



SHIPWRECK ISLAND

BEFORE & AFTER CAMP CHURCH GROUP DEVOTION GUIDE



Greetings from beautiful Arkadelphia, Arkansas!

Camp is fast approaching! You've paid your deposits, promoted camp to kids and parents and now you're praying for a great camp experience. Your camp director, the CentriKid staff in Nashville, and many others are working hard to make sure everything that happens on "Shipwreck Island" this summer is intentional, meaningful and life-changing for you and your children.

To make the most of your camp experience, you have the opportunity to gather your kids before camp to prepare them for what they'll experience and get a jump start on the life-changing experience of CentriKid camp. This guide will help you prepare your kids and sponsors for camp.

When you get to camp, you'll notice your Church Group Devotions are similar in form and function to this guide. That means -- if you use this Before Camp Devotion Guide, you'll be a pro at leading Church Group Devotions when you get to camp! If you're just picking this up when you get home to lead the After Camp Devotions, well, you're surely a pro because of your awesome Church Group Devotion leading prowess.

I hope your week at camp this summer truly is a great time to connect with your kids, and for your kids to connect with each other and with God.

Blessings –

Jon Merryman, Writer
Arkadelphia, Arkansas

HOW *to use* ✕ - - - - - THIS GUIDE

During each meeting, I've given you activities to help you and your kids prepare for camp and debrief their experience when they get home. There are opportunities to share hopes and fears and stories from camp, read the Word together, continue to grow in relationship with each other, pray together and even serve together. You'll even have some time to get things done you've gotta get done. Here's how the guide works:

GGD: (Gotta Get Done – Pre-Camp Only) This is time for you to make sure kids are paid up, their forms are in order, etc. It's just stuff you've gotta get done.

FOR FUN: Time to laugh, to smile and to connect your kids to each other. Before camp, they can get a jump start on knowing each other's names and becoming friends. When they get home, they'll want to share their memories with kids who had a similar experience during this life-changing week.

DIG IN: These are ideas to help prepare your kids spiritually for what they'll learn at camp and build on what they learned at camp when they get home.

STAYING THE COURSE: (Post-Camp Only) This is an activity for your kids to participate in a mission project together. Helping others gives kids a big helping of fun, purpose and blessings and keeps their missional spirit strong when they return home from camp.

PRAYER TIME: Prayer thoughts to guide your kids in praying for what they'll experience at camp and how to live differently after they get home.

MEETING #1

Prepare for your time together:

- *Download the third CentriKid promo video and the first Sally & Shelly video at www.centrikid.com. Just go to the Group Leader Info page and download the promo video on the far right and the Sally and Shelly video on the far left that has a girl and a bear.
- *Gather note cards and pens/pencils for each child.
- *Bring a basket for collecting note cards.

As kids enter, give some high fives and tell each child how excited you are they're coming with you to camp!

GGD:

Make sure to sign in kids so you know who attended the Before Camp Devotion Time. This will help you get kids the information they missed if they couldn't make it. Make sure you have all the forms you need and funds you need for each camper, make copies of insurance cards, etc.

FOR FUN:

Play the 1st Shelly and Sally video.

Lead the children in your favorite name game if your kids don't know each other well.

Play "Nice to meet ya!"

Guide children to stand in a circle and hold hands. Explain that this game is similar to duck duck goose. You'll pick someone to be "it" and they'll walk around the circle clock-wise. When they tag someone, they will continue to run clockwise while the person tagged runs counter-clockwise to see who can get back to the spot of the person who was just tagged. Explain that as soon as someone is tagged everyone in the circle will turn around and introduce themselves to the kids trying to make it back to the spot. Let kids know that they can shake hands and introduce themselves, and try to keep the conversation going, but they can't physically keep holding hands or try to stop them from going on with anything except conversation. Explain that if you are tagging or tagged, you have to be polite, saying "Nice to meet you!" to everyone introducing themselves. They must listen to the person speaking and can't ignore them. Continue the game until many have had the chance to be it and tagged.

