



DivorceCare for Kids

Leader's Guide

DIVORCE *Care*[®]

Content disclaimer

This book refers to some services, websites, and resources that are no longer available. Since the program's first release in 2004, DC4K has helped thousands of children around the world who are struggling with the breakup of their parents. Today we are offering this program free of charge for both family use and as a church ministry. While some of the materials may be dated (or may not apply to individual use of the program), the teaching and core materials are timely and effective, drawing children to Christ's comfort and equipping them with the skills to cope with challenges and communicate their feelings.

Some features that will no longer be available for churches using the program are the Find a Group search tool and the LeaderZone.

Have questions? Need help?

Our ministry coaches are glad to assist you!

Call us at **800-489-7778** or email **info@dc4k.org**.



Leader's Guide

We are excited your church
is joining our DC4K family.

DIVORCE *Care*[®]

Some content may be inapplicable or no longer available.

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First printing of new edition, April MMXIII.

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For more information

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Welcome to



Dear Friend,

In your hands you hold the guidebook to a program that can make a profound, positive impact on the next generation. In your heart you hold the passion to lead hurting children toward healing in Christ, who alone can restore them to lead healthy, productive lives following the devastation of a family breakup. What a wonderful combination!

The most important thing for you to know as you begin organizing your group is that you are not alone as you build your DC4K ministry. An entire team of people is standing by at Church Initiative to help you through the process step-by-step. In addition, we've developed easy-to-access online tools, located in the DC4K LeaderZone, that provide you with even more resources to help you succeed as a leader.

Best of all, there is no charge for you to talk with our DC4K consultants or access the online tools. These resources are free, and this Leader's Guide will show you how to access them.

You are on the front line of a vital ministry. Thank you for your commitment to helping children heal from the hurt of divorce!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Steve Grissom'. The signature is stylized with a large 'S' and a cursive 'G'.

Steve Grissom
Founder and President, DivorceCare and Church Initiative



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HOW TO CONTACT US

DivorceCare for Kids (DC4K) exists as a ministry to help you as you help others. Feel free to contact us with questions, problems, and success stories.

Phone: **1-800-489-7778** (US and Canada); **919-562-2112** (Local and international)

Fax: 919-562-2114

Mail: DivorceCare for Kids
P.O. Box 1739
Wake Forest, NC 27588-1739

Email: **info@dc4k.org**

Web: **www.dc4k.org** and **www.dc4k.org/leaderzone**

ONLINE ACCESS

LEADERZONE

The online LeaderZone is a resource hub for “leaders-only.” **All the forms and worksheets referred to in this book and in the Lesson Plans book are available for download and reprint on the LeaderZone, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.** The LeaderZone also features the following:

- Downloadable DC4K logos and advertising art
- Leaders’ Forum
- Find a Group database maintenance
- Leadership store
- Articles, forms, agreements
- Promotion tools: Promo videos, logo apparel, banners
- Latest DivorceCare news

LEADERS’ FORUM

Communicate easily and regularly with other DC4K leaders and our DC4K consultants through this online forum. You can ask questions, share ideas, make prayer requests, and react to messages posted by other Forum members via web or email. To begin participating in the Leaders’ Forum, go to **www.dc4k.org/leaderzone**.

All DC4K forms and worksheets can be downloaded and printed from the LeaderZone Library, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.

STORE

Visit the DC4K Leadership Store, **dc4k.org/store**, to order additional Activity Books, brochures and posters, kit replacement items, and other supplies for running your DC4K group.

GETTING STARTED

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- View the Watch Me First! (Leaders Only) video located on Disc 4
- Preview the Leader Training DVD
- Read through the DC4K Leader's Guide
- Register on the LeaderZone
- Preview the children's Activity Book
- Preview at least one story in the *Stories for Kids in Divorce* book
- Preview at least one set of the *Kids Like Me* and the *Stories from the Bible* videos
- Listen to a song from the DC4K CDs
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CHECK YOUR DC4K MATERIALS

Please check the contents of your DC4K materials shipment. We've packed it with care, but we want to make sure you have everything you'll need for your ministry.

Your DC4K Kit Should Include the Following:

- 4 DVDs (with case): Contains 13 *Kids Like Me* dramas, 12 *Stories from the Bible* dramas, and a 3-part Leader Training Video
- Leader's Guide: Instructional and promotional leader training materials (each leader should have a Leader's Guide)
- Lesson Plans: Includes detailed instructions for the leaders, an outline and agenda for each of the 13 sessions, and a weekly Preparation List (each leader should have a Lesson Plans book: download and print copies at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone)
- DC4K Children's Activity Books: Each child will need an Activity Book; we recommend each leader have an Activity Book as well (*please note that Activity Book pages are protected under U.S. copyright law and may not be photocopied*)
- 2 CDs: *Kids Like Me* and *Kids Singing Bible Songs*
- Storybook: *Stories for Kids in Divorce: A Read Aloud Storybook*
- Flip Chart: Alphabet Stretches & Weekly Scriptures
- Herby Mascot Puppet: With 6 red interchangeable feelings faces
- Herby's Feelings Poster
- Energy Ball: Used in Sessions 1, 2, and 13
- Publicity Brochures and Posters: For mailing, distributing, and bulletin boards
- Durable Plastic Carrying Case: For easy storage and transport of DC4K materials

If you're missing items, please contact us, and we'll quickly send you the needed materials.

30-Day Satisfaction Guarantee

DC4K kits are sold with a 30-day guarantee. If you're not satisfied, return the kit for a full refund (excluding shipping charges). The 30-day return policy does not apply to items purchased in addition to the kit. Returns for these additional items will be accepted only if they are damaged or defective.

Proper Care of the DVDs

Proper care of the DVDs is important! Play the first few minutes of each of your DVDs to verify that the disc content corresponds with the label and that the DVD audio and video are present. If you encounter any difficulties, attempt to play the DVD in an alternate machine to determine if your equipment is functioning properly.

Please hold DVDs by the edges only; do not place your fingers on the back side of the disc. If you can see fingerprints, dirt, smudges, or small scratches, use an approved DVD cleaner to keep the DVDs running smoothly. Deep scratches can ruin the media.

Important: It is essential that you view your DVDs within 30 days of receipt to confirm quality. We will be happy to replace any defective DVDs within 30 days after you have received your DC4K kit. Replacement cannot be made beyond this 30-day period.

BEGINNING YOUR DC4K MINISTRY

The tools in this Leader's Guide, plus those on video and online, will help you launch an effective ministry. If you're new to DC4K ministry, don't let these materials overwhelm you. You'll learn as you go—by your successes and mistakes. The most important thing you can do is to get started. There are children of divorce out there who need your ministry.

In this section, we'll share some key principles important to the success of a DC4K ministry. You'll find flexibility to form a ministry that fits your church and community. We encourage you to experiment and innovate, then share your experiences so others can learn and benefit.

What to Expect

You might be wondering what kind of response to expect if you announce the availability of a DC4K group. Every church and community is different. There's no precise way to predict how many children will come to your first group. Factors such as the demographics of your church membership, the availability of other divorce help groups in your community, and the effectiveness of your publicity will have an effect on attendance.

Even with these variables, it's possible to offer some guidance about what to expect:

Your DC4K group will draw children from outside your church: It won't be unusual for the majority of your participants to come from outside the host church. Some children won't be active in any church. Others will come from churches where there's no DC4K ministry. Many of the children in your group might not be followers of Christ, creating an extraordinary outreach and evangelism opportunity.

Your group size is likely to be small when you begin: If only one child or a small number of children show up at your first session, be encouraged! These are the children God has led to you for ministry. The nice part about a small start is that it lets you and your leadership team fine-tune your program and work on the rough spots.

Your DC4K program will likely grow larger over time. *The keys to growth are consistency, prayer, and a warm, accepting environment.* As word gets out that practical help and support are available, families will be drawn to your program. The most effective publicity for your DC4K group will be word-of-mouth invitations and testimonials from your current and previous DC4K children and parents.

Church members will refer people to your group: Everyone knows a divorced family, but many people don't know how to effectively help them, so they'll be glad to learn there's such a ministry in their church. Be sure to publicize DC4K effectively within your congregation.

Expect to be especially busy at first: Every new project, whether it's a start-up business or a new ministry, needs a "champion," someone who's passionately committed to seeing it through to success. It's likely you're that person in the initial phase of your church's DC4K program. Be sure to create a leadership team to help you as your group begins to grow.

Expect to be stretched, challenged, fatigued, and often blessed! Ongoing care ministry can be emotionally draining. If God has called you into this ministry, He'll sustain you through it. Best of all, as you help others, you'll find that you're being deeply blessed, fulfilled, and refilled.

Anticipate testing, trials, and temptations. This phenomenon isn't limited to DC4K ministry. If you are effectively doing the work the Lord leads you to do, you are likely to face some opposition from the enemy. Paul addresses this issue in Hebrews 12:1–2 and suggests an antidote of perseverance. In verse one he urges: "Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." In the second verse, he gives us a focal point: "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus."

Who Will Come

The children in your group might be from divorced, separated, or never-married families. No two groups will be identical, but the following mix is representative of many groups:

Christians: Some of the children who come to your group will be young, growing followers of Jesus Christ.

Non-Christians: A significant percentage of your group might have little or no church background and don't have a personal relationship with Jesus. DC4K gently points children toward Christ as the source of help and hope through the trials their family is experiencing.

Children who have completed at least one DC4K cycle: Children are encouraged to repeat 13-week cycles. As a child repeats the sessions, he or she will experience the DC4K materials from a new perspective and benefit from levels of information that might not have been relevant at an earlier point. As a leader, you must be able to differentiate between children who are genuinely benefiting from the repetition and those who might be staying for other reasons. In most cases, a child shouldn't participate in more than three 13-week cycles.

Children from a variety of life circumstances: It's very likely your group will include a mixture of children from families that are:

- Divorced
- Separated
- Never married

The DC4K material is carefully designed to simultaneously meet the needs of children from each of these categories. The overarching principles presented in the material are relevant to all of these family circumstances.

ESSENTIAL STEPS TO STARTING YOUR DC4K GROUP CHECKLIST

Now that you have inspected your DC4K materials, you might be wondering where to begin, what to do first. Here is a strategy for digging into the material in a logical, helpful sequence. These steps are a conceptual overview of what each director and Safekeeper* (what we call a DC4K leader) needs to do to become familiar with DC4K.

- ❑ **Visit the DC4K website, www.dc4k.org.** Explore each of the sections. They will provide an excellent overview of the ministry. Pay particular attention to the **Start a Group** section, which includes excerpts from the videos, children's Activity Book, Lesson Plans, and Leader's Guide. Visit the **ParentZone**, which contains articles that will help parents of children who participate in your DC4K group.
- ❑ **Preview the Leader Training DVD.** (It's the orange disc, Disc 4, in your DVD package.) This video summarizes the best path to becoming an effective DC4K Safekeeper. Following the steps outlined in this video material will help you have a successful ministry. If you have time, watch all of it now, but be sure to watch it in full with your Safekeepers as part of the training experience. Pages 27–30 have an outline and discussion guide to use when training your leadership team with this video. Using this outline and discussion guide will make the training much more effective and help create a bond within your ministry team.
- ❑ **Read through the DC4K Leader's Guide** and become familiar with its contents. It is the "resource of resources" and will direct you to the material and answers you need. The Leader's Guide references everything a Safekeeper needs to know to start an effective DC4K group. Be sure to highlight points to remember. (Note: You can page through the Lesson Plans book, but it's not necessary to dig into the lesson details at this time. Instead, focus your time on looking at the Running a Weekly Session section on page 33 in this Leader's Guide.)
- ❑ **Register on the LeaderZone, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.** It's important that each current Safekeeper and future Safekeeper connected with your DC4K ministry have access to the LeaderZone. **The LeaderZone serves as the online epicenter for DC4K Safekeepers.** It is a password-protected website exclusively for leaders and church staff. The LeaderZone contains all the downloadable forms and worksheets needed to lead your group. It has important articles, advertising materials, and other valuable resources to help you provide a successful ministry. Also be sure to explore the online, moderated **Leaders' Forum** where you can interact daily (via web and email) with other DC4K leaders around the world. Once you're registered, you'll be automatically signed up for our Leaders' Forum that's delivered daily to your email inbox. This is an essential step in getting all of your Safekeepers connected.
- ❑ **Preview the children's Activity Book.** Please note that the Activity Book pages are protected under U.S. copyright law and may not be photocopied.
- ❑ **Preview at least one story in the *Stories for Kids in Divorce* book (hardcover storybook).**

*The Safekeeper concept has been reproduced/adapted from the following with permission from Loving Guidance, Inc.:
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❑ **Preview at least one set of the *Kids Like Me* and the *Stories from the Bible* videos.**

Session 1	The Kids Connect	Jesus Calms the Storm
Session 2	The First Act	The Woman at the Well and the Children
Session 3	Trey to LA	Jonah Gets Angry
Session 4	Ill Will	The Mother and Son Who Had to Leave
Session 5	Moses Is in the House	A Boy Alone
Session 6	Pastor Tim Visits	God Provides for a Young Girl
Session 7	It's Not Fair	Mephibosheth's Needless Worry
Session 8	A Simple Prayer	A Widow, Her Sons, and the Oil Jar Miracle
Session 9	Breakable Jay	Welcome Home
Session 10	Facing Uncle Scott	Jesus and the Lunch Box Miracle
Session 11	Will to Forgive	Joseph Forgives His Family
Session 12	Dress Rehearsal	Josiah, the Eight-Year-Old King
Session 13	Your Time in the Son	Jesus Calms the Storm

❑ **Listen to a song from the DC4K CDs.**

❑ **Promote your group meeting.** Promote your group meeting on our free, Find a Group online search engine on the main DC4K.org website. People in your community and church need to know your group exists. This free promotional tool enables website visitors to search by zip/postal code, city & state, or country to find the DC4K group nearest them. Your free listing includes all the details parents need to know, such as when and where your group meets, cost for children to participate, and whom to contact for additional information. Plus, it automatically displays a short preview video! To customize your online listing and promote your ministry, go to the LeaderZone, My Church section, and follow the guidelines on that page.

❑ **Connect with the DC4K headquarters team.** Our consultants and support team members are experienced and qualified in helping leaders succeed as they start and sustain a DC4K group. Remember, there is no charge for this help. It is yours for the asking! One of our consultants will be contacting you soon and assisting you as you launch and grow your group for a successful future. We have a Welcome email letter to send you containing lots of tips for leading a DC4K group. Our church support associates are dedicated to helping you with your orders and general inquiries. Feel free to call or email anytime, Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. (eastern time), **800-489-7778** or **info@dc4k.org**.

❑ **Pray for leaders (we call them Safekeepers).**

DC4K is designed to be run by lay leaders with a compassionate and loving heart and a call to this ministry. Pray for wisdom and guidance as you begin the volunteer recruitment process and for God to prepare the hearts of those you'll ask to serve. Take a look at pages 16–24 in this Leader's Guide to help you build your leadership team along with these two practical articles in the LeaderZone Library: "Where Do You Find DC4K Leaders?" and "Recruiting a DC4K Team."

How many leaders will you need?

Recruit a minimum of three leaders to start any size group; then use a ratio of three to four children per adult leader after that.

Maximum group size: Groups should be no bigger than 20, but 12–15 is more manageable.

NOTE: If you have a large registration of 20 or more children, consider forming two DC4K groups instead of one large group. Be sure to keep siblings together.

DIRECTOR'S CHECKLIST

As a lay-driven ministry, it's essential to have someone oversee the coordination of the ministry and the leadership team, whether that person is on the church staff or a volunteer. Many DC4K churches already have a director who oversees the volunteers running the ministry. If you do not already have a director, this page will give you ideas as you structure your DC4K ministry.

As a director you'll have three main roles of administration, liaison, and overseeing volunteers. Note, however, that as a director, it isn't necessary to do all of these tasks yourself. In fact it's better to delegate the actual tasks while overseeing the entire ministry.

A director thinks about objectives, looks at priorities, sets goals, and considers specific actions that will help reach ministry goals. In any ministry, it's important to have someone act as a liaison between all the people involved and to oversee volunteers.¹

What Should a Director Do Before, During, and After a DC4K Cycle?

