet or skilful hands. Games with strategy, requiring concentrated planning, and especially working with their teammates, will promote skills needed for your whole boy's ministry to succeed.

**EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT** – It's not just 'sore losers' but also 'flaunting winners' you need to watch for. Here's a good place for 1Cor 10:24, *"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth."* Paul is not saying you should want what's in his pocket. Instead, you should care what's going on in his heart. Step in and settle disputes by reminding each boy "we are our brother's keeper."



**SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT** – One reason many Christians never really grow: they think that the only place where God would be comfortable is beside you on a church pew! Wouldn't it be something if your boys could actually see that Jesus is also on the court hollering "Hey...pass the ball...pass the ball!" If (as He promised) He will never 'leave us' or 'forsake us', shouldn't we expect Him to want to 'play', too? May seem a little too casual for some, but boys better get used to the idea that 'where you go, He goes too'!

## PLAN WELL – PLAY WELL:

- ✓ Know about how many boys to expect and be sure there is the needed gear for all.
- ✓ Have location (as well as equipment) ready so no 'game-time' is lost.
- ✓ Games requiring special skills need to be divided by age groups or known abilities (big boys against little boys is almost never a 'fair match'!!)
- ✓ Make sure all rules are clearly understood and fairly enforced.

Be clever and creative with game ideas. Consider playing soccer but with an American football (so they never know where a kicked ball will roll) Playing like that will always release some energy but, more importantly, be a "ton of fun", even for boys not too athletic. Some Skill Patch kits will offer suggested recreation that accompanies or promotes the day's lesson. The key, however, for a good time week after week, is to not do the same thing week after week!!

## Keeping It Together Before It All Falls Apart

Discipline is not as much the responsibility of the boys as it is of the men leading them. Of course every member of your program must be accountable for their own behavior, and there are some things we all must know and do. But a well planned and executed meeting leaves little time, opportunity, or reason for trouble to arise.

**Make your standards and expectations clear!** Rules should be stated and 'slated' (posted for all to see.) Fewer, common sense rules have a better chance of success than a "thou shalt not" at every turn. If yours is a new start-up program let your new boys help with making your new rules (you'll be surprised how practical their suggestions will be!) Your confidence in their good character will encourage boys to give you more. If you expect less – you will get less!!

**Your consistency and fair justice decides the outcome!** Some boys misbehave because they simply misunderstand the rules or your expectations. It is always prudent to examine yourself before examining them! But some boys may be there just to entertain themselves at your program's expense. As the road sign says, Proceed with Caution! It is not possible in this small space to tell you everything you need to do every time. But the first thing to do will always be – PRAY! Hard to do if you are trying to 'fly solo'. Get men beside you, with you, helping you to share the load. If needed, apply the guidelines at the bottom of page 5, LBB manual "**The Journey of Boyhood**".

**Positive things come from positive things!** As simple as it sounds it's hard to have trouble in the middle of a terrific program! The quality of your planning, preparation, and presentation will likely decide the outcome of the event. Promote teamwork and group spirit at every opportunity (when boys truly feel a part of something they don't want to take that something apart!) Your conduct (how you present yourself) will go far in creating order and commanding respect. You are not a 'dictator' – you are a 'disciple maker'. The more you respect your boys the more they will respect you! !

# “It’ll Get Good by Gettin’ Out”

It is imperative that your program’s leadership recognize the powerful potential for increasing your boys’ experience and opportunities for Christian service just by stepping through the doors and into their community, and world. That’s really not very far to go! Many of their newly learned skills need to be put to work. And most certainly you want those who are outside of your church to see and appreciate the good things you are doing. Best of all, you want your boys to know firsthand that faith gets a lot done outside of the fellowship hall!

As boys advance through earning Skill Awards there will be times that some of those requirements must be met in the outdoors. Those arrangements may be challenging for some of you but do the best you can to provide as much ‘hands-on’ experience as possible. Also, as you try to work through a Patch each quarter (as a crew) you will have some time open for other events the church may be having, or for getting your boys off to somewhere ‘new’ (even if it’s just around the corner!) Just taking your lesson or devotions out to the grass beneath a nearby tree on a pleasant day or night can heighten attention and fuel curiosity.

Crew Leader’s Activity Kits are being developed (such as camping, hiking, community service as well as guidelines for all patches shown below.) In the Nassau, Bahamas area an abundance of opportunities exist, but let this list fuel your own creative ideas for what may be nearby:

(SOME OF THE MANY DOZENS OF FULL COLOR PATCHES AVAILABLE)



Whatever you do, where ever you go, make it fun, educational, and an opportunity to bond closer with your boys, giving them a chance to see other sides of you!