Say: "At camp, you'll become better friends with kids in this room AND make new friends! It's important to really get to know each other and get to know your new friends by listening to them and learning as much about them as possible."

Distribute note cards and writing utensils. Say: "Who can tell me what they're looking forward to most about camp?" (Allow children to share.) "Is there anything you're nervous about?" (allow responses – encourage kids) Say: "Take a moment to write down on your card what you are most looking forward to about camp. Then write what you'd like to get out of your week at camp. And third, write down anything you might be nervous or anxious about concerning camp. When you're done, come drop it in this basket." Take these cards with you and be sure to ask your kids during the week if this has in fact happened or been the best part of their week, etc.

DIG IN:

Say: "The theme this summer at CentriKid is Shipwreck Island: Where God Provides! Ask: "What are some ways God provides for us?"

Ask for a volunteer to read Philippians 4:19.

This verse will be our key verse for camp. Let's start memorizing it now – work on that before our next gathering.

This verse tells us that God will supply ALL our needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. It doesn't say that he'll supply all of our wants, just our needs. But what does that look like? At camp we'll really look at what it looks like for God to supply all our needs. Be thinking about this verse and God's provision in our lives and in the lives of others as we prepare for camp.

PRAYER TIME:

Say: "There are just ___ days till we leave for camp!" Ask: "What do you have left to do to get ready for camp?" (Pack, shop, etc.) "Just as we have a list of things to do before camp, we can also prepare ourselves spiritually for camp. That's why we're meeting today and one more time before we leave for camp." Make sure they know when that next meeting will be.

Say: "Why do you think we should prepare spiritually for camp?" (Camp is a week dedicated to learning about God. The more we prepare and learn now, the more God can build on that and help us to learn more and more about Him!) "What are some ways we can prepare spiritually for camp?" (Read the Bible, Pray...) "Let's pray as we wrap up our time together and continue to prepare for our week of camp." (Pray for the kids to be physically prepared for camp by packing, etc., but also for each of them, and you, to be spiritually prepared for this week you'll spend totally focused on God and His recipe for your lives.)

MEETING #2

Prepare for your time together:

- *Download the second Sally and Shelly video at www.centrikid.com. Just go to the Group Leader Info page and download the video on the far right.
- *Bring a black marker.
- *Find a returning camper to share his testimony.

As kids arrive, welcome them and tell them again how excited you are they're going to camp.

GGD:

Spend some time making sure you have everyone's forms, payment, etc. This will make your morning when you load the vans/busses much happier. Also, go ahead and talk through what a day of camp will look like, and some track times they'll be able to choose from – just get them excited about camp. (You can download your camp-specific information with track times, schedules and more at www.centrikid.com – just click on Group Leader Information and look for your camp at the bottom of the page.)

FOR FUN:

As your group continues to get to know one another, ask a kid ahead of time, who has been to camp before, to share his testimony about what he loves about camp and what God did in his life at camp and after he got home. If you don't have anyone, consider enlisting a student or adult who can share about how a camp experience changed his or her life.

DIG IN:

Ask a volunteer to read Jeremiah 29:11-13.

Say: "God has plans for each of us – good plans! And part of His plan is that each of us is going to spend a week at camp learning more about Him! And His plan for us can also be part of His plan for someone else. Did that make your brain hurt? Our stories are all part of God's story. So while God is working on and shaping us, he can be working through us to show Himself to others. So cool! Let's think of all the people we'll encounter during our trip to camp, our time at camp, and on the way home from camp."

Lead the children to come up with people you all will encounter on your way to camp, at camp, and on the way home from camp. For example: McDonald's workers, bus drivers, CentriKid Team Leaders, campus housekeeping and cafeteria staff, etc.