Before

- Develop and manage the budget, including researching funding options
- Secure a regular meeting space
- Order needed materials
- Coordinate and manage participant registrations and contact information
- Organize ministry promotion both within the church and the community
- Identify and recruit volunteer leaders (Safekeepers)
- Coordinate a leadership team, matching volunteers to specific roles and tasks
- Conduct volunteer leader screening and training

During

- Coordinate work for your leadership team, matching leaders to specific roles and tasks
- Provide resources and supplies for your volunteers
- Delegate tasks to your leadership team
- Have weekly "debriefing" meetings with your leadership team during each 13-week cycle
- Have regular, ongoing meetings with the primary Safekeepers during each 13-week cycle

After

- Give your leadership team feedback and additional training
- Appreciate your volunteers with a small gift or recognition event
- Secure commitments of current leaders to continue with the next 13-week cycle
- Coordinate follow-up with alumni (parents of DC4K children; potential volunteers from DivorceCare and Single & Parenting graduates)
- Organize plans for the next 13-week cycle

**"Divorce is not easy, and helping these children is not easy, but DC4K tools help make it possible. Use all the tools."
Leader, MD**

A Director's Checklist is available for download in the LeaderZone Library at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.

Ongoing

- Act as a liaison with the congregation and church staff about the ministry
- Work with leadership and church staff to develop ongoing and comprehensive ministry plans
- Work with the pastor or staff assigned to the ministry
- Interface with other leadership teams in your church (DivorceCare, Single & Parenting, etc.)
- Contact and stay connected to your free DC4K consultant
- Continue to identify and enlist potential leaders for your leadership team
- Give your leadership team and church staff feedback

WEEKLY THEMES, GOALS, & OBJECTIVES

Weekly Thematic Units

One unique aspect of our program is the weekly theme. The weekly themes are reflected in the session titles. These themes complement the adult DivorceCare program's themes. Parents should be strongly encouraged to participate in DivorceCare. Because parent and child will both be on the same or similar topics each week, this will create an opportunity for parent and child to have meaningful conversations about the issues they face. They'll be learning at the same time about their emotions and how to handle each emotional phase.

Themes, Goals, and Objectives

All of the weekly themes, goals, and objectives are designed to accommodate the outcome objectives (see page 85 for a list of DC4K outcome objectives: immediate, intermediate, and final). Below you'll find a copy of the 13 weekly themes and goals for each session along with samples of the objectives needed to obtain the goals.

SESSION 1 – What's Happening to My Family?

Goal: To help the children of divorce find comfort and relief from the anxiety of what's happening in their families.

Scriptural objective: To demonstrate a "Christ-like" image for the children as they enter the door and begin the DC4K journey of healing.

This session will help the children:

- Know they're safe in this place
- Learn and understand what is going to happen each week at DC4K
- Have fun and connect with new friends

SESSION 2 – God Loves Children in All Kinds of Families

Goal: To assist the children in realizing that everyone's family situation is different and to help each family develop a healthy single-parent home.

Scriptural objective: To help the children discover that when their earthly parents disappoint them or leave them, they can ask God to become their heavenly parent.

This session will help the children:

- Discover that there are other kids like them in similar situations and that they're not different

- Understand how all families are different and unique
- Realize it's okay to miss people and things

SESSION 3 – Facing My Anger

Goal: To help the children understand that anger is part of the grief process when parents divorce and to learn how to deal with these feelings in a healthy and acceptable way.

Scriptural objective: To help the children understand that anger is an emotion from God and that God is “slow to anger” (Psalm 86:15). We want to help the children realize that God doesn't get mad when they're angry with Him. Instead, He has unconditional love for each child.

This session will help the children:

- Recognize when they're mad
- Understand it's okay to be mad, but not okay to be hurtful when they're mad
- Learn they are God's STARS

SESSION 4 – Journey from Anger to Sadness

Goal: To acquaint the children with the sadness phase of grief in the divorce process and to help them learn how to process this in a healthy emotional way.

Scriptural objective: To help the children realize and understand that sadness is an emotion everyone experiences, even people in the Bible.

This session will help the children:

- Realize the difference between being mad and being sad
- Recognize when they're sad and how to respond to their sadness
- Realize they'll get through this sadness and even though they might be sad again in the future, they'll be okay

SESSION 5 – I'm Not Alone

Goal: To help the children realize they're not alone and that there are people, including a heavenly Father, who care about them and love them.

Scriptural objective: To bring God's presence to each individual child.

This session will help the children:

- Understand that everybody feels alone at times
- Develop coping skills for when they feel lonely
- Realize there are people who care about them and love them

SESSION 6 – God's Plan for Me

Goal: To give the children hope and comfort in knowing that God always loves them and will meet all their needs.

Scriptural objective: To introduce the children to the truth that God has a plan for every child.

This session will help the children:

- Realize they have choices to make
- Realize it's okay to say “no” and to set boundaries for themselves
- Learn to talk to God

SESSION 7 – Developing New Relationships

Goal: To help the children realize their relationships with Mom and Dad and others are different since the divorce and to help them learn to develop new relationships.

Scriptural objective: To help the children discover how to develop a new relationship with Jesus Christ and to show them a compassionate God whom they can go to with every problem in life.

This session will help the children:

- Realize they have to look at Mom and Dad differently—as individual parents living in separate homes
- Understand that other relationships (grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends) have changed
- Develop a positive attitude about changes in relationships

SESSION 8 – Developing Money Smarts

Goal: To help the children understand various aspects of budgeting and spending that will help them and their families.

Scriptural objective: To help the children become aware that God wants to supply all of their needs.

This session will help the children:

- Learn about expenses at home and how they can help
- Understand what child support is and how it is to be used
- Make good choices in earning and spending their money

SESSION 9 – It’s Not My Fault

Goal: To communicate to the children that divorce is an adult problem between the two parents and to assist the children in comprehending that their parents’ divorce isn’t their fault.

Scriptural objective: To show the children that God loves them unconditionally.

This session will help the children:

- Understand that it’s okay if they’re sad about the split in their family
- Find out it’s not their fault or any other kid’s fault in their family; it’s between the parents
- Respect both parents

SESSION 10 – Telling My Parents How I Feel

Goal: To help the children learn how to go to their parents and talk about how they feel in an honest, yet respectful, manner.

Scriptural objective: To help the children be able to pour out their hearts to God, their heavenly Father, and to know that He accepts all their burdens.

This session will help the children:

- Communicate how they feel to different people
- Explore ways to express themselves so others can understand what they’re saying
- Realize they can’t be their parent’s best friend

SESSION 11 – Forgiveness

Goal: To help the children understand what forgiveness is and how to forgive others.

Scriptural objective: To help the children become acquainted with the God who forgives our sins.

This session will help the children:

- Define forgiveness and forgive their parents for divorcing
- Learn about God's forgiveness for them
- Take responsibility for their actions and attitudes

SESSION 12 – Loving My Parents

Goal: To help the children discover that their parents still love them and to help them express love to their parents.

Scriptural objective: To help the children realize that Jesus is God's Son and in order to be adopted into God's family, they need to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

This session will help the children:

- Realize their parents don't love each other the same way they used to, but their parents still love them
- Explore ways to show their love to each parent
- Accept love from their heavenly Father

SESSION 13 – Moving On: Growing UP and Closer to God

Goal: To help the children realize that life goes on after divorce and their futures can be healthy and happy.

Scriptural objective: To help the children understand that God wants them to be joyful and happy and it's okay to be happy even though their parents are divorced.

This session will help the children:

- Realize there's life after divorce
- Realize they are individuals with their own talents, hobbies, and interests
- Realize they have their own relationship with God

GETTING STARTED DOWNLOADABLES

We have provided tools you can download in the LeaderZone Library.

- ❑ **Essential Steps to Starting Your DC4K Group Checklist:** An overview of what each director and Safekeeper needs to do to become familiar with DC4K.
- ❑ **Director's Checklist:** Each cycle the director uses this to keep up on his or her roles and responsibilities.

Go to www.dc4k.org/leaderzone to download these resources.

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LEADER RECRUITMENT

One of the most important things you can do to ensure the success of your DC4K groups is to find, recruit, and train the right leadership team. Warm, caring, and mature group leaders (whom we call Safekeepers) set the tone for safe discussion and activities. The right leaders will help children feel comfortable, accepted, and free to share their feelings, struggles, and thoughts. That's why you need to have a specific understanding of what makes a good DC4K Safekeeper and what his or her roles and responsibilities will be.

If your church is just beginning a DC4K ministry, you might be serving as director, Safekeeper, and snack caterer. If that's the case, this section can help you get started in building a leadership team. As your group begins to grow, ask the Lord to help you identify people who can assist you in leadership. To prevent burnout, **never do ministry alone!** Always have someone serving with you. Remember the model that Jesus provided us in Luke 10:1–3, when He sent disciples out “two by two.”

The Importance of a Team

DC4K will be successful because of the loving and caring volunteers you place on your team. Matthew 18:20 says, “For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them” (NIV). With Jesus at the center, and a shared vision to help children heal and grow in their relationship with others and with Jesus, your DC4K program will grow in success and depth. Here are five key reasons why it's important to build a DC4K team:

- **Vision:** A team can help communicate and model your ministry's vision for DC4K. Having a common goal will strengthen and build your leaders as they serve the children.
- **Roles:** Placing leaders in a position that allows them to use their gifts, talents, and abilities will strengthen your program. No one needs to feel like he or she is in this ministry alone; a team allows everyone to be stronger and more productive together.
- **Communication:** Encourage everyone on your team to have a voice to speak into what's working and what's not. Talking through problems and issues, as well as praises and successes, will build your program and strengthen your volunteers.
- **Relationship:** Working together for a common purpose will help your volunteers form lasting relationships with each other. A team provides opportunities for leaders to build lasting friendships and support each other—in DC4K groups as well as personally.
- **Fun:** Serving as a team is a lot more fun than going it alone. DC4K can be tough at times, dealing with kids' deep wounds and hurts. A team atmosphere can remind everyone that even in the difficult times, serving together is uplifting and rewarding.

A **first step** in recruiting a DC4K team is **prayer**. Ask a team of people to join you in praying for God to call leaders to your team. Ask the team to pray for the following:

- That God would stir in the hearts of the congregation a dedicated team of DC4K Safekeepers to come alongside children of divorce who are hurting.
- For wisdom and discernment for you and your church leaders as you recruit leadership for DC4K.

Helpful Hint

Ideally, you'll have a team of at least three adults. It is best to have one leader for every three to four children. Don't try to start this ministry alone.

- For the effectiveness of the promotional tools used to spread the word about the need for a DC4K team.

A **second step** in recruiting a DC4K team is to **use the one-minute leader recruitment video** to inform potential leaders about DC4K. This video is found in the Promotion Tools section of the LeaderZone.

- One of the most effective tools to use is the leader recruitment video. This informative and visually appealing video gives your congregation a one-minute view of a DC4K group in action.
- Potential leaders watching the video will get a more realistic understanding of how this ministry impacts children.
- The video can be used a variety of ways: before, during, or after worship services; in the lobby on a table with a TV/DVD; at small group venues; at senior citizen meetings; and emailed to prayer warriors and folks who have a heart for children who are hurting.
- The leader recruitment video can be shown at an informational meeting about upcoming volunteer opportunities in DC4K. Plan for and place an announcement in the church bulletin about this type of meeting.

Another promotional tool we want to suggest is the use of testimonies throughout your church. Seek opportunities to share how God has worked in the lives of children through DC4K.

- Share one in your church newsletter—each month, if possible.
- A short testimony in a church service is always powerful.
- Request brief testimonial time in an adult Sunday school class.

A **third step** in recruiting your team is to **personally invite** people to join your team. A personal invitation is one of the most effective ways to recruit volunteers. Don't feel alone in your efforts—encourage current volunteer leaders to personally extend invitations to people they're relationally connected with and believe could be valuable additions to your team.

We hope you'll take advantage of these helpful steps for recruiting a leadership team. Starting with prayer, following up with promotional tools such as the DC4K promo videos and testimonies, and personally inviting people to join your team are three keys to successful recruiting. A stronger leadership base will make for a more effective, long-lasting ministry in DC4K.

Basic DC4K Roles

As you're looking for potential DC4K recruits, keep these four key positions in mind:

Safekeeper

A leader for DC4K is called a Safekeeper. Safekeepers are responsible for:

- Planning, equipping, and gathering supplies for each session
- Facilitating each weekly session
- Praying together as a team for their ministry and all of the children attending
- Fostering trusting relationships with parents at drop-off and pick-up

Most importantly, the Safekeeper's role is to remind children during each session that they can feel safe at DC4K. It's essential to introduce the **Safekeeper concept**² and review it each week: ***Each leader is a Safekeeper; it's the Safekeeper's job to keep everyone safe, and it's the child's job to help keep things safe.***

We know that when children don't feel safe, they can't learn. Many adult children of divorce say that safety was a big issue for them; the fact that they didn't feel safe in various situations after their parents' divorce still haunts them. We want the children to feel safe so they'll have the optimum opportunity to learn at DC4K.

DC4K helper

Teenagers who serve as helpers to Safekeepers, but with limited responsibilities, are required to have an adult with them at all times they are with the children.

The DC4K LeaderZone has articles, forums, and book study or program recommendations for ministering to teens, including suggestions from DC4K leaders who've created their own teen programs. To access this information, go to www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.

Prep team

Your DC4K team will also need a prep team. They don't work with the children directly, but they can be of tremendous support. They can:

- Make copies of handouts for the next week
- Collect and prepare arts and crafts supplies
- Ask for donations for snacks or prepare snack supplies
- Be available to run errands for leaders during the sessions or run audiovisual equipment

Prayer support team

Don't underestimate the importance of prayer to your ministry. Focused, organized prayer support of your DC4K ministry is essential. We view prayer as the "jet fuel" that keeps your program going.

We encourage you to pray with your leadership team each week before or after each session: pray for one another, the children, newcomers, and the ministry. We also suggest you organize an outside "prayer support team" of church members to pray for the ministry. The prayer team could meet regularly for prayer and/or have team members individually intercede for the ministry.

A good way to provide specific information about your group's prayer needs is to regularly send a list of prayer requests to the prayer team. Requests could include:

- The Lord will bring children to your DC4K group.
- Children will find help and hope and will grow closer to the Lord.
- Children who don't have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ will be open to Him.
- The Lord will protect and guide your DC4K leadership team in ministry.
- The Lord will protect your DC4K program, participants, and leadership from oppression.

You will also become aware of individual needs in the lives of DC4K children and their families. You can share these needs with your prayer team as well, being careful to maintain confidentiality. Through prayer, your church can have a significant impact on the lives of the people who participate in your DC4K group.

For additional information and suggestions, look for prayer support articles on the LeaderZone, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.

Helpful Hint

We encourage you to invite all support staff and behind-the-scenes assistants to attend your leadership training. This will give everyone an opportunity to learn about children of divorce and about the DivorceCare for Kids program.

Identifying Potential Leaders

Effective leaders come from all walks of life. The right leadership will be the glue that brings together all the elements of the DC4K program. The Potential Leader Assessment Form and DC4K Leader Application will help you identify potential leaders. Also, check out the Recruitment Letter for Potential Leaders. These can be downloaded from the DC4K LeaderZone Library.

Churches should always have two unrelated adults present when working in this type of program. This is for you, your volunteers, and your church's protection as well as protection for the children. If possible, have at least one male and one female leading your group. The DC4K curriculum is so comprehensive it makes it easy for volunteers to pick up the Lesson Plans, follow them, and be successful at facilitating the lessons.

Look for these characteristics in potential leaders:

- **A personal relationship with Jesus Christ:** DC4K identifies a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as the foundation for hope. Leaders must be able to model the hope and peace that come from knowing Christ.
- **Demonstrate spiritual maturity:** Leaders should be mature Christians with a consistent walk. New believers can be recruited to help with administrative and support tasks but shouldn't lead a group. We suggest your leaders be active, participating members of your church. Remember, these leaders will be representing your church to many people who might not attend church. There might be occasions when it's desirable to place someone from another church in a leadership role in your DC4K program. If you're considering such a person, discuss it first with your church leadership to ensure you have their support. Safekeepers should also be able to demonstrate the following spiritual qualities:

Shepherd: As sheep without a shepherd, many children are floundering, confused, not knowing which direction to go. A Safekeeper will develop trust with children and gently point the group discussion toward God's support and direction for their lives. As a shepherd, a Safekeeper will help protect members against things that can harm them.

Comforter: Most Safekeepers can empathize or understand the conflicting emotions children of divorce are feeling. They can offer the special kind of comfort described in 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, mirroring the comfort and care they received from God during times of confusion and pain in their own lives.

