

# Step Into My Shoes, Philippines

## Adaptation Ideas for Younger Children, Preschool—First grade

While Step Into My Shoes – Philippines was designed with 8- to 11-year-olds in mind, with a few adaptations it can easily be utilized with preschool and early elementary-aged children as well. Below are a few ideas for adapting each of the elements of the resource.

### Passports

We recommend not using the Passport tool for younger kids, since it is designed primarily for kids who can write. You may want to develop alternative coloring sheets or simply use the prompts for group discussion rather than actively drawing.

### Welcome

You may wish to adjust the way the sessions begin for younger kids. Here are 4 alternative suggestions, one for each step.

- Step 1: Introduce the session by playing a quick game of Follow the Leader. Transition to the Bible story by saying, “You all did a great job following the leader! Did you know that we get to follow Jesus too? Let’s get ready to hear from the Bible about how Jesus says, “Follow me!””
- Step 2: Have the leader ask the kids about things they like. Tell the kids to indicate if they like that activity, food, etc. (If you like the park, touch your nose! If you like mac and cheese, rub your tummy! If you like ice cream, stand up! If you like to hop, stand up and hop in place! If you like building things, touch your knee!) Between each example, say, “Look at how many friends like \_\_\_\_\_!” Close by saying, “We are all connected by the things we love. We also all love Jesus. And you know what? Friends all over the world love Jesus too! We are going to meet some new friends who love Jesus today.”
- Step 3: Create a special grab-bag of things we all need—play food, toys (because we all need to play), clothing items, water bottle, a picture of Jesus, a heart for “love,” etc. Let kids take turns pulling an item from the bag, followed by everyone saying what it is. After each one, say, “Yes, we all need \_\_\_\_\_ (food, clothes, love, to know Jesus, play, etc.). Close this exercise by saying, “There are things we all need, and God wants us to have enough of what we need. When someone does not have enough of what they need, we call this poverty. It is very hard to experience poverty, but the good news is that we can all help make sure everyone has enough of what they need.”
- Step 4: This step is designed to help older kids think about their next step of obedience to God through caring for others. Younger kids can instead focus on how Jesus’ love changes us and gives us hope. We recommend replacing the introduction with a review of the Bible verse, then transitioning to the video of Heugene and Heunice, saying, “Today we’ll get to meet a brother

and sister who love Jesus so much. They are big now, but when they were little, other people helped them have love and hope. Let's watch!"

## Bible Focus

For older children, this series explores how we are called—to follow Christ, to be the Church, to Care, and to take a next step. This framework is more than preschoolers need, so you may wish to follow one of these suggestions to focus the biblical content for younger kids.

- Repeat Jesus' calling story each week of the unit, engaging with it a new way each time—act it out, use pictures from a children's Bible, tell the story with puppets, etc.
  - Kids about age 3.5 to 5 can answer "wondering" questions well if you help them. To do this, ask kids to put on their "Imagination Caps" before the wondering questions. Say, "We are going to imagine together what it was like to hear Jesus say, 'Follow Me.' So I'll ask a question, and it doesn't have a right answer. The answers will come from our imaginations! Ready? I wonder..." Then ask:
    - I wonder how they felt when Jesus invited them to follow?
    - I wonder if they ever felt scared following Jesus, since they didn't know where he'd take them?
    - I wonder what Jesus and his friends did for fun together?
- Alternatively, you might consider repeating 1 John 3:16 for lesson 2-4, without adding verses 17-18. You could create hand motions for the verse (and perhaps simplify a few words). Say it several times before talking about what it means.
  - Suggestion: "We know (point to your head) what real love is (give yourself a hug) because Jesus gave up his life for us. (Spread arms open wide.) So we (point to self) [can] give up our lives (place open hands in front of you) for our brothers and sisters." (Point to other kids in the group.) 1 John 3:16, NLT
  - After saying the verse, explain it in simple terms such as, "We get to follow Jesus together. And we get to love others like Jesus loves! Let's meet a new friend who loves Jesus too." Then begin the video.
- Finally, for preschool children, you may wish to reframe the whole 4-week series around 1 John 4:7, 'Let us love one another, for love comes from God.' You can say to kids each week, "We get to love our friends here today, and our friends who live far away. Let's meet [Jonas/Leah/Audrey Mae/Huegene and Huenice] now!"

## Video

- For younger kids, focus your post-video questions on simple, concrete things the kids saw and heard: What was the boy's/girl's name in the video? Who else did we see with them? What did they do together?
- If you have enough leaders for kids to break into smaller groups of 3-4, you could let kids talk about what they liked or what questions they have about the video. We've found that kids are very curious about the kids and the communities in the videos, and would love the chance to ask more about them. It's okay if leaders don't have the answers to those questions! It's great to say, "What a great question! I'd like to know that too."

## Prayer Reminders/Crafts:

- Step 1: Ahead of time, write “Follow me” on the flip-flop ahead of time and provide foam stickers or colorful markers for the kids to decorate the flip-flop. While young kids cannot follow the full rules of “Knock Down the Can,” they would enjoy tossing their flip flop at a can just to see if they can knock it over.
- Step 2: Glue sticks rather than liquid glue will allow younger kids to decorate their own footprint. If you choose to use 1 John 4:7 instead, you can decorate a heart shape instead of a foot.
- Step 3: Pre-make several sets of the Bottle Cap memory game for kids to play with the help of a leader.
- Step 4: You can replace the recommended call and response for older children with a simple ‘repeat after me’ poem.