PRAYER TIME

Say: "Tonight, we're going to pray for all of these people we may encounter. We want to be ambassadors for Christ, and for this church as we go to camp. Lots of kids may not think about how they can minister while they're about to be ministered to for a week. But you can learn a lot from God at the same time you are letting others see God in and through you! How could one of these people see God through us during our trip?" (Allow responses; encourage great answers!)

Lead kids to think of things like showing Christ to the McDonald's worker by being kind when you order food. Also, taking trays for other kids when they are done eating at the cafeteria is a great way to serve others. Saying please and thank-you at stores and thanking those who serve you at camp (from the staff to the campus security) lets them see you are different from other disrespectful kids. We can also offer words of encouragement to those who serve us during our time at camp.

Say: "Take a few moments to pray for one of these people you'll encounter. Pray that you will show God's love to everyone you meet on the trip. After a few minutes, I'll close us in prayer." (Pray that God would give you and each child opportunities to show Him and share about Him to those you come into contact with on your trip to camp.)

MEETING #3

Prepare for your time together:

- *Bring snacks. Before your first after-camp gathering, make sure to send invitations to all the kids who were at camp. Ask them to bring their favorite snack as you celebrate your great week at CentriKid. Don't rely on the kids to bring all the snacks, you want to have plenty of tasty treats.
- *Prepare to show a copy of your End-of-Week DVD from camp.
- *Download "Now That I Have Seen" at www.sweetsleep.org.
- *Consider providing Nickels for Nets coin collection boxes for each child. Ordering information is available at www.sweetsleep.org/nickelsfornets.
- *Optional: 1/2 size pool noodle for Skeeter Tag.

FOR FUN:

When kids have arrived, allow them to grab some snacks and show the DVD from camp. By the time the DVD is finished, they should be finishing up their snacks. Have them toss their plates and cups and find a seat.

After the video, allow kids to share their favorite camp memories. Make sure you share a couple, too. Ask kids if they still have their camper devotion book and if they're keeping up with doing these devotions and reading the fun articles in the book. Encourage them to use that guide to continue spending daily time with God.

DIG IN:

Ask: "How have you been doing at living out what you learned at camp? How have you seen God providing for you since you've returned from camp?" (allow kids to share).

Ask: "Can anyone remember our main verse from camp?" (Philippians 4:19) "Let's say it aloud together." Next, ask them to recall whatever they can remember from their Bible Study time on Shipwreck Island. You can revisit your Adult Leader Guide from camp for a copy of this verse as well as information about continuing to pray for our missions offering.

Say: "One way we're going to continue living out what we learned at CentriKid is to work on a mission project together!"

STAYING THE COURSE:

Say: "At camp, we learned about how God provides – and that sometimes God provides for others through us! We also learned about the needs of orphans in Africa and participated in the missions offering. (Share specifics about how great your kids did with their giving to the offering, etc.) Today we're going to learn even more about Africa and malaria and how we can continue to help meet the needs of orphans in Uganda by providing them with life-saving mosquito nets!"

Play “Skeeter Tag”

Say: “Sweet Sleep is an organization that helps provide orphans around the world with healthy, comfortable beds, bedding, life-saving mosquito nets and Bibles in their own languages. Today we’re going to learn more about malaria and how getting a mosquito net with a new Sweet Sleep bed helps orphans around the world sleep sweetly!”

Gather the children and ask for a girl volunteer. Explain that “Suzy” is going to be our skeeter. Ask, “What’s a skeeter? Does anyone know?” Once you explain that it is in deed a mosquito, show Suzy how to be a skeeter by putting her right index finger on her nose to make a stinger, or by holding the pool noodle on her nose or forehead. Explain that when you say go, Suzy will be looking for people to sting. When people get stung, they must sit down.

Be sure to set boundaries for which areas are off limits. And it’s also a good idea to ask kids not to run but to walk quickly. It can keep kids safe.