Encourager: Many children of divorce begin to lose hope that things will get better, that daily life will become easier. The peace, strength, and perseverance exemplified by the Safekeeper will become an encouragement to the children.

Moral Purity: It's essential for the sake of individual Safekeepers, participants, and for your church that your group leaders be morally pure. One report of immorality might cause serious emotional damage to a child, jeopardize the ministry, affect the church's public reputation, and sidetrack an individual leader from public ministry indefinitely.

Intercessor: Mature Safekeepers will pray for their group and the people in it. Let the participants know this is being done for them; it brings hope and encouragement.

- **Have been divorced (or were raised in a divorced family):** The Lord has a desire to take our difficult experiences and use them for His glory. People who have been in a divorced family have an intimate understanding of the needs of other divorced families. They'll have a special sensitivity as they interact with group members. It isn't essential that leaders have been divorced, or are children of divorced parents, as long as they demonstrate a sensitivity and calling to such ministry.
- **Have recovered from past hurts:** If potential leaders are divorced, it's essential that they demonstrate substantial recovery before leading a group as a primary Safekeeper. If they have a heart for helping others and are enthusiastic about your ministry, you might be tempted to plug them in to a leadership position. We strongly encourage you to protect these people and your program by

resisting this temptation. It's almost impossible for people to effectively lead a group until they've experienced considerable healing (even if they're highly motivated). These people might become effective group leaders in the coming years, but don't press them into service prematurely. As your group grows, you'll need administrative, publicity, food, registration, and other support. People in the healing process can hold these positions of service. As you observe people heal, you can consider their readiness for these types of support functions.

- **Have a sense of calling:** Your best leaders will be those God leads to you!

Here are people to consider asking to be Safekeeper volunteers in the recruiting process:

- **Married couples:** Children from divorced homes need to be able to see Christian brothers and sisters who can work together effectively and model healthy male/female relationships. If you have a married couple leading a group, place another unrelated helper in their room for everyone's protection.
- **Senior citizens:** Try to include multi-generational volunteers. Many children in the divorce process lose access to their extended families, especially grandparents. Older people can bring a special connection to these children's lives.
- **Divorced individuals:** It's a good idea to use adults who've been through a divorce, have processed their divorce, and are now healthy, functioning Christians who have a consistent walk with the Lord.
- **Adult children of divorce:** Consider recruiting adults who experienced divorce as a child and are willing to share their successes and their hearts with children. Adult children of divorce who have healed from a childhood divorce also have a real understanding of what these children are experiencing.
- **Educators:** Schoolteachers, paraprofessionals, and child care teachers are great people to recruit as DC4K leaders. These individuals already have a heart for working with children and understand the struggles the children face.
- **College students:** Especially those pursuing degrees in the social sciences, child development, education, or ministry. Children often easily connect with young adults, and these volunteers can bring a youthful energy and passion to your program.

Helpful Hint

We're finding from churches that are running successful DC4K programs that they have allowed former DivorceCare participants to facilitate DC4K. DivorceCare graduates who are single parents are making great leaders. These are people who have healed sufficiently and love the Lord. They are familiar with the DivorceCare materials. They know what their children went through in the divorce process, and they want to help other people's children. They have a passion to help others heal from the devastation of divorce.

How to Recruit Leaders

Here are five proven and practical tips for recruiting leaders.

Bulletin/newsletter/website ad

We've found that placing an ad in the weekly worship bulletin, newsletter, or on the church website has yielded great results. The key is to find the communication vehicle most read by people attending your church. Here's a sample ad you can run for two weeks. *Do you have a heart to reach children who are hurting from the pain of divorce in their home? Have you learned valuable lessons and experienced some real success as a single parent or as a child of divorce? Would you like to help others do the same? Then please call or email to learn more about the different volunteer opportunities in our DivorceCare for Kids ministry. [Include contact info.]*

Don't try to combine a leader recruiting ad with your promotion to potential participants for your upcoming group. They're separate audiences, and you want to keep your messages simple and clear.

Information meeting

Set up and promote an information meeting, usually after a service, for those interested in coming and hearing about the different volunteer opportunities in DC4K. Attending the meeting carries no commitment: it's an info-only meeting. Show the one-minute leader recruitment video, plus a promo video (available in the Promotion Tools section of the LeaderZone), and give a brief 10-minute overview presentation with the products and brochures. Get their contact and interest level information. Follow up with phone interviews and emails as needed. Email a DC4K Leader Application (a sample is downloadable in the LeaderZone Library) to those who show interest.

Ministry event table

Many churches sponsor "Ministry Fairs" or "Showcases" that allow church members to learn about volunteer or participation opportunities within ministries sponsored by the church. If your church has a ministry fair or similar event, staff a DC4K ministry table or display during the event.

As an alternative, ask your church for permission to place a table or display in the foyer of your church as a way to create exposure for your group and recruit volunteers before and after Sunday services.

In either scenario, display a DC4K children's Activity Book, DC4K brochures, and your DC4K kit. If possible, add a television to your display that's showing the DC4K promo videos. Be sure to get contact and interest level information from people who inquire about volunteering. Make sure you have friendly people staffing the display (use your leadership team) to answer questions and take completed contact forms.

Note: If you're able to set up a table or display as described above, be prepared to answer questions from potential leaders AND parents whose children might be interested in attending DC4K. It's likely you'll get questions from both.

Short presentations

Hold short presentations to inform different groups within your church what DC4K is all about. An effective way to get the word out to your church family is scheduling a "7-minute presentation" at already-scheduled church meetings. (See the LeaderZone Library for step-by-step instructions on conducting this 7-minute presentation.) If every month you asked to be a "guest speaker" at a meeting such as the deacons' meeting, choir practice, church staff meetings, Sunday school classes, home small groups, etc., you'd have covered 12 groups in your church by the end of the year.

"Alums"

If you have a DivorceCare ministry that has been running for one or more 13-week cycles, a powerful place to find leaders is from past graduates of this ministry. (This is also true of single-parent alums from the Single & Parenting program.) Send out emails to past participants asking if they'd prayerfully consider volunteering. If you offer different ministry jobs, a person can start as snack or registration coordinator and move into becoming an apprentice Safekeeper. As a reminder, a Safekeeper should meet the qualifications and characteristics of "potential leaders," as identified on pages 19–20, to effectively minister to others.

Helpful Hint

It's always a great idea to be continuously recruiting for your DC4K program. Inviting people to serve throughout the year will build your volunteer team, allow potential leaders to be nurtured and mentored before they serve on their own, and provide a team of substitutes should a leader need to miss a session.

DC4K TEAM BUILDING

Never do ministry alone; it takes a lot of volunteers to build a great ministry. Think about who needs to be on your DC4K team, then begin the recruiting process by advertising your needs in your worship bulletin, on your church website, through announcements during worship services, and through networking with church staff, current volunteers, and congregational connections. Forming and building relationships within your church and community is your best ongoing and effective method for recruiting DC4K team members.

You can begin your DC4K group by recruiting Safekeepers: a primary Safekeeper and two additional Safekeepers. As your program grows, ask other people to join the team and help with tasks like administration, publicity, food, registration, etc. Adapt the structure of your leadership team to meet the needs of your program and church.

There's no best way to organize these kinds of responsibilities. Create an organization that works effectively for you!

Overall Ministry Team

- Pastoral staff: Be sure to include the Children's Pastor.
- Church receptionist: Will likely be the first point of contact, so he or she should have access to current schedule and contact information.
- Custodial/AV staff: Room and equipment setup, unlocking of rooms/restrooms, cleaning before and after, and AC/heating control.
- Child care staff: Paid or volunteer child care staff to care for children of volunteers and for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers of DivorceCare and Single & Parenting participants.
- DivorceCare and Single & Parenting leadership teams: Communicate with each of these groups about DC4K and coordinate schedules accordingly.

DC4K Team

Core team

These team members will relate directly with participants. (Remember: You'll need a minimum of three Safekeepers to start your group. For groups of 12 or more children, add an additional Safekeeper for every additional three to four children.)

Director: Person who coordinates/directs the DC4K ministry.

Primary Safekeeper: Lead person who will run your DC4K group every week.

Safekeepers: People who work closely with the primary Safekeeper to run the group (start with a minimum of three Safekeepers and add from there, making sure you have one Safekeeper for every three to four children).

Apprentices: People in training and learning the role of Safekeeper.

DC4K helpers: Teenagers who serve as helpers to Safekeepers, but with limited responsibilities. Students are required to have an adult with them anytime they're with the children.

Helpful Hint

Consider purchasing logo apparel for all of your Safekeepers so they're easily identifiable every week. You can view logo items on the LeaderZone in the Promotion Tools section.

Helpful Hint

DC4K can be successful with both small and large groups; however, if your group becomes larger than 20 children, we recommend you purchase an additional DC4K Kit at a reduced price and add an additional room so optimal safety, teaching, and healing can take place.

Prep team

Publicity coordinator: Organizes and creates promotional materials (website, newsletters, etc.).

Registration coordinator: Handles Registration Forms, Child Information Forms, name tags, and Activity Book purchases; handles the money for fees; welcomes participants when they first arrive.

Administrative coordinator: Ensures the room, equipment, and supplies are ready.

Snack coordinator: Prepares and delivers the two snacks for each week.

Child care coordinator: Coordinates the child care program.

Prayer coordinator: Coordinates a prayer team and distributes prayer requests.

Signage crew: Sets up directive signs at the meeting site.

Parking lot crew: Directs people to the building and oversees safety in the parking lot.

Security crew: Monitors hallways and building interior to keep participants safe.

Note: These team position ideas are just suggestions for your program. You might be starting this ministry with a team of three, and that's okay. Your DC4K ministry will still work for you! See the DC4K LeaderZone Library for "Job Titles & Descriptions."

Keeping Your Group Healthy

- Pray for your Safekeepers; ask God to protect and hold them accountable to Him and the other Safekeepers. Also pray for protection and guidance for each child.
- Understand your purpose is to provide a safe place for children of divorce to encounter God as their Savior and healer.
- Being a successful Safekeeper means being consistently present, trustworthy, and showing care for each child who comes, regardless of his or her mood or behavior.
- Recruiting Safekeepers throughout the year is key! Recruit Safekeepers-in-training, and use as "backups" when needed.
- Maintain church connections by keeping your pastor and/or children's ministry leader informed of what's happening. An excellent way to do this is to email them each week after the session with details of attendance, program highlights, and reports of salvation and healing.
- Maintain consistency by setting up the room the same way each week and having the same Safekeepers. Children of divorce often deal with constant change and long for consistency.
- Between sessions make sure to pray for each child, stay in communication with the DivorceCare and Single & Parenting leaders, email or call the other Safekeepers, and establish communication with parents so they can let you know if there's a change in schedule.
- Celebrate at the end of each 13-week session with a graduation or party that acknowledges what the kids have learned and what God has done.
- Encourage the children to come to your next session and to invite their friends who are from divorced families.

"This ministry is so deep and important, and there is a mountain of information to help you prepare your leaders to do this ministry."

Leader, OR

For more information on organizing your materials, go to the DC4K LeaderZone Library and see the "Organizing Your DC4K Materials" article.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEADERSHIP GUIDELINES

It is essential that your leaders support your church and embrace its key values and policies. This ministry becomes an extension of your church and represents your church to people from the community who have turned to your program for help.

It's important to develop guidelines for your leadership team that can be the road map by which you determine expectations and goals. Expectations such as time, work, behavior, relationships, and structure should be clearly defined and work in conjunction with guidelines already established for ministry roles in your church.

It's also essential your leaders support your guidelines for issues such as modest dress and behavior. For instance, you will want to establish a clear policy that single leaders not develop a dating relationship with parents of participants.

Perhaps your church already has well-defined guidelines for its volunteer leaders, but if not, see the Leadership Guidelines in the LeaderZone Library, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone. The purpose of these sample guidelines is to provide you with a starting point so you can use portions of it, add to it, or delete from it to make it fit your church and context. You will want your leaders to sign and date a copy of your leadership guidelines, agreeing to be accountable to church leadership under these guidelines.

LEADER TRAINING

Equipping your DC4K team for success is critical, so make sure all volunteers go through the DC4K training so they feel confident in what they'll be doing. Training will also communicate the mission of DC4K and help cast the vision of how your church's DC4K ministry can continue to reach out to people in your church and community.

Orientation

Each new leader should go over the Essential Steps to Starting Your DC4K Group Checklist with the primary Safekeeper or DC4K director to become oriented with the DC4K materials and program. In order to complete the Essential Steps, each volunteer should have his or her own Leader's Guide and children's Activity Book, plus access to the videos, CDs, and storybook. (You can download a copy of the Essential Steps from the LeaderZone Library, or direct them to page 7 in their Leader's Guide.)

Leader Training Video

The Leader Training Video (orange DVD) is designed to give you an overview of what it takes to run a successful DC4K ministry. It's an essential tool for training all DC4K volunteers at your church.

This is the foundational training path that is the key to being an effective Safekeeper. Safekeepers who have watched this video and carried out its action points have gone on to have successful and effective ministries. Watch the entire video (pages 27–30 have an outline and discussion guide to use when training your leadership team with this video).

Keep in mind, as valuable as the Leader Training Video is, the information in your Leader's Guide is another part of the foundation for a successful ministry. Ignoring it will limit your effectiveness. So be sure to read your Leader's Guide and watch the Leader Training Video.

The video presentation on this DVD can be used in three different ways:

1. Individual Viewing – If you have overall responsibility for DC4K in your church or if you are the person starting a new DC4K ministry, use this DVD to help you formulate a strategy and foundation for your ministry.
2. New Leader Training – Make it a priority to go over this DVD content and related material with each new person you recruit to your leadership team. You should not hand off the Leader Training Video to individuals to view on their own. Rather, all new leaders should see this DVD with their director or primary Safekeeper in order to process the discussion questions after the video and answer any further questions. This will help ensure the consistency of your program.
3. Leadership Training Sessions – The Leader Training Video can also be used as a valuable resource as you train and equip your Safekeepers (both veteran and new leaders). Annually, you and your leadership team will want to review the Leader Training Video.

Helpful Hint

It's a good idea for veteran volunteers to attend leader training annually. It'll help spark concepts they might have forgotten and renew their enthusiasm for the vision and mission of the program.

The Leader Training Video, located on Disc 4 in your DC4K kit (on the orange DVD), is designed to stimulate interactivity and discussion within the DC4K leadership team. There are three individual segments that comprise the video training material. We've designed the format so that you'll view a segment, and then use the discussion questions to help your group apply the concepts presented on that segment. You can use the videos in one of two formats:

1. Schedule three separate team meetings, viewing one video per meeting, followed by discussion and planning.
2. Plan a longer training session (such as a Saturday morning), and go through all of the material in a single session. If you elect this option, be sure to include time for discussion/planning after the viewing of each video.

Whichever format you choose, reserve time to pray for your ministry, for the people who will come as participants, and for your leadership team.

Suggested outline for two-hour DC4K leader training

Allow leaders to look through the DC4K materials.	5 minutes
Have trainees form breakout groups of two to three people. These breakout groups will remain together for the remainder of your training time.	
Watch Part 1 – What Is DC4K?	10 minutes
Answer questions on Part 1	15 minutes
Watch Part 2 – The Eight Success Tips	15 minutes
Answer questions on Part 2	15 minutes
Sample snacks for Session 1	10 minutes
Watch Part 3 – DC4K Room Setup and Session Schedule	10 minutes
Answer questions on Part 3	15 minutes
(Optional) DC4K session run-through	15 minutes
Conclusion / Question & answer session	10 minutes

Helpful Hint

To help your leaders become familiar with the schedule and materials for a typical DC4K session, choose one of two options:

1. Have your Safekeepers run a mock DC4K session, going through the different aspects of a session. Be sure to include at least one activity and craft.
2. Have your Safekeepers read through the Running a Weekly Session section (p. 33) together.

Leader Training Video Outline

Download this document from the LeaderZone Library at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.

Use these pages to take notes while viewing the DC4K Leader Training Video.

Part 1: What Is DC4K?

Biblically Based Children's Group

Essential Elements

An ER (Emergency Room) Ministry

A Powerful Outreach Ministry

Part 2: The Eight Success Tips

Success Tip 1 – Build a Team

Success Tip 2 – Read the Leader's Guide

Success Tip 3 – Watch the Leader's Video

Success Tip 4 – Sign Up for the LeaderZone

Success Tip 5 – Provide Activity Books

Success Tip 6 – Customize Your Online Find a Group Listing

Success Tip 7 – Connect with a Consultant

Success Tip 8 – Pray

Part 3: DC4K Room Setup and Session Schedule

DC4K Setup and Stations

Greeting Activities

Opening Circle Time

Kids Like Me DVD Drama

Storybook Time

Small Group Interaction

Focusing Activity

Stories from the Bible on DVD

Closing Connection Circle

Leader Training Video Discussion Guide

Introduction

Begin with a few questions to help your leadership team get to know each other:

- Introduce yourself and share why you are involved in the DC4K ministry.
- What is your dream or vision for our DC4K ministry?
- What fears or concerns do you have about being involved in DC4K ministry?

Part 1: What Is DC4K?

- What are the essential elements of DC4K and why are they important for the children's healing process?
- In your own words, explain the concept of DC4K as an "emergency room."
- What can we do to maximize our DC4K ministry's outreach and impact in the community?
- How would you describe DC4K to a friend or acquaintance who asked you about the program?

Relevant sections in your DC4K Leader's Guide:

Beginning Your DC4K Ministry (p. 5)

Defining Your Ministry (p. 58)

What Is DC4K? (p. 84)

How DC4K Can Benefit Your Church (p. 86)

Ongoing Ministry (p. 89)

Accepting the DC4K Challenge (p. 92)

Part 2: The Eight Success Tips

Success Tip 1 – Build a Team

- What unique contribution can you make to our DC4K leadership team? What gifts or strengths do you bring to this DC4K leadership team?
- Why is it important to have a team of leaders versus a single leader?
- Besides Safekeepers, what other roles for additional team members would be helpful for an effective DC4K ministry at our church? Make a list of these roles.
- Looking at the list, consider the gifts and abilities of our current team. What might be missing? Discuss team assignments.
- Discuss specific guidelines or rules your church has developed for leaders.

Relevant sections in your DC4K Leader's Guide:

Essential Steps to Starting Your DC4K Group Checklist (p. 7)

Recruiting and Training Leaders (p. 15)

Accountability and Leadership Guidelines (p. 24)

Leader Training (p. 25)

Success Tip 2 – Read the Leader’s Guide

- Why is the Leader’s Guide important?
- What date (deadline) can we agree upon as a leadership team to have read the Leader’s Guide completely?
- As a team, what can we do to hold each other accountable to adhere to the principles and goals laid out in the Leader’s Guide?
- What parts of the Leader’s Guide will you be using on a weekly basis with your DC4K group?

Relevant section in your DC4K Leader’s Guide:

Essential Steps to Starting Your DC4K Group Checklist (p. 7)

Success Tip 3 – Watch the Leader’s Video

- Why is it important for each new leader to watch the Leader Training Video initially?
- Why is it important for another trained member to walk through the training video with a new leader?
- Why is it important for our leadership team to watch the Leader Training Video annually as a team?

Relevant sections in your DC4K Leader’s Guide:

Essential Steps to Starting Your DC4K Group Checklist (p. 7)

Leader Training Video (p. 25)

Leader Training Video Outline and Discussion Guide (pp. 27–30)

Success Tip 4 – Sign Up for the LeaderZone

- What is the LeaderZone and why is it important?
- What features of the LeaderZone most interested you and why?
- How can we ensure all of our current and new leaders visit the LeaderZone regularly for new insights and ideas?
- If you could post a question on the Leaders’ Forum right now, what would it be?

Relevant sections in your DC4K Leader’s Guide:

Online Access (p. 1)

Essential Steps to Starting Your DC4K Group Checklist (p. 7)

DC4K LeaderZone (p. 78)

Success Tip 5 – Provide Activity Books

- Why is it important for each leader as well as each child to have a personal copy of the Activity Book?
- What are some things we can do to encourage children to use their Activity Books?
- What is the best way for us to handle the cost of the Activity Books here at our church?
- How can the Activity Book enhance a multi-age learning environment?

Relevant section in your DC4K Leader’s Guide:

Activity Book Station (p. 40)

Success Tip 6 – Customize Your Online Find a Group Listing

- What is the online Find a Group search engine and how can it help us to be more effective in reaching our community?
- Where is it located on the LeaderZone website?
- Why is customizing our online listing and keeping it up-to-date important?
- Who will assume responsibility of keeping our listing up-to-date and publicizing and

- promoting the DC4K ministry within our church and community?
- What are some other creative ways our team could publicize and promote our DC4K ministry within our church? Our community?

Relevant sections in your DC4K Leader's Guide:
Essential Steps to Starting Your DC4K Group Checklist (p. 7)
Find a Group Online Search Engine (p. 68)
Customize Online Find a Group Listing (p. 79)

Success Tip 7 – Connect with a Consultant

- Why is connecting with a DC4K church consultant an important part of being an effective leader?
- What kind of issues would you like to discuss with the consultant?
- Who will be our team's point person (primary leader, final decision maker) to connect with the consultant?

Relevant sections in your DC4K Leader's Guide:
Essential Steps to Starting Your DC4K Group Checklist (p. 7)
Consultants (p. 78)

Success Tip 8 – Prayer

- Will we (personally and as a team) make an ongoing commitment to pray for our DC4K ministry?
- What steps can we take to strengthen the prayer support for our leadership team? For our participants?
- Whom can we ask to serve on our DC4K prayer team? (Identify prospects, discuss who will contact them, and organize the prayer team.)

Relevant sections in your DC4K Leader's Guide:
Essential Steps to Starting Your DC4K Group Checklist (p. 7)
Prayer Group (p. 62)

Part 3: DC4K Room Setup and Session Schedule

- How will our leadership team prepare each week for the DC4K meeting?
- How will we help kids feel welcome and safe?
- What are the eight main components of each DC4K session? Why are they each important?
- Discuss our facility and decide how we will set up the room to accommodate the suggested stations during the Greeting and Small Group Interaction times.
- How will our leadership team prepare for questions that the children might ask in regard to the Bible stories or other spiritual matters each week?
- What will we do to establish a ritual with our DC4K group?
- How can DC4K help children of divorce feel like they "belong"?

Relevant sections in your DC4K Leader's Guide:
DC4K Schedule (p. 34)
Lesson Plan: Detailed Description – Session 1 (pp. 35–54)
Logistics (p. 61)
Spiritual Development in the Child of Divorce (p. 83)
Stations (p. 88)
Valuing Each Child (p. 89)
Safety Guidelines (p. 90)
Creating a Safe Environment (p. 91)
Communicating with the Child of Divorce (p. 94)

CONNECTING WITH OTHER LEADERS

Cooperation Between DivorceCare and DC4K

It's important for the DC4K ministry to collaborate with the adult DivorceCare ministry at your church. These two programs were created to run simultaneously. When parents find healing, the children benefit so much more. The weekly session topics are geared to complement each group.

When DC4K is run in conjunction with the adult DivorceCare program, both programs will be strengthened. Many churches find participation in both programs is more consistent when DC4K and DivorceCare meet at the same time. Make the DivorceCare leaders part of your DC4K team. Meet together and pray with each other. Make sure all leadership is on the same page and understands what the other's ministry is all about. When you train your DC4K Safekeepers, invite the DivorceCare leaders to be part of that training process. It'll help educate them and deepen their desire to help your DC4K group succeed.

Remember, DC4K and DivorceCare are designed to be an intertwined team, focused on ministering to hurting families of divorce.

Connecting with the Children's Minister/Director in Your Church

It's important for the DC4K ministry to connect with the Children's Minister/Director in your church. This is a key partnership for any DC4K ministry as the Children's Minister/Director will be able to inform your team about any policies, training, and opportunities related to ministering to children in your church context.

Children's Ministers/Directors can also be great resources to your ministry in helping you recruit leaders and granting you access to supplies available to your ministry. In addition, they'll benefit by knowing about your ministry and will be able to help by referring children in other church programs to DC4K.

Make the Children's Minister/Director a part of your ministry team. Keep him or her informed about your ministry and foster a mutually beneficial relationship. When you train your DC4K Safekeepers, invite the Children's Minister/Director to be part of that training process. It'll help educate your church leader and deepen his or her desire to help your DC4K group succeed.

Local Network Fellowships

What is a DC4K Local Network Fellowship?

DC4K Local Network Fellowships are groups of local DC4K leaders from churches in a city or region who agree to meet once a quarter for fellowship, encouragement, support, networking, training, and prayer. These fellowship meetings are intended to be informative, interactive, and inspirational.

DC4K leaders will get to know other DC4K leaders in their city or region, glean new ways on how other groups approach things, and find practical feedback and input for the success of their own local church DC4K groups.

These fellowship meetings are typically two hours in length on a Saturday. They will often include training elements, but also heavy emphasis on creating fellowship and friendship with DC4K leaders from nearby churches. The goal is simple: leaders encouraging leaders!

Note: If there are not other DC4K groups in your city or region, consider starting or joining the DivorceCare or Single & Parenting Local Network Fellowships in your area. This will keep you connected to other local leaders and might stir other churches to start their own DC4K group.

How do I start a Local Network Fellowship?

For information on how to organize a Local Network Fellowship and the benefits of starting and participating in a Local Network Fellowship, go to www.dc4k.org/leaderzone in the Network section.

TRAINING DOWNLOADABLES

We have provided tools you can download for your ministry training in the LeaderZone Library.

The forms labeled “Sample” are provided strictly as guidelines for you to create your own forms. Laws and regulations concerning children vary by state/province and denomination. Please check with your state/province and denomination to create your own forms. Check with your church’s children’s department for existing forms and policies.

- DC4K Leader Application (Sample):** This sample form is to be filled out by potential leaders who are interested in serving on your leadership team.
- Potential Leader Assessment Form:** Use this form to help you evaluate potential leadership candidates. (DC4K director fills this out when evaluating a person for leadership.)
- Leader Feedback Form (Sample):** Use this to gather feedback from your leadership team after each cycle.
- Before Your 13-Week Cycle Begins Checklist:** Track what needs to be done before each cycle.
- During Your 13-Week Cycle Checklist:** Track what needs to be done during each cycle.
- After Your 13-Week Cycle Ends Checklist:** Track what needs to be done after each cycle.
- Leader Training Video Outline and Discussion Guide:** Take notes while viewing the DC4K Leader Training Video. Use the Discussion Guide to guide group discussion after viewing the video.
- Recruitment Letter for Potential Leaders:** A sample letter to invite people to join your DC4K team.
- Leadership Guidelines 1 & 2 (Samples):** Guidelines for leadership team accountability.

Go to www.dc4k.org/leaderzone to download these resources.

RUNNING A WEEKLY SESSION

SECTION OVERVIEW

DC4K Schedule 34

Lesson Plan: Detailed Description – Session 1 35

- Leader’s Notes
- Preparation List
- Session Outline
- Greeting
- Opening Circle Time
- Kids Like Me DVD Drama
- Storybook Time
- Bathroom Break
- Small Group Interaction
- Focusing Activity
- Stories from the Bible on DVD
- Closing Connection Circle

Optional Orientation/Registration & Celebration Sessions 54

Running a Weekly Session Downloadables 55

“Before you ever start with the kids in the room, sit down and draw out your room. I am a visual person, so I need to see the room and where things are.

Also realize that each cycle is different.

No two cycles or groups of kids are ever alike.”

Leader, MI

DC4K SCHEDULE

We've designed two streamlined methods to help you get your DC4K group up and running as quickly as possible. The model used and preferred by the majority of DC4K groups is a two-hour schedule. An alternative 90-minute schedule is also available.

A basic session schedule is below to help you choose what will work best for your time frame.

SESSION OUTLINE – Session Title	2 hours	90 minutes
GREETING	15 min.	15 min.
OPENING CIRCLE TIME	15 min.	15 min.
KIDS LIKE ME DVD DRAMA	15 min.	10 min.
STORYBOOK TIME	15 min.	15 min.
BATHROOM BREAK	5 min.	5 min.
SMALL GROUP INTERACTION	20 min.	15 min.
FOCUSING ACTIVITY	10 min.	0 min.
STORIES FROM THE BIBLE ON DVD	15 min.	10 min.
CLOSING CONNECTION CIRCLE	10 min.	5 min.

Each week it's important to read through the complete session in advance, including the Leader's Notes and Lesson Plan (see the Lesson Plans book, which includes detailed instructions for the leaders, an outline for each of the 13 sessions, and a weekly Preparation List). In the Preparation Lists, we have a list of items to prepare and collect ahead of time and another list of things to do 30 minutes before the children arrive. We suggest that you go over the next week's session before you leave each week. This way, decisions can be made as to who will be responsible for various items. It's important to always include the essential pieces of DC4K:

- Activity Book pages
- Weekly Scripture and prayer
- *Kids Like Me* video
- *Stories from the Bible* video
- Music
- Scripture Decoder

LESSON PLAN: DETAILED DESCRIPTION - SESSION 1

The Session 1 Lesson Plan (from the Lesson Plans book) is included in this section with added descriptions about the different parts of a weekly session. The idea is to help leaders become more familiar with the session layout and to better understand the philosophies and intent behind each aspect of a DC4K session.

SESSION 1: WHAT'S HAPPENING TO MY FAMILY?

This session will look a bit different than the remaining 12 weeks to accommodate for registration. The goal of this session is to meet and greet kids, begin to establish a trusting group atmosphere, and begin laying the foundation for a healing environment for children.

LEADER'S NOTES

DESCRIPTION

Each session includes a brief summary of the key points for leaders to know as they prepare to lead their DC4K group. Each leader should read through the Leader's Notes before starting weekly preparations.

Goal: To help the children of divorce find comfort and relief from the anxiety of what's happening in their families.

Scriptural Objective: To demonstrate a Christlike image for the children as they enter the door and begin the DC4K journey of healing.

Gospel Spotlight: God loves each child.

This Session Will Help the Children:

- Know they're safe in this place
- Learn and understand what is going to happen each week at DC4K
- Have fun and connect with new friends

Leader Insights for This Week:

Welcome the Family

Understand that the first week can be difficult for children coming to DC4K as they might not be familiar with your church, adult leaders, or other children. Look at every child entering the group as a hurting child. These children are hurting because of the breakup of their families. Be intentionally welcoming, friendly, and sensitive during this first session. Help the children feel as if they're being welcomed into a family atmosphere that will show them unconditional love and acceptance over the next 13 weeks.

Helpful Hint

The Gospel Spotlight is a section in the Leader's Notes each week that will help highlight an aspect of sharing the gospel with children that leaders can incorporate into the session. By the end of 13 weeks, all the essential gospel elements will have been covered.

Feeling Safe

The main focus of this first session is to get acquainted with each child and help the children feel safe in this environment. Communicate that all of the leaders are Safekeepers. Tell the children it is their job to help you keep things safe. During Opening Circle Time, you'll have a chance to remind the children that DC4K is a safe place and talk about confidentiality within the group. You'll also help the children feel safe by establishing group guidelines, creating rituals, and following the weekly routine.

Talk with your church leadership for any church-specific direction when presenting the gospel to children.

Flexibility

Remember that your first meeting will make it challenging to stay exactly on schedule as you might have to allow extra time for registration, introductions, questions, and helping children feel welcomed and comfortable. Practice grace and patience as you begin the journey of ministering to the hearts of these hurting children.

Registration

Holding an Orientation/Registration Session prior to starting the actual 13-week cycle is a great way to get your registration information. If you opted not to have an Orientation/Registration Session prior to Session 1, then you need to make sure you have sufficient time and supplies to complete registration during this first session. Pass out Welcome Packets to each parent, which include the Registration and Child Information Forms downloadable from the LeaderZone Library. If you're holding registration on the first night, adjust the schedule as follows: Skip the song under "Scripture and Prayer" and skip the section entitled "Focusing Activity."