Round 1: a girl volunteer stings as many people as she can. Countdown 3...2...1... STOP! Tell everyone to freeze – seeing who was stung still sitting on the floor...

Round 2: Gather everyone up again and ask for 2 new skeeters (girls) and 3 volunteers to be Sweet Sleep Net Providers. (Those can be girls or boys of course.) Say: “This time, our Sweet Sleep volunteers will be trying to get to you before the skeeters get to you. They’ll give you a mosquito net by throwing it over your head. When you get your net, hold your hands above your heads touching your finger tips together like you’re in a house – so the skeeters know your protected by your new net. Ready? Go!”

Gather the children back up after your countdown and have them freeze. Explain that the reason the “skeeters” could only be girls is that mosquitoes that carry malaria are just the females and the only bite at night – they sleep during the day.

Say: “That’s why Sweet Sleep mosquito nets are so important! When Sweet Sleep provides new beds to orphans in Africa and Haiti, each bunk bed is covered by a mosquito net. Those nets are just \$8 – covering 2 kids! And this \$8 net protects them from this deadly disease. Isn’t that awesome?”

Play HOW LONG IS A MINUTE?

Gather the children and explain the next game. Say “Alright, everybody sit down – making sure you’re not touching or close to your neighbor. We’re going to play “How Long is a Minute?” We’re all going to close our eyes and when you think it’s been a minute – 60 seconds – stand up. Keep your eyes closed – and whoever stands up closest to 1 minute wins! No talking – but you can count to yourself in your head if you’d like... Ready? Go.”

Watch for the person that stands up at exactly one minute. Wait for others to stand up... If it’s been 90 seconds or so – tell them to look up and announce the winner and get them to clap.

Round 2: Have everyone stay standing and say – now we’re going to play “How Long is 30 Seconds?” Stay standing, close your eyes – and when you think 30 seconds have passed, sit down.

After this round ask everyone to open their eyes, announce the winner, and say: “In the time it took you to play how long is 30 seconds, a child somewhere in the world died of malaria. In 60 seconds, 2 children have

died of malaria. That's 2,800 children a day – dying of this disease. How do people get malaria again?" (Female mosquitoes, in certain countries – in Africa and Haiti, that only bite at night.) "And how can they be completely protected from malaria?" (mosquito net) "And how much does it cost per net?" (8 dollars) "And how many kids lives' can that save?" (2 or even 3 in Haiti!)

Stat Hunt Match-Up

Prepare for this activity by printing the stat hunt match up strips (downloadable at www.sweetsleep.org/nickelsfornets.) Make sure you have an even number of strips for kids in your group. Explain that teachers or volunteers will be coming around giving them a strip of paper. When everyone has their strip, say: "Without talking, find all the other people with the same exact strip as you. Some are similar, so look carefully!"

Make sure everyone finds their group and that there is only one group for each stat.

Ask a volunteer from each group to share their stat with the group

Show Uganda video

Say: "Now we're going to watch a video of children receiving their Sweet Sleep beds and nets!"

Show: "Now That I Have Seen: Sweet Sleep for Uganda." Say: "When the team bringing beds and nets to these girls arrived they asked – 'How many of you have had malaria?'" "Every hand went up. Then when volunteers returned the following Christmas to check on the children they asked, 'How many of you have had malaria since you received your new beds and nets?'" "No hands went up. The nets had completely protected every child who received their Sweet Sleep bed and net! Isn't that awesome?"

Explain the Nickels for Nets Program

Say: "We have an opportunity to help protect more of these sweet orphaned children by providing mosquito nets through Sweet Sleep to orphans in Africa.

"All you have to do is see how many nickels, or other change – even dollars – you can bring in to help us provide these nets for orphans! You can get your friends and family to help, you can even sell lemonade or friendship bracelets – anything you can do to see how many nets you can provide! If you fill your box up before time to turn them in, just come by my room and dump it in our Nickels for Nets bucket and keep going! Let's set a goal of _____." (Consider maybe setting a goal of 1 net per child – that's just \$8 and should be easily attainable.)