PREPARATION LIST

<p><i>DESCRIPTION</i></p> <p>The Preparation List contains all of the items that need to be gathered or prepared during the week before the session. Each week's Preparation List is specific to that week (see also the Supply Lists section on page 105 of this Leader's Guide). The Preparation List also provides you with instructions on what needs to be done to set up the room 30 minutes before the children arrive. For instance, you'll need to set up three or four "stations" in the room before the children come. (A station is a table or area where small groups of children can sit and work on their Activity Book pages, do a group project, or prepare their snacks. Stations are used during the 15-minute Greeting time when children are arriving and again halfway through the evening in the Small Group Interaction time. See the LeaderZone Library for articles on fitting stations into your schedule.)</p> <p>Make copies of the weekly Preparation List to give to your leaders and your prep team.</p>	<p>Helpful Hint</p> <p>Lighten prep load by having Safekeepers and helpers divide up the sections of each lesson and prepare only for their own section. You might choose to rotate roles each week.</p> <p>Be sure to watch the DVD segment for each session ahead of time and practice reading the story aloud before kids arrive.</p>
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SESSION 1: WHAT'S HAPPENING TO MY FAMILY? PREPARATION LIST

TO DO – Before the Session Meeting:

- Pray for children attending DC4K (if you have a list, pray individually by name).
- Read the entire Lesson Plan.
- Download & make copies (from LeaderZone Library, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone). *Make 1 copy of each, unless otherwise noted:*

- Name Tags (1 name tag per child, copy on card stock or brightly colored paper, to be laminated after kids decorate this week)
- About Me (1 copy per child who didn't fill one out at the Registration Session)
- Session Schedule (enlarge & laminate)
- Job Descriptions
- Job Sheet (8 copies, 1 used per week for the first 8 sessions)
- Family Word Search Answer Key (Family Word Search found in AB,* p.3)
- Self-Serve Snack Instructions
- Breaking Bread Instructions
- Scripture Decoder (1 copy per child)
- Welcome Packets pages (1 per parent who didn't receive one at the Registration Session)
- Purchase/collect the following items for this session:
 - Self-Serve Snack
 - Peanut butter†
 - Bread
 - Apple juice
 - Small paper plates
 - Plastic knives
 - Small paper cups
 - Breaking Bread
 - Applesauce
 - Water
 - Plastic spoons
 - Small paper cups
 - Game Supplies
 - 1 soft ball or stuffed animal
 - Journaling/Herby Mailbox Supplies
 - Writing utensils
 - Paper or stationery
 - Mailbox or box with lid
 - Art Supplies
 - Markers, yarn, etc., to decorate Name Tags and to wear around neck or affixed to shirts (all 13 weeks). You might choose to use sticker tags this week and save the decorated tags until laminated.
 - Large paper for Group Guidelines
 - Boxes with no tops and low sides, e.g., a box that holds soda cans or a large cereal box with the front cut off and sides taped (1 box per 5 children)
 - 1 Ping-Pong® ball per box
 - 1 set of tongs per box
- Disposable bowls for paint
- Stickers of treasures, fish, seashells, etc., to decorate Treasure Boxes
- Optional: Kids might enjoy making their own Storm in a Bottle (see instructions below). Use small plastic water bottles during Breaking Bread time, and the children can recycle their empty bottles. Bring needed supplies.
- Optional: A small ball or a wristband with a connecting latch (1 per child; see Devotion)
- Make ahead:
 - 1 Storm in a Bottle: Fill a 2-liter soda bottle with water; add blue food coloring. Put Monopoly® houses or other small items, such as cars, trees, etc., in the bottle. Secure lid to bottle with duct tape. Shake to see funnel.

TO DO – 30 Minutes Before Children

Arrive:

- Take out the Weekly Art Tote (see list on p. 106 of Leader's Guide).
- Post Job Sheet and Session Schedule.
- Post Herby's Feelings Poster and place sticky notes and pencils beside it.
- Put on a DC4K CD as background music.
- Set up stations for Greeting activities:
 - Name Tags
 - About Me
 - Activity Book
 - Self-Serve Snack with instructions
- Set aside items for Small Group Interaction stations:
 - Activity Book and journaling
 - Herby Mail Station (optional)
 - Ping-Pong® Blow
 - Breaking Bread with instructions
 - Treasure Box Scripture Decoder
- Have one Activity Book per child available.
- Make sure Energy Ball is working.
- Make sure equipment is working:
 - TV/DVD player
 - CD player

Reminder: Children's Activity Book pages are protected under U.S. copyright law and may not be photocopied. Please provide an Activity Book for each child.

* AB = Activity Book
† ALLERGY ALERT!

SESSION OUTLINE

DESCRIPTION

The session outline provides a quick view of the entire session with time allocations and references, such as song choice or page numbers. This can be an extremely useful tool during session preparations and if you lose your place during a given session.

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO MY FAMILY?	2 HOURS	90 MIN
GREETING Music: "Kids Like Me" (Disc 1, Song 1) Greeting Activities: 1. Introduction and Name Tags 2. Job Sheet 3. Herby's Feelings Poster Activity Book Station: Family Word Search (AB, p. 3) Additional Activity Station: About Me Self-Serve Snack Station: Peanut butter sandwiches and apple juice Herby Mail Station: (Optional)	15 MIN	15 MIN
OPENING CIRCLE TIME Music: "Herby Rap" (Disc 1, Song 2) Welcome: 1. Session Schedule 2. Herby Minute (and introduction) 3. Safekeeper concept Alphabet Stretches: A & B on the flip chart, stress-reducing diaphragm breathing, cross-lateral, and cross-midline movements Scripture and Prayer: 1. Psalm 32:7 2. "You Are My Hiding Place" (Disc 2, Song 1) (Skip if you hold registration on the first night) Creating Group Guidelines Topic Introduction: Read This Week's Goals (AB, p. 2)	15 MIN	15 MIN
KIDS LIKE ME DVD DRAMA "The Kids Connect" (Disc 1, Week 1) Drama Discussion Questions	15 MIN	15 MIN
STORYBOOK TIME Story 1 "My Parents Are Getting a Divorce? Not My Parents!"	15 MIN	10 MIN
BATHROOM BREAK	5 MIN	5 MIN
SMALL GROUP INTERACTION Activity Book Station: Storm in a Bottle (AB, p. 4) Project Station: Ping-Pong® Blow Breaking Bread Station: Applesauce and water Journaling Station: The Journaling Page (AB, p. 5) Treasure Box Station: Decorate Treasure Box; Treasure Box Scripture Decoder Herby Mail Station: (Optional)	20 MIN	15 MIN
FOCUSING ACTIVITY (Skip if you hold registration on the first night) Group Activity: Name Game	10 MIN	0 MIN
STORIES FROM THE BIBLE ON DVD "Jesus Calms the Storm" (Disc 1, Week 1) based on Mark 4:35-41 Discussion Questions	15 MIN	10 MIN

CLOSING CONNECTION CIRCLE

Devotion

Demonstration: Energy Ball

Prayer Time

Music: "United in Love" (Disc 1, Song 17)

Parent Page: Hand out

10 MIN

5 MIN

GREETING

DESCRIPTION

Place one Safekeeper at the door to welcome children as they arrive. Your group will create a "hello" ritual that includes a special handshake. Each week the Safekeepers and children will greet each other with the hello ritual and/or handshake.

Have another Safekeeper or helper available to show kids the stations and offer a quick explanation of choosing an area of interest and what's available at the stations each week. It's important, especially the first week, to provide children with personalized attention as they arrive; many might be hesitant about the program, not knowing any other children or being in an unfamiliar environment. By having various stations set up and giving children the opportunity to decide what they want to do, you'll be empowering them. So much of their power is taken away during the divorce. You'll also be teaching them to make decisions. Be sure to assign leaders to the station area.

Music: As the children arrive, have the *Kids Like Me* CD playing as background music. Music can play an important role in helping children in crisis. Music can soothe the hurts. It can convey important ideas and concepts. The two CDs contain 31 songs that specifically correspond with the weekly themes and Bible verses in DC4K. The CDs are called *Kids Like Me* and *Kids Singing Bible Songs*. The *Kids Like Me* CD contains songs you can use as teaching tools. As the children sing together as a group, they'll begin to connect with each other; the lyrics focus on common thoughts and concerns that children in divorce experience. Some of the songs are used to help the children focus or relax. The *Kids Singing Bible Songs* CD contains the DC4K weekly Scriptures set to music. Because the children's minds are on emotional overload, learning Scriptures can be very difficult. But when set to music, we expect to enhance their Scripture memorization capacity.

Information for parents on how to purchase the CDs is found in the children's Activity Book on pages iv and 102. This Leader's Guide also has information on ordering additional materials on (p. 112).

Job Sheet: Greeting time is a good time for the children to sign up for the jobs they'll perform during the session. (This first night you might want to do this during the Opening Circle Time as a way of introducing the concept of jobs and allowing the kids to help you define some of the jobs that need to get done.)

If you don't have enough jobs for every child each week, let the kids know they can sign up for a job every two weeks. Here's an easy way to keep track: Use wooden craft sticks with the kids' names printed on them and only put out the names of children who are eligible to sign up for a job each week.

Helpful Hint

You can choose to have an adult volunteer run your music each week or create a music job on the Job Sheet, a perfect job for a child who might enjoy music or technology.

Lyrics to the songs can be found in the Library at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone. Encourage the kids to make up motions and movements that are fun and will help them remember the lyrics.

Herby's Feelings Poster Station: This poster depicts various emotions children experience. We encourage you to use the Herby's Feelings Poster to help the children identify their various feelings. Children will place their names on the Feelings Poster next to the picture/word that best describes how they're feeling. This can be accomplished by giving each child a sticky note as he or she arrives. The children can write their names on the sticky notes and then place the notes on the "feeling" picture on the poster that best describes how they feel. This can also serve as your attendance chart each week. You can save the sticky notes or record them on an attendance chart at the end of the session.

Activity Book Station: The Activity Books are designed to boost the DC4K experience. They contain games, word searches, Bible verses, journaling pages, and gentle reminders of the healing process. At the end of each week's section is a short summary of a story from the Bible (these Bible stories are based on the same Bible passages as the *Stories from the Bible* DVD). Read each Activity Book page prior to the lesson.

The Activity Books are set up to accommodate the beginning reader as well as the more advanced reader. We do this in the instructions by directing them to "draw a picture" or "write a story." Children are encouraged to work at their own developmental level: For beginning readers and nonreaders, the Safekeepers or older children will need to read the instructions to them. We have also included age-related supplemental materials downloadable on the LeaderZone. These can be copied and used at your discretion. Answer keys for Activity Book word puzzles are also found in the LeaderZone Library.

While children will have fun with the Activity Books during DC4K, we expect the Activity Books will actually mean more to them after they complete the 13-week session. Many children will keep these Activity Books for years. This Activity Book will become a record of each child's story: a story of how he or she processed the divorce and grew through this period of life.

Group Project Station: This station is an art or craft project that the children work on together. It always has a tie-in to the session theme for that week and will be unique to the lesson. Refer to weekly Lesson Plans for supplies and instructions that will be needed each week.

Self-Serve Snack Station: This is an important station during the Greeting time as many families might not have time to eat a meal before coming to DC4K. If kids have hungry tummies, they won't be able to concentrate on activities and their mood will become grumpy. It's also a bonding experience for the kids to eat together as a community.

Set out all snack-making supplies and instructions at this station. Post a sign as kids check in, indicating what the snacks are each week (including ingredients). This will alert parents to anything that their children might be allergic to (be sure to keep a record of any food allergies on the children's Registration and Child Information Forms). Consider possible peanut butter substitutes

Helpful Hint

The Activity Books should stay at the church, but they can be sent home after the last session. Each child should have his or her own Activity Book (you can include the cost of the book in the registration fee). When a child is repeating DC4K, a second Activity Book will be given to encourage new explorations in healing and promote continued growth. If a child should drop out, then the Activity Book can be mailed to the home.

Helpful Hint

Anytime children arrive early, welcome them in and have them either get started at one of the stations or help you finish setting up the room. Use the opportunity to build relationships with kids apart from the larger group.

each week (preferably something with protein), such as hummus, cream cheese, guacamole, or jelly. For dairy allergies, you could provide soy milk, almond milk, or gelatins; always have water available to drink and keep soda crackers on hand as a quick snack alternative.

Children use a lot of energy when under stress and while processing the divorce. Children do better with several small meals versus three large meals during the day. We suggest you provide two snack times. The first snack is called “Self-Serve Snack” and is set up when the children arrive. At the beginning of the session, children can go to the snack area and serve themselves. Post the snack instructions (downloadable from the LeaderZone Library) for the children to read and follow.

The second eating time is in the middle of the session. This eating time is called “Breaking Bread.” Because many children of divorce report eating in front of the TV or alone, we want to provide them with a time to sit down and eat with others. The children can eat with a few of their friends or with one of the Safekeepers. The Breaking Bread area should be set up to only accommodate a few children at a time. Both snack times are optional for the children, and some children might choose not to eat at all. However, as the children warm up to the group and begin to feel safe and comfortable, most will want to participate. Churches have reported this is a time when children really open up and share what is on their minds.

Suggested Snacks: Careful consideration and research has gone into the snack suggestions. You’ll find a complete 13-week snack list downloadable on the LeaderZone. The suggestions include stress-reducing foods that contain potassium, such as bananas and orange juice; comfort foods, such as applesauce, that feel soft and soothing in the mouth; and foods that are crunchy and hard to bite, such as pretzels, for the children who are angry. Many children who have problems focusing do well on foods high in protein, so we have several snacks using peanut butter or cheese. Brains that are dehydrated can’t learn, so give the children ample opportunity to drink water. Be sure to check for allergies (some children are allergic to peanut or dairy products).

Helpful Hint

Consider purchasing individually packaged snack items when appropriate (such as applesauce, juice boxes, and pudding). These can make cleanup easier.

Herby Mail Station: You can use this as an optional station during the Greeting time. Kids can express their questions and/or concerns regarding divorce to Herby via a mail system. For details on how to set up the Herby Mail Station, see the corresponding article in the LeaderZone Library.



GREETING

15 minutes

Hand out Welcome Packets to any parents who did not receive one. Have parents fill out Registration and Child Information Forms.

Music: “Kids Like Me” (Disc 1, Song 1)

- Have playing in the background.

Greeting Activities:

- Introduction and Name Tags – Introduce yourself and ask the children their names. Have each child make and decorate a name tag that will be used for the next 13 weeks. Tell a little about what will happen this first session.

- Job Sheet – Show Job Sheet and go through the Job Descriptions. Have the children sign up for a job for today. (Explain that not everyone will have a job each time.)
- Herby’s Feelings Poster – Have the children write their names on a sticky note or a sticker and then find a feeling picture on the chart that best describes how they feel right now. Have them stick the note by the feeling picture. Explain that this will be the attendance chart each week.

Let the kids choose which Greeting stations they’d like to participate in. Place a few chairs at each station so all the kids don’t go to the same place at once.

Activity Book Station: Family Word Search

- Have the children pick out Activity Books and write their names in their books.
- Show the children that the first page of each week announces the session title and is a coloring page if they want to color it (AB, p. 1).
- Have them do the Family Word Search (AB, p. 3). Explain that they’re to stop and not proceed to the next page when they see Herby saying “Stop” at the bottom of the page.

Additional Activity Station: About Me

- Have the children complete these forms. Help those who aren’t able to write.

Self-Serve Snack Station: Peanut Butter Sandwiches and Apple Juice

- Have snack items and corresponding instruction sheet at the station.
- The children can make peanut butter sandwiches. (For children with allergies, see alternative suggestions listed in sidebar.)
- Encourage each child to be in control of his or her own snack setup and cleanup.
- Make sure to have a trash container close by, wet wipes to clean their hands, and a small dustpan and broom so the children can clean up after themselves.

Peanut and dairy allergies are common among children. Use these products as peanut butter substitutes: hummus, guacamole, or fruit spreads. For dairy allergies: soy milk, almond milk, and gelatins.

Herby Mail Station:

- Have the mailbox, stationery, and writing utensils available. (This is an optional station. For details on how to set up this station, see the corresponding article in the LeaderZone Library, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.)

OPENING CIRCLE TIME

DESCRIPTION

Opening activities should help children feel comfortable.

Music: Let the children know it’s time to move from the Greeting to Opening Circle Time by playing the same song each week. We suggest using the “Herby Rap” (Disc 1, Song 2). You’ll also play the song for the week that goes with the theme. Some songs are used to help children connect with each other; some are used to convey a message, such as “you’re not alone”; some are just for fun and relaxation. The music prompt is an important way to establish a group ritual and helps with group management.

Welcome: The welcome activities vary from week to week with welcoming games, deep breathing, and other activities.

Session Schedule: Consider enlarging your weekly schedule for better viewing and either laminate or cover with contact paper to make it durable to use for each session. A sample Session Schedule is downloadable on the LeaderZone.

Herby Minute: Use the Herby puppet to introduce the session topic. Introduce Herby at this session and how his different “faces” can help kids communicate how they’re feeling each week. Keep in mind that the children might feel more comfortable at times over the next 13 weeks talking with or communicating through an inanimate object (Herby).

Helpful Hint

Leave the Herby faces out on a table and encourage the children to use them as pillows or stuffed animals throughout each session.

The Herby mascot puppet was designed specifically for DC4K. Herby has six different emotions on interchangeable pillow faces. The heart shape was chosen for Herby because many children talk about their hearts in the divorce process. It’s not unusual to see them drawing hearts ripped apart or placing their hands over their hearts while saying their hearts hurt. Herby has his own rap song, and it’s included on the music CD (Disc 1, Song 2). See the Herby Puppet Face Guide in the LeaderZone Library for a guide to Herby’s six feelings faces.

It’s important to have a mascot or a companion because many times children will tell an inanimate object something they won’t say to a person. Children can hold the Herby pillow faces as the Safekeepers tell stories. Children can use the Herby puppet to perform skits. He can sit on the Activity Book tables, and the children will be able to see his picture on the Activity Book pages and in “person” at the same time.

Alphabet Stretches: Providing an activity like the Alphabet Stretches not only disengages the stress response, it also helps children connect with one another and unite in an activity. This is a great way to help kids get the “wiggles” out, relax, and prepare them to focus on the learning and healing process.

Helpful Hint

The Scriptures chosen for the Alphabet Stretches aren’t thematic each week, but were chosen for the movement they describe.

The Alphabet Stretches can be displayed using the flip chart. The flip chart will also be used to display the weekly Scripture, which is on the other side of the chart. Two letters of the alphabet are used each session. Each letter has a Bible verse that contains a word starting with that letter and instructions for a stretching activity that corresponds with the Bible verse.

Scripture and Prayer: Each week there’s a Scripture to display using the flip chart and a Scripture song.

Topic Introduction: With the help of the children’s Activity Book, the topic for the session is introduced. At times, this can include a game, story, or other activity.



OPENING CIRCLE TIME

Have the children bring their Activity Books.

15 minutes

Music: “Herby Rap” (Disc 1, Song 2)

Welcome:

- Session Schedule – Show the children the posted Session Schedule and explain what’s going to happen each week. Explain that each week you’ll follow a similar schedule of activities.

See the Herby Puppet Face Guide in the LeaderZone Library for a guide to the six feelings faces found on the Herby mascot puppet.

- Herby Minute – Introduce Herby and tell the kids Herby will be with them every time they meet and that they’ll learn more about this friend next week. Go around the circle and have the kids say their names and something about themselves, such as their favorite color or subject in school.

- Safekeeper concept – Tell the children that they’ll be learning many things at DC4K and that this is a safe place.

- Say This

The first thing I want you to understand is that you’ll always be safe here. I’m a Safekeeper, and it’s my job to keep you safe. All of the adults in this room are Safekeepers. Your job is to help us keep things safe. When people don’t feel safe, they can’t learn; they can’t concentrate or focus. Can anyone share about a time when you have been so scared you couldn’t think?

Alphabet Stretches: A & B

- Say This

Another thing I want to explain to you is what often happens to your body when you feel scared or stressed. When you feel this way, your muscles might feel tight or hurt. You might even feel clumsy and awkward. When you feel this way, it means you need to breathe deeply and stretch. Stretching helps you release tension from your tight muscles. At DC4K we’ll do “Alphabet Stretches” each week to help you release tension and help your brains to focus.

- Show the children the Alphabet Stretches Poster for this week (located on the flip chart). This week’s letters are A and B. Demonstrate the following exercises, which you’ll be using throughout your 13-week program.

Stress-Reducing Diaphragm Breathing

1. Have the children put their hands above their belly buttons with fingers just barely interlaced.
2. Demonstrate how to take a deep breath (using your diaphragm) so your fingers move apart slightly.
3. Hold for a moment; then release your breath and let your fingers go back together and relax.

Cross-Lateral and Cross-Midline Movements (© Becky Bailey, *Conscious Discipline*)

1. Show the children how to cross their right arms over their bodies and over their waists.
2. Then do the same movement with the left arm. This could be right arm to left knee or left foot, and then left arm to right knee and so forth.
3. This helps their brains to focus. (See article in the LeaderZone Library for an explanation of cross-lateral and cross-midline movements.)

Scripture and Prayer:

- Have the flip chart open with the weekly Scripture displayed, and read aloud Psalm 32:7, *“You are my hiding place from every storm of life.”*
- Explain that when parents divorce, it can feel like a storm has come into the children’s lives. God promises that they can go to Him, and He will be their hiding place and protection during a storm.
- Listen to this week’s Scripture song – “You Are My Hiding Place” (Disc 2, Song 1).
- Give thanks for each child and lift up the session’s activities.

For Sessions 1 and 2, have your Bible open and explain to the children that the Bible is the Word of God and all the Scriptures you will read in DC4K come directly from the Bible.

Create Group Guidelines:

- Keep the guidelines simple and few.
- Let the children have input, but the leader has final say.
- List the rules in positive terms rather than starting each rule with “don’t.”

- Write the guidelines they suggest on a large paper.
- This is a good time to address *confidentiality* (see Leader’s Guide, p. 91). Explain that things said in this group are *private*. They can share with their parents what they said if they want to, but not what the other children said.

Topic Introduction: This Week’s Goals (AB, p. 2)

- Read through with the children.

KIDS LIKE ME DVD DRAMA

DESCRIPTION

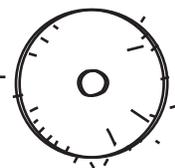
Each week there’s a 10–12 minute practical life application DVD for the children to watch. *The Kids Like Me* drama begins with a group of elementary-age children starting their summer vacation. As they decide how to spend their summer, they hit upon the idea of performing a play. With the help of two teenagers from the high school drama club, the group decides to do a play about their lives and how their lives are similar to the children of Israel.

In order to perform their play, the children overcome a myriad of problems that children of divorce often face in their day-to-day lives. For instance, one girl gets upset because she has to attend two different churches; one girl disappears; and one child’s parent starts dating. The children learn a lot about each other. They share their hurts and disappointments as well as their anger and sadness about their parents’ divorces. They also realize through Pastor Tim that Jesus can bring them through all of their difficult times.

During the intro section of each episode, engage the kids in the drama by having them call out the characters’ names as they appear in print on the screen. This will help the children remember the characters and make connections during later discussions. During all question and answer times, be sure to read each question slowly and repeat it if necessary. Your timing and pacing with questions will greatly help the children be able to respond more readily.

Helpful Hint

Create a comfortable environment for kids to watch the drama by laying out large pillows, soft blankets, and stuffed animals.



KIDS LIKE ME DVD DRAMA

15 minutes

“The Kids Connect” (Disc 1, Week 1).

Primary Questions:

Review the characters and talk a little about their situations. Have the children refer to the pictures of the *Kids Like Me* stars in their Activity Book (AB, p. viii).

- *Did you meet someone in the drama who was like you? How was he or she like you?*
- *What kinds of things do you do to keep busy?*
- *How can friends and activities help you when life is hard?*

Additional Questions:

- *How has your routine changed over the past year?*
- *Why do you think change can be difficult sometimes?*

Say This

We’re sort of like the kids in the drama—a group of friends who have things in common and are going to have fun learning and spending time together each week.

STORYBOOK TIME

DESCRIPTION

Use *Stories for Kids in Divorce: A Read Aloud Storybook*. We've learned from several churches that story time brings a new level of closeness between the Safekeepers and children. We suggest that you nurture the story time. Find a place where you, the adult, can feel comfortable and where the children can stretch out, lean back, or curl up as they listen. Be calm and don't rush. Let the words sink in. Don't be surprised if children want to snuggle in close as they listen. The questions at the end of each story are optional.

The purpose of the *Stories for Kids in Divorce* is to help children bond with the adults in their lives and to connect children with other children. There are 13 different stories, one to be read each week. Each storyline comes from Linda Ranson Jacobs' (creator of DC4K) personal experience in working with children. The characters are real, but the names have been changed. Children listening to these stories find comfort in knowing the stories are about real kids. As the children listen to the stories, they'll be free to create images in their own minds about the characters (this is the reason the book doesn't contain images). They can place themselves, their parents, friends, and others in the stories. While the book is designed to accompany the DC4K program, each story can stand alone.

Questions: The questions at the end of each story are designed to enhance relationships between parent and child. DC4K Safekeepers will also use the questions to encourage discussion. Parents can purchase a copy of the storybook, if they desire. Information for parents on how to purchase the storybook is found in the children's Activity Book on pages iv and 102. This Leader's Guide also has information on ordering additional materials (p. 112).

Reading Suggestions: Shared reading experiences are interactive, thought provoking, exciting, and educational.

General Principles

- Position yourself so that both you and the children are comfortable.
- Allow your listeners, especially younger children, a few minutes to settle down to get ready to hear the story.
- Mood is an important factor in listening. Create anticipation.
- Use plenty of expression, and change your tone of voice to fit the dialogue.
- Adjust your pace to fit the story.

During Reading

- Ask questions and make elaborations during the read aloud.

These should help children:

1. Understand the meaning of unfamiliar words
 2. Make predictions (What do you think will happen next?)
 3. More deeply interpret the meaning of the book (Ask a "Do you think ..." question)
- Stop periodically and have children recap in their own words what has happened so far.³

Helpful Hint

Create a comfortable environment by having blankets, pillows, and stuffed toys available, and encourage the children to sit or lie on the floor as they listen.



STORYBOOK TIME

15 minutes

Read from *Stories for Kids in Divorce*, "My Parents Are Getting a Divorce? Not My Parents!" (Story 1).

Primary Questions:

- *Why do you think Jamie thought the divorce was her fault?*
- *What does it mean when parents get a divorce?*
- *Why do you think Jamie felt scared after she heard the argument? What was she afraid of?*

Additional Questions:

- *Why wasn't Jeremy worried like Jamie?*
- *What do you think will happen next summer with the vacation Jamie and Jeremy planned?*

BATHROOM BREAK

DESCRIPTION

Schedule a regular time each week for children to use the restroom. This will save on interruptions from numerous trips to use the facilities. Here are tips for scheduling bathroom breaks:

- It's recommended to always have two adults present during trips to the bathroom.
- A convenient time to schedule a break is either right before or right after snack time.
- If your venue has a restroom with multiple stalls, allow a group of children to use the facilities, with an adult volunteer holding the main door open for safety.
- If a child has to use the bathroom outside of the scheduled break time, continue to follow the safety procedure for restroom use with two adults present.



BATHROOM BREAK

5 minutes

SMALL GROUP INTERACTION

DESCRIPTION

Divide the large group into smaller groups of 3–5 children. Have several stations set up for these activities. A Safekeeper should be positioned at each station while the children move around the room from station to station. Children should be encouraged to move from place to place at their own pace. During this time you might see siblings separate and gravitate toward friends their own age. As long as they can keep an eye on each other, they should feel safe and comfortable. Have at least three stations: one for the Activity Book activities, one or two for the projects, and one for Breaking Bread.

Helpful Hint

Let the children choose which stations they'd like to participate in, and place just a few chairs at each station so all of the kids don't go to the same station at once.

If you have a smaller group on a given night, you can either have kids go from station to station individually or in pairs. Make sure to still give them choices and not move as a whole group from station to station.

Activity Book Station: Each week there will be at least one Activity Book page to do at this time.

Project Station: Projects use a variety of different mediums. Projects are designed to enhance the participants' understanding, and they've been carefully selected to contribute to the topic being discussed during that session.

Breaking Bread Station: The children will come to the table in small groups. They can eat with their friends, with a Safekeeper, or with new friends. Churches using DC4K have commented on the importance of this special eating time. When children relax and feel comfortable while eating, they feel more comfortable about sharing from their hearts. This provides another avenue for the adult to listen. It also provides one more opportunity to nurture the children in your group. Make sure a leader is always present near the Breaking Bread station to assist the kids and to be available for the children to talk with.

Journaling Station: The children are encouraged to journal their hurts, feelings, dreams, and expectations in their Activity Books each week. We use various ideas to teach them how to journal. This is a time for the children to pour out their hearts and to feel safe and comfortable doing so. **Journal information is confidential. Leaders should not share with anyone (including the parents) what the children have written in their journals, even if it's something funny or cute.** Betraying the children's trust could affect them for many years; however, if what they write involves a safety issue, contact the appropriate authorities. For more information on contacting authorities, see the Safekeeper concept section on page 90.

Treasure Box Station: In the children's Activity Books on the pages titled "This Week's Goals," you'll find a section at the bottom of the page called "God's Treasures for You" and a symbol or shape with a Scripture verse, one of God's treasures, on it. You'll have read this together during Opening Circle Time. On the inside of the back cover of the Activity Book is a Treasure Box.

Before each session, you will be making copies of a Treasure Box Scripture Decoder page for each child. (The Scripture Decoder pages are downloadable on the LeaderZone.) Each Scripture Decoder page has a symbol or shape on it that matches the one found in the Activity Book; however, instead of the words of the Scripture being written on it, the Scripture is written in code. On half of the page is the decoder. The children will be encouraged to decode the Scripture. Then they will cut out the symbol and place it in their Treasure Boxes. At the end of 13 weeks they will have 13 symbols with Scriptures decoded in their Treasure Boxes. Periodically, the children can match the symbols in their Treasure Boxes with the corresponding symbols in their Activity Books. The children can also store special stickers and other treasures in their Treasure Boxes.

Herby Mail Station: (Optional) Kids can continue to write and submit their letters to Herby at this station.

Helpful Hint

All of the questions after games and activities are optional and should be used as conversation starters.

Helpful Hint

The Treasure Box is a great place for kids to find a "surprise" treasure, such as a piece of gum, a note of encouragement, stickers, or a Bible verse. Don't provide a surprise every week so that it becomes expected or the children associate coming to DC4K with getting something; instead, use it occasionally as a time to bless the children with a surprise treat.



SMALL GROUP INTERACTION

20 minutes

- Divide the large group into smaller groups of 3–5 children.
- Have stations set up for these next activities.
- Adults remain at one station while the children move.
- **Have at least three stations** – Activity Book activities, Projects, and Breaking Bread.
- The number of children you have registered will drive how many stations you need. For 20 children, try to have five stations (e.g., two or three Activity Book Stations, one or two Project Stations, and a Breaking Bread Station).

Activity Book Station: Storm in a Bottle

- Provide a Storm in a Bottle. Shake it up and watch the storm inside.
- Have the children pass it around and then complete the corresponding Activity Book page (AB, p. 4).
- Optional: Have the children make their own Storm in a Bottle, using small water bottles.

Project Station: Ping-Pong® Blow

- Purpose – To help the kids discover that even when their lives seem out of control, God is always in control.
- Do This
 1. Place a piece of white paper inside a box (see Preparation List for box ideas).
 2. Have the children roll a Ping-Pong® ball in paint; then, using tongs, place the ball on the paper.
 3. The children can blow the ball across the paper. They can pretend their breaths are a soft wind or a violent storm.
- Ask This
 1. *Do you feel you are more like the blowing wind or the Ping-Pong® ball?*
 2. *What do you do when things in your life seem out of control?*
 3. *What can you say to God when things in your life seem stormy or out of control?*

Breaking Bread Station: Applesauce and Water

- Have snack items and the instruction sheet at the station.
- Explain that children going through a divorce need comfort foods that feel soft and comforting in their mouths. They also need a lot of water to help their brains focus.

Journaling Station:

- Introduce the idea of writing in their journals.
- Have the children read and complete the Journaling Page in their Activity Books (AB, p. 5).
 1. Younger children might need help from a leader or the older children to write their words. Encourage younger children to draw their journal entries.
 2. You might want to provide a separate, quiet area for older children to journal and reflect more on their writing.

Treasure Box Station:

- Provide stickers depicting treasures, fish, seashells, etc., to stick on the outside of their Treasure Boxes (see inside back cover of Activity Books).
- Distribute copies of this week's Treasure Box Scripture Decoder.
- Have the children decode the Scripture. This week's Scripture will be written on the shape of a house.
- Have them cut out the house and place it in their Treasure Boxes.

Herby Mail Station: (Optional, see the Leader's Guide, p.41)

- Have the mailbox, stationery, and writing utensils available.

FOCUSING ACTIVITY

DESCRIPTION

Group Activity: By this time in the session, the Safekeepers will need to be ready with some stimulating activities to captivate the children's attention. We use this time to bring the children back together again into one large group. A group game or exercise is included each week. Some of the activities make use of exercises that stimulate blood flow to the brain and energize the children. Other activities drive home a point in a fun manner.

Music: Suggestions within each weekly Lesson Plan are made for music that helps children connect with one another.

Note: If you are offering a 90-minute schedule, then you will be skipping the Focusing Activity.



FOCUSING ACTIVITY

10 minutes

Group Activity: Name Game

- Purpose – To help the children get to know their DC4K family.
- Do This – You'll need a soft object that can be passed from person to person.
 1. Sit in a circle and have everyone say his or her name.
 2. Give the soft object to an adult first. The person with the soft object must say three names: the name of the person to the right, the person to the left, and his or her own name.
 3. Then pass the object to the right. The next person must say the name of the person on the right, the left, and his or her own name. The game continues until everyone has had a turn. (For variation, the object can be tossed to someone other than the person next to you.)
- Ask This
 1. *Was it easy or difficult to remember the names around the circle?*
 2. *What are some scary things and some fun things about meeting new people?*
 3. *What's something unique about yourself that might help others remember you?*

Music: "Jesus Loves the Little Children" (Disc 1, Song 3)

- Allow the children to listen to the song.
- Then assign each child a partner. One child is the mirror, and the other child faces the "mirror" and copies his or her movements while the song is playing. (If you need some ideas on movements for this song, watch the bonus material on DVD Disc 3. At the end of the *Kids Like Me* drama, the kids perform "Jesus Loves the Little Children.")
- Partway through the song, have the children switch roles.

STORIES FROM THE BIBLE ON DVD

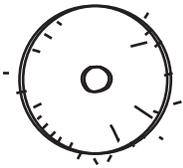
DESCRIPTION

Special care was taken to choose Bible stories that complement each week's theme. Stories are used that address the many difficulties children of divorce face while at the same time pointing them to Jesus Christ as their source of healing.

For this weekly drama, we use a modern-day scenario in which Uncle Bill, who owns a local ice cream shop, enjoys telling stories—especially stories from the Bible. Uncle Bill has a niece and nephew who live above his ice cream shop. They not only come to Uncle Bill with their problems, but they also bring their friends to him. Each week’s story starts with an object lesson that captivates the children watching the DVD. Uncle Bill listens to each child’s problem, and then he skillfully moves into a story from the Bible. He explains how the child’s problem relates to someone in the Bible. Each week’s drama ends with Uncle Bill saying a prayer.

Some children attending your group will already be familiar with the Bible stories. Other children in your group might not have previous experience with church or the Bible. Whether the child is new to Bible stories or has heard them before, these stories will be a good introduction for learning real-life lessons from the Bible and learning how these lessons apply to each child’s divorce situation.

See the children’s Activity Book page ix for a description and picture of each character in the drama.



STORIES FROM THE BIBLE ON DVD

15 minutes

As you get ready to watch the *Stories from the Bible* dramas, take the children to their Activity Books (AB, p. ix) and show them the pictures of Uncle Bill and the cast for these dramas.

Watch “Jesus Calms the Storm” (Disc 1, Week 1) based on Mark 4:35–41. After the children watch the drama, show the children where the corresponding Bible story is found in their Activity Books (AB, p. 6).

Important to Note: The “Jesus Calms the Storm” (Disc 1, Week 1) Bible story drama will also be repeated and used in Session 13 (see Lesson Plans book, p. 161). This will be a good way for children in your group to think about how far they’ve come in dealing with their parents’ divorce since Session 1.

Primary Questions:

- *What can we learn from the Bible story to help us when we’re afraid?*
- *Describe a time when you’ve felt sad, alone, or afraid?*
- *Taylor told Jamal it’s good to talk about things when you’re sad. Whom can you go to when you need to talk?*

Additional Questions:

- *Why do you think the disciples became so afraid, even though Jesus was with them during the storm?*
- *Why can it be difficult to trust God sometimes?*

Say This

During this session we’ve discussed when the “divorce storm” hits your life. You learned that different things happen that seem like a storm is in your life and can cause you to feel unsafe. You might feel scared or unsure of what to do. But you know from this DVD drama that even the disciples in the Bible had to face storms. Jesus provided for them just as He can provide for you. He will never leave you or forsake you—He wants to be your forever friend.

See the Leader’s Guide (pp. 94–95) for ideas on presenting the gospel. If a child would like to talk more about this, have a leader take the child aside. You can also walk the child through the gospel presentation in the Activity Book (p. vi).

CLOSING CONNECTION CIRCLE

DESCRIPTION

Devotion and Demonstration: A short devotion is included in the Lesson Plan each week. Various elements, such as games, demonstrations, or science experiments are used.

Prayer Time: Keep a prayer journal in your DC4K room where children can record prayer requests during station times. Prayer requests are prayed for and praises are shared.

Closing Music: The same song, "United in Love" (Disc 1, song 17), is used each week to close out the session.

Wrap Up: It is important during the wrap-up time to make sure that the DC4K materials are cleaned up and that everything each child needs to take home (personal effects, coats, art projects, etc.) is in one easy-to-find place near the exit where their parents will pick the children up.

Parent Pages: Parent Pages should be passed out to the parents as they pick up their children. If a child needs to bring an item for the next week, this too can be added to the Parent Page. Goals of the Parent Pages:

- Reinforce the theme for the week
- Encourage family devotions
- Give the parents tips on how to create stronger bonds
- Enhance the parent/child relationship with suggestions for fun activities
- Encourage the parent

As you, the Safekeeper, work with the children both one-on-one and in the small groups, the children will learn how to interact with you, with others and ultimately with their parents in this confusing time. Through the Parent Pages, information is given to the parents to help them reassure their children and to give them practical advice on how to talk with and work with their children throughout the divorce process.

Ideas on building family unity are also suggested to parents via this avenue throughout the 13-week program. A weekly Parent Page can be found online at www.dc4k.org/parentzone (parents can access the ParentZone) and on the DC4K LeaderZone. Make copies of this page to hand out to the parents each week when they pick up their children. If the children's parents are involved in the adult DivorceCare program, the Parent Pages are also found in the DivorceCare participant workbook.

Helpful Hint

If you're running short on time, shorten the Closing Connection Circle time by having a Safekeeper briefly ask the kids what they discovered that night, and then wrap up with a short prayer. Only do the activities in the Lesson Plan if there's time.



CLOSING CONNECTION CIRCLE

10 minutes

Devotion: Energy Ball

- Explain that you want to end each session in a special Closing Connection Circle where everyone can come together in a circle and connect with each other.
- Say This

Sometimes when you talk about what's happening in your family, you'll get sad and discouraged. You might wish you could make it all go away. The adults and your new friends in DC4K are here to help you. Sometimes you have to lean on other people. We'll talk about things together, and you

might feel worse before you get better, but you will get better. Together we'll learn to lean on Jesus.

Let's end the session thinking about the good things in life. Sometimes you might think there's nothing good, but when you look around, you can find some good things in your life. Would someone like to share during this session about something good that happened to you?

- Energy Ball – Demonstration
 1. Show the children the Energy Ball. Have the kids hold hands, and make sure their legs, feet, and other body parts aren't touching anyone or anything else.
 2. Take the hand of the child to your left. Have the child to your right put his or her thumb on the metal strip on the bottom side of the ball and index finger on the top of the ball, while you place your thumb on the metal strip and your index finger on the top. (Make sure that your fingers or thumbs don't touch each other.) The ball will light up and twinkle.
 3. Have two children across the circle drop hands. When this happens, the ball will stop lighting and sounding. Experiment several more times.
 4. Say This

It seems like this ball has special powers. But it doesn't. There's an electrical circuit traveling through us, and when two of us drop our hands, we break the connection. When we break the connection, the electricity to the ball is shut off, and it stops working. Isn't that amazing?
 5. Explain that when they're feeling down or discouraged, they need to stay connected to God (point up) and to each other (spread arms out).
 6. Say This

When we break the connection, we cut ourselves off from each other and from God. Repeat after me, "When I feel discouraged, I need to stay connected to God [point up] and to other people [arms out]."

Helpful Hint

Provide the children with a take-home reminder that it's important to stay connected to each other and to God—a small ball or a wristband with connecting latch.

Explain to the children that every time they bounce the ball or wear the wristband, they can remember their connection to God and to other people—especially their new friends at DC4K.

Prayer Time:

- Thank God for the children and their parents.
- Ask Jesus to be with them this week and to help them all feel safe and comforted.
- After prayer, tell the kids that next time they meet they'll learn a special handshake.
- Ask them to think of ideas for the special handshake because you'll be asking for their help. For this session though, have them shake hands with a regular handshake.

Helpful Hint

Have Safekeepers ask the children for special prayer requests and then, during prayer, lift up all of the requests spoken in a general request.

Music: "United in Love" (Disc 1, Song 17)

- Listen quietly and sway to the music. Explain to the children that this will be the ending ritual every week at DC4K.

Wrap Up:

- Have the kids help with cleanup. Children can stack Activity Books, put items in the garbage, wipe tables, pick up art supplies, etc. (Make sure Safekeepers or Teen Helpers put all the DVDs and CDs back in their boxes.)

- Have the children turn in their name tags and Activity Books before leaving.
- Make an announcement for “last chance to turn in Herby Mail letters.”
- Make sure the children have everything they came with (coat, shoes, toys, etc.).
- Throughout the night create a stack for each child of items to take home (completed art projects, etc.).
- Parent Page: Distribute each week as kids leave. (Note: If a parent is attending DivorceCare, the weekly Parent Pages are found in the DivorceCare workbook.)
- Tell the children to bring a picture next week of themselves with their families. It would be best if the picture is of the family or parent the child is living with. We want the children to become comfortable with their current family arrangement. But if they don't have a picture of the people in their current living arrangement, they can bring any family picture or they can draw a picture.
 1. Communicate to the parents that the photos are to assist with a project during next week's lesson where the kids will discover that their family is the people they live with.
 2. Assure parents that the photos will only be used on the Family Tree during group time and will be stored each week in a secure, non-public location. Pictures will be returned in the Exit Packet at the end of the cycle.

Gospel Spotlight

REMEMBER to share the gospel with the children. Go to page vi in the Activity Book, answer their questions and pray with them. As you go through each point in this section, PAUSE to give children time to reflect and pray silently. (Talk to your children's ministry leader or pastor about how your church prefers to approach the question of salvation with children.)

OPTIONAL ORIENTATION/ REGISTRATION & CELEBRATION SESSIONS

Orientation/Registration Session

Holding a DC4K Orientation/Registration Session prior to starting the actual 13-week cycle is an excellent strategy that will help orient parents and children and calm the common first-session nervousness and discomfort. Its design is to help with the preliminary needs of meeting the parents, completing registration, and familiarizing parents and children with the program. See the Lesson Plans book for an Orientation/Registration Session sample agenda (also downloadable on the LeaderZone).

Benefits of offering an Orientation/Registration Session for parents and children

- Find the location – church building, parking lot, room location.
- Register, complete forms.
- Meet and get acquainted with the DC4K leadership team and church staff (if they're available).
- Meet and get acquainted with other children who will be in the group.
- Hear an overview of what to expect during the 13 weeks.
- See a snapshot of what the 13 sessions will look like.
- Ask questions.

- Feel a sense of “ease” and safety; get rid of any jitters or apprehensions.
- Gain assurance that there’s hope and help for each parent and child.
- Invite other parents to bring their children with them for the first session.

Benefits of offering an Orientation/Registration Session for leaders

- Take care of housekeeping items such as registration, Welcome Packets (see p. 97), etc.
- Meet children who will be coming, and get to know their circumstances.
- Meet the parents of the children who will be coming.
- Give an overview of what to expect during the 13 weeks.
- Answer questions.
- Pray for children who have registered before the first session.
- Experience a calm and gentle start, especially if prone to large numbers.
- Be better prepared for the first session.
- Check supplies and Activity Book inventory in preparation for the first session.

Celebration Session – Week 14

Your leadership team should consider planning a week 14 session to hold what we call a Celebration Session. See the Lesson Plans book for a sample agenda (also downloadable on the LeaderZone). This session is designed to allow for a family celebration at the end of DC4K with parents and children.

There are two primary reasons we recommend doing so:

- Allows children the opportunity to have a completion ceremony that the parents can attend.
- Provides a capstone for the entire DC4K experience.

RUNNING A WEEKLY SESSION DOWNLOADABLES

- Lesson Plans:** All weekly Lesson Plans are downloadable on the LeaderZone. Provide a copy for each leader. All worksheets, games, and forms referenced in the Lesson Plans are also downloadable.
- Orientation/Registration Session:** A sample agenda for this optional first session.
- Celebration Session:** A sample agenda for this optional final session.

Go to www.dc4k.org/leaderzone to download these resources.

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DEFINING YOUR MINISTRY

Before dealing with the specifics and logistics of DC4K ministry at your church, it's important to step back and evaluate some key questions:

- Why are we [you and your church] entering this ministry?
- What form should it take?
- What support and resources do we have available?
- What kind of DC4K ministry do we see in our church five years from now?

Take a few minutes to evaluate the material in this section, then attempt to answer these questions within the context of your church and your personal skills and goals. You can use the Defining Your Ministry worksheet found on page 60 of this Leader's Guide to record your answers.

Why Are We Entering This Ministry?

Children of divorce are found in almost every church and community, and living in a divorced family is tough: physically, mentally, emotionally, and financially. The church has a biblical mandate to serve and care for one another as God has cared for us.

Beyond this basic foundation, there are many other reasons your church might begin a ministry for children of divorce:

- You see children of divorce within your church membership whom you'd like to minister to.
- You see ministry to children of divorce as a tool for community outreach.
- You see ministry to children of divorce as a tool for evangelism.
- Single parents in the community have approached your church, and you don't have anything in place to help their children.
- There's little or no help for children of divorce in your community.
- As a pastor or church staff, you see the needs of children of divorce, and although you'd love to minister to each one personally, you're already overburdened and would appreciate the help of a lay-led ministry team to meet this need.
- Your church offers DivorceCare and/or Single & Parenting and your leadership sees the opportunity to extend these ministries by offering help to the children of group members.

By clearly articulating the reasons you're launching a DC4K ministry, you'll be able to more effectively plan the steps necessary to achieve your goals.

What Form Should It Take?

We suggest you establish a goal of maintaining a year-round, ongoing schedule. You might want to sit down with your calendar and plan an annual cycle. The 13 DC4K sessions can be scheduled three times per year (leaving time for breaks between sessions). Many participants will repeat the material one or two additional cycles. This can be beneficial because they'll hear the material from a different perspective as they experience personal growth and will benefit from the continuing contact with a supportive group. If your church is offering additional support group ministries like DivorceCare and/or Single & Parenting, you'll want to consider coordinating your 13-week DC4K schedule to coordinate with those complementary groups.

What Support and Resources Do We Have Available?

It's important to have the support of your church before launching a DC4K ministry. The Defining Your Ministry Worksheet (p. 60) will help you look at issues such as:

- Do you have the support of the pastor and other church leadership?
- Who will provide ongoing leadership and oversight?
- What obstacles do you foresee?
- Do you have access to or can you refer people to Christian counselors in your area?

Launching a ministry without proper support and resources could lead to an ineffective ministry or failure of your program. However, it's also true that many new ministries begin with what appear to be inadequate resources and support, relying on God's creative provision. If God has called you and your church to launch this ministry, we encourage you to proceed in faith!

What Kind of DC4K Ministry Do We See in Our Church Five Years from Now?

Your first DC4K group might consist of three people. That's okay. You'll find blessing and encouragement from leading this kind of group. Even if your group begins with a larger number, it's important to develop a ministry vision for the future. You might want to think about questions such as:

- How large can our program get?
- How can we involve DC4K children in other parts of church life (if they aren't already involved in a church)?

This can be a stimulating exercise as you let your imagination run free to envision possible future directions for your ministry. Ask God to begin to reveal His plan for ministry to children of divorce in your church. Out of this "dreaming," you can develop three or four key, long-range goals to help guide your intermediate steps. Use the Defining Your Ministry Worksheet on page 60 to help guide your planning.

Why You Should Offer DC4K on a Repeating Schedule

Each DC4K group will meet once a week for 13 consecutive weeks. Some churches will schedule three 13-week cycles each year, creating a continuous ministry. If your DC4K program will be meeting in conjunction with other groups such as DivorceCare or Single & Parenting, it's important for DC4K to match the time frame of these groups.

It works best if your program can meet for two hours each week; however, you can design your group to meet for 90 minutes as well.

After conducting several 13-week DC4K group cycles, you might ask the question "Is it time for something fresh?" We encourage you to continue using this material. To each child it's new, relevant, and potentially life-changing. We recommend the children attend the 13-week cycle at least twice, but not more than three times.

Defining Your Ministry Worksheet

Download this document from the LeaderZone Library at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.

Take some time to evaluate the questions below. They will help you in the planning of your DC4K ministry. You can download and print the worksheet so that you can write and review your answers.

Why are you entering this ministry?

1. Why are you, personally, entering this ministry?
2. Why is your church undertaking a DC4K ministry?
3. What are the needs you are trying to address?
4. In what ways are these goals consistent with the overall objectives of your church?
5. If you plan to meet weekly, how many 13-week cycles will you hold each year?

Support and resources

1. Does your pastor support the formation of a ministry for children of divorce? Summarize the concerns and/or encouragement you have received from your pastor.
2. Do you have the support of your church board (elders, deacons, etc.)? Summarize their questions, concerns, and encouragement.
3. If you have not yet obtained support of the pastor and church board, do you need to schedule a presentation of your plans and ideas to help secure such support? What questions do you envision they will ask?
4. What obstacles need to be overcome before launching your ministry?
5. Who will have primary oversight of your ministry?
6. If you are the person who will lead, what strengths do you have? What are your weaknesses?
7. Make a list of people who might be able to assist in leadership. (See pages 16–32 for ideas on identifying, recruiting, and training DC4K leaders.)
8. What funds are available in the church budget to support your ministry? Have you sought budget approval? (See Budget Planner Worksheet on page 64.)

What is the long-range vision for ministry to children of divorce at your church?

1. Write a short description of the type of children's divorce ministry you envision for your church five years from now. What is your dream for the future of this ministry?

LOGISTICS

As you plan your DC4K program, it's important to consider some of the logistical details that will help ensure a successful group. In this section we'll examine subjects such as where and when to meet, budget considerations, child care, and other operational areas.

Where to Meet

The best place for your DC4K group to meet would be at your church, at the same time as your church's adult DivorceCare program. Here are some tips for determining your meeting space:

- Close proximity to the adult DivorceCare group – Children and parents will feel more comfortable knowing the other is close by.
- DC4K shouldn't meet in a home; this could be scary for children. For the protection of the children and your volunteers, meeting at a church is the safest venue.
- The sound – Children can be noisy, so choose a location far enough away that the noise won't interfere with the adults attending DivorceCare.
- Enough space for children to sit comfortably and to be able to see a TV screen.
- A room equipped with tables, chairs, and an unencumbered space where children can stand or sit in a large circle.
- A place that will help make cleanup easy, especially when projects with paint are involved.
- Close proximity to the bathrooms.
- The kitchen – Can the snacks be prepared in your DC4K classroom or will they need to be prepared in the kitchen? (Check with your church about health codes and/or restrictions.) Will you have access to the kitchen if needed?

Helpful Hint

Make sure you have adequate square footage to accommodate the number of children you have registered. If you run out of room for the number of children in your program, talk with your church leaders about finding a larger space better suited for your needs. (Be sure to continue recruiting and training new leaders as your program grows.) For further information on meeting space, check out the article titled, "Is the Size of Your Area Creating Aggressive Behaviors?" on the LeaderZone.

When to Meet

Carefully consider the best time to meet, factoring in any conflicts within your church or community, such as children's choir rehearsals or community sports schedules. While you can't account for every potential conflict, gather information from your children's ministry leader and community recreation centers to find the best possible day and time to meet. Here are some other key things in choosing when to meet:

- It's helpful to meet in conjunction with your church's adult DivorceCare program.
- When considering a day and time to meet, determine if child care will be needed for volunteers and/or DivorceCare participants. When possible, schedule your groups to meet concurrently with other programs to allow you to work with other ministries in scheduling volunteer child care workers. For example, if the church provides child care for adult Bible studies on Thursday evenings, try to schedule your DC4K programs during the same time frame.
- Try to stay away from the typical dates when custody visitation issues might arise, such as on the weekend. (Check with local court system officials to find out about the common custody arrangements in your area.)
- If your church doesn't offer the adult DivorceCare program, look at creative times to offer DC4K, for instance, as an after-school program. See the corresponding articles in the LeaderZone Library on DC4K in after-school programs.

Support Systems

The DC4K program is unique because it's a ministry that provides hope and healing to children of divorce as well as a tool for outreach in your community. Because of the program's unique DNA, it's important to have support systems in place for you, your team, and the children and families you'll be serving. Here are key areas for building a support system for your program:

- **Church leadership:** It's important for your DC4K leaders to have a working relationship with the leaders of your church. This includes the ministers as well as the children's workers. Many of your children might also attend other children's programs in your church. It's important that other children's events aren't planned at the same time DC4K is in session. In other words, don't make a child who's on an emotional roller coaster choose which class to attend.
- **DivorceCare leaders:** If your church has a DivorceCare ministry, develop a relationship with the leaders of the adult DivorceCare program. An ongoing dialogue between DC4K leaders and DivorceCare leaders is a must. If a new participant is scheduled to attend DivorceCare and he or she will be bringing children, decide in advance who will be the contact person to notify DC4K of a possible new child attending.
- **Single & Parenting leaders:** If your church has a Single & Parenting ministry, develop a relationship with the leaders. If a new participant is scheduled to attend Single & Parenting and he or she has been divorced and will be bringing children, decide in advance who will be the contact person to notify DC4K of a possible new child attending.
- **Mental health professionals:** If your church has a mental health counselor or a list of recommended area therapists or counselors, ask these people to serve on your support team. Encourage them to look over the DC4K materials so they'll be aware of the program dynamics if you need to seek suggestions from them about children in your group.
- **Prayer group:** One of your greatest means of support for DC4K is an intercessory prayer group. We suggest you organize a "prayer team" who will commit to regularly praying for your ministry. You can choose to have this prayer team meet on a schedule for prayer or have prayer team members individually intercede for the ministry. Children's first names can be given to individual prayer partners, but children's personal prayer requests shouldn't be shared.

Budgeting Costs

You can offer an effective DC4K ministry without spending a lot of money. Even so, there are some potential expenses to consider, and you'll want to think about ways to meet these expenses. Some churches choose to fund all group expenses through their operating budgets; others charge a registration fee to help cover costs. If you choose to charge a registration fee, we encourage you to keep it as low as possible so that cost will not be a barrier to participation. The average registration fee at most churches is \$15–\$20. You might also consider setting up a scholarship fund that church members can donate to for families unable to pay a registration fee. For ideas on how to fund your DC4K program, go to the LeaderZone Library.

Here are expenses to consider as you do your financial planning:

- **Activity Books:** Each child will need a DC4K Activity Book.
- **Supplies:** Ask your children's ministry team if there are supplies you can share, and ask your congregation to donate craft items.
- **Child Care:** Check with your children's ministry regarding funding and availability of child care.

- **Snacks:** You can make an estimate of the expenses for snacks served at each group session. In your planning, remember that you can often find volunteers to bring items needed for snacks.
- **Publicity:** You can generate much of your publicity at little or no cost. DC4K makes attractive brochures and posters available at a reasonable cost. If you plan on mailing brochures, placing newspaper ads or any other promotion in which expense is involved, you'll want to be sure to project the costs ahead of time and budget accordingly. For more information on promoting your DC4K group, please go to the Publicity section (p. 67).
- **Miscellaneous expenses:** Any additional expenses you might encounter.

We've included a Budget Planner Worksheet on page 64 to help you anticipate the expenses associated with your DC4K group. If you don't have many resources to work with, don't worry. You can still have a powerful and effective ministry as you help children heal from their hurt and pain.

Budget Planner Worksheet

Download this document from the LeaderZone Library at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.

EXPENSES

Activity Books
(projected number of participants x Activity Book cost) \$ _____

Supplies*
(arts and crafts, paper goods, etc.) \$ _____

Publicity
(promotional brochures, posters, paid advertising, etc.) \$ _____

Child care (birth up to kindergarten)
(hourly cost x number of workers x number of hours
per session x number of sessions) \$ _____

Snacks*
(estimated cost of suggested snacks) \$ _____

Miscellaneous expenses
(any additional anticipated expenditures) \$ _____

TOTAL EXPENSES \$ _____

Cost per person
(compute by dividing total expenses by the
anticipated number of participants) \$ _____

INCOME

Church support and/or registration income
(projected number of participants x registration fee) \$ _____

Child care income
(if you charge a fee for child care) \$ _____

TOTAL INCOME \$ _____

NET GAIN/LOSS
(subtract total expenses from total income) \$ _____

*Possible DONATED ITEMS.

NOTE: The average registration fee around the country is \$15–\$20 (covering the Activity Book, plus a little more for other expenses). Most DC4K groups are attempting to keep this ministry at a low cost for families.

Organizing Your DC4K Materials

We suggest you choose a method to organize your DC4K materials that works best for you and your team. Here are two ideas that have worked well for other groups. For a complete description of how to organize a Leader Resource Notebook and DC4K File Box, see the article in the LeaderZone Library titled “Organizing Your DC4K Materials.”

- Leader Resource Notebook: Place everything you need to run your program in one handy, organized binder. For example, your promotional material can be in one section, important articles in another and forms in another.
- DC4K File Box: Organize all the handouts, laminated snack sheets, games, etc., that you need for each session in clearly labeled file folders. Then place these files in a portable file box that you can have with you all the time.

Weekly Supplies

You'll need to create a Weekly Art Tote with supplies that are commonly used every DC4K session, such as markers and crayons, scissors, stamp pads, pencils, large paper, etc. Be sure to bring your Weekly Art Tote to every session and refill any supplies that get low. For a complete list of what to include in your Art Tote, see page 106.

Other items to be used weekly include snack supplies, cleanup items, electronic equipment, and more. See page 106 for a list of weekly supplies.

Note: A Week-by-Week Art Projects Supplies List and a Week-by-Week Suggested Snacks List for all 13 weeks are downloadable from the LeaderZone Library.

Registration and Information Forms

You'll want to ask parents/guardians to fill out a Registration and Information Form for their children. This will allow you to learn a little about the children and their families and have a permanent record of their addresses and phone numbers. If you charge a registration fee, the Registration Form will help you keep track of the payments you receive during the registration process. Consider creating an online registration process so families can sign up from anywhere, or host an Orientation/Registration Session where families can come to sign up their children and meet the DC4K team (see the Lesson Plans book for a sample agenda, or download it from the LeaderZone).

In addition to the Registration Form, use a Child Information Form to give you a more in-depth understanding of each child and his or her situation. DC4K leaders can use these for follow-up and reference.

Sample Registration and Child Information Forms can be downloaded from the LeaderZone Library at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone. Feel free to customize these forms for your ministry's needs. These forms are provided strictly as guidelines for you to create your own forms. Laws and regulations concerning children vary by state/province and denomination. Please check with your state and denomination to create your own forms. Check with your church's children's leaders for existing forms and policies.

Staying in Touch

While it's a good idea to stay in touch with children and their parents if they miss a session and after the DC4K cycle is over, it's essential that you obtain permission from the parent first before contacting a child in any way. Check with your church's policies regarding leaders' contact with children outside of your scheduled group time.

Some ideas for follow-up communication are:

- Send a postcard or email to parents or children when they miss a group session. It gives you the opportunity to find out why they were away and communicate that the group missed them. You might discover that they're struggling and that your call or note becomes a significant source of encouragement.
- Send an email to parents reminding them about a schedule change or an item children need to bring to the next session.
- To encourage a child, send a postcard or email after you obtain permission from the parent.

Helpful Hint

We strongly caution against forming a Facebook page or other social network page. Even as a closed group, this can compromise safety and confidentiality.

Contact information for children should be considered confidential. Follow the policies your church has for storing and using confidential personal information. As a rule of thumb, keep contact information for children in a secure place and don't share the information with other people.

LOGISTICS DOWNLOADABLES

We have provided tools you can download from the LeaderZone Library for help in planning logistics.

The forms labeled "Sample" are provided strictly as guidelines for you to create your own forms. Laws and regulations concerning children vary by state/province and denomination. Please check with your state/province and denomination to create your own forms. Check with your church's children's department for existing forms and policies.

- Defining Your Ministry Worksheet:** Use to help plan your DC4K ministry. (One needed per leader.)
- Budget Planner Worksheet:** To help plan for the costs involved with running your DC4K group.
- Registration Form (Sample):** This form can be used to register children for DC4K. Churches can use this sample form to create their own hard copy or online registration form.
- DC4K Child Information Form (Sample):** Collect the essential contact information for each child in case of emergency and for your own records either at the Orientation/Registration Session or on the child's first night with your group.

Go to www.dc4k.org/leaderzone to download these resources.

PUBLICITY

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PROMOTING DC4K

You've recruited group leaders, picked the dates for your first DC4K group, and made arrangements for a place to meet. Now you're ready to invite people. This section will guide you in effective ways to spread the word about your DC4K group.

Helpful Hint

Be sure to check out additional promotion ideas in the LeaderZone Promotion Tools section.

Publicity – Three Most Powerful Tools

These publicity vehicles are the most effective tools at your disposal to bring people to your DC4K group. Best of all, they cost nothing to use. Make these your first priority; then try other options listed in this section.

1. Referrals by people in your church

Almost everyone knows a family of divorce; it might be a friend, family member, neighbor, or coworker. People might want to help children of divorce, but they don't know how. Let church attendees know about your DC4K program so they can share with those they might think could benefit from this type of ministry.

2. Referrals by your DC4K participants, parents, and other "alumni"

The parents of children who've been through your DC4K group and the children themselves will become active recruiters for you: first-person testimonials are highly effective. Adults who have been through your church's DivorceCare or Single & Parenting programs can offer excellent referrals, too. We've provided a tool to help alumni spread the word about your group to others using a feature on the DC4K website called "Email a friend." Encourage them to use this tool and to invite and bring other people to upcoming sessions. The key to maintaining referrals from your alumni is to be sure they know when your sessions are scheduled.

Helpful Hint

If a child moves out of town and needs to find a DC4K group in that area, you can search by zip code, city & state, or country by clicking "Find a DC4K Group" on www.dc4k.org. You can do a 30- to 100-mile radius of churches offering DC4K programs.

3. Find a Group online search engine

The DC4K website includes a search function to help people locate groups across the US, Canada, and in other countries. Thousands of weekly visitors come to the site. For maximum visibility, you'll need to customize your online listing, creating a link to the details of your program, such as contact details, times, dates, child care, etc. Go to www.dc4k.org/leaderzone, My Church section, and follow the guidelines on that page.

Free Publicity

DC4K online website tool

Use the DC4K online sharing tool, "Email a friend." If you know someone who's divorced and has children, then click the "Email a friend" link and tell him or her about the DC4K website. It's a great tool to help divorced parents discover helpful information quickly.

Church web page

Create a web page dedicated to your DC4K ministry. Be sure to embed one of the promotional videos. Include contact information and how to register for your group. Don't forget to create a link to www.dc4k.org, where divorced families can find helpful tools and information!

DC4K logos and art

You're welcome to use the DC4K logo and Herby image to promote your DivorceCare for Kids group, as long as you follow the guidelines on page ii (copyright page). Remember, these are trademarks, so if you have any doubt about whether a use is appropriate, please contact us.

Church bulletin announcements

Bulletin announcements serve two purposes. First, they let people attending your church know of the availability of a group for children of divorce. This is one of the most powerful publicity tools you will have, so maintain high visibility within your church.

Second, divorced families will sometimes slip in and out of church services without letting anyone know of their situation. With bulletin announcements, at least you have the opportunity to let them know about your group.

Run bulletin announcements for six weeks before the beginning of each new DC4K group cycle. If your bulletin includes a weekly calendar, include a DC4K listing every week your group meets. Remember, DC4K groups are designed to be "open," meaning that people can begin attending at any point.

You can download bulletin inserts at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone in the Promotion Tools section.

Promotional videos

Use the promo videos to show to your church during Sunday morning announcements, Sunday school classes, evening services, Bible studies, and other small group venues. Post on your church website.

The videos may be downloaded from the DC4K LeaderZone at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone in the Promotion Tools section. At that location, you'll also find an online version of the promo videos, along with instructions on how to embed the videos on your church website or other internet pages. You'll also find customizable versions of the promo videos that you can download and burn to a DVD.

Announcements by your pastor

During your Sunday or weekday services, ask your pastor to make an announcement encouraging church members to invite children of divorce they know to come to the DC4K group (have brochures available for people to distribute).

Church newsletter or e-letter

Include details about your DC4K group in your church newsletter or e-letter. Often, the newsletter or e-letter format gives you the opportunity to