Be sure to share with the children when your project ends. Explain that you'll collect the final offering at the next after-camp meeting.

PRAYER TIME:

Pray with your kids. Pray that God would help you and your kids help orphans sleep sweetly – protecting them from deadly malaria.

MEETING #4

Prepare for your time together:

- *Tell your kids to bring copies of their favorite pictures from camp (not the originals...) You'll need to print some, too, so there are plenty. They can be printed off the computer or printed on photo paper. Make sure they know they won't get these pictures back. Encourage them to print extra copies of pictures with friends in them to give away.
- *Gather butcher paper, a bulletin board, or connected sheets of posterboard.
- *Enlist a camper to share their testimony about their experience at camp/after camp.
- *Find a tub or basket to collect change/offerings for Nickels for Nets.
- *Download "Sweet Sleep: Human" at www.sweetsleep.org.

FOR FUN:

As kids gather, welcome them and start a project with their photos. Guide the children to pick the best photos that best represent the week at camp and tape them or pin them to the camp collage. After the board is full, ask kids to share a couple of their photos and why they picked them with the group. Make sure you encourage the kids to be positive and encouraging about the pictures taken as they select the photos. Try to allow time to for every kid to share, or break up into smaller groups to share.

Review the camp key verse. (It's Philippians 4:19 if you already forgot!) Say it aloud together. Next, ask a few volunteers to lead the group in the motions for the verse. Remember, you can revisit your Adult Leader Guide from camp for a copy of this verse as well as information about continuing to pray for our missions offering.

STAYING THE COURSE:

Ask kids to share how their Nickels for Nets collecting went to help orphans get life-saving mosquito nets with their new Sweet Sleep beds.

Show the "Sweet Sleep: Human" video from www.sweetsleep.org to show your kids the kinds of beds they've provided through their offerings.

After the video, collect the offerings and donations by having them dump the funds from their boxes into a larger collection bin or tub. You can play music while it is being collected if you'd like.

If you have some volunteers, send them to count the offerings during the Post-Camp Wrap Up so they can report the amount raised at the end of the meeting.

POST-CAMP WRAP UP:

Ask a kid before the meeting to be prepared to share a testimony about what God did in her life at camp or after she returned home from camp. You can do this interview style if you'd like to help her be less nervous and stay on topic.

Afterward, ask for volunteers to share what they've been learning in their time with God using their CentriKid Devotional magazine they received at camp.

Ask: "Has it been hard to stay focused on God since you got home?" (allow for responses) "Why do you think it's been difficult?" (distractions, getting back to a routine, etc.) "Just remember that you can always spend time with God. If you feel far away, it's not because He's gone anywhere. Just take a little break from all the distractions and spend time in His Word."

PRAYER TIME:

Ask your kids to bow their heads and think about one friend that doesn't know Jesus that they'd like to see come to camp next year. Even if they're going on to FUGE or another camp as they head into middle school, they can think of a friend who they'd like to take to youth camp. Ask them to spend a moment praying for that friend and praying for God to show them how they can share His love with that friend when they get back to school, etc.

Close in prayer -- thanking God for what He did in and through your group at camp. Ask Him to continue to guide and direct each of you and to help you continue to grow in Him. Thank Him for what he has taught you and your kiddos about the needs of orphans and pray that He continues working through kids around the world to help orphans in need sleep sweetly. Close your prayer thanking God for each of the kids in the room and for what they mean to you.

Before your kids leave, share the total raised if it was able to be counted by volunteers. Celebrate with them. You may also want to ask them what other ways they can think of that your church can help orphans through Sweet Sleep and continue what they started at camp by making a difference in Africa.

*If you have not already done so, be sure to sign up NOW for CentriKid 2012. You'll save your church's spots for camp, and also be included on email updates from our CentriKid Camps office every month until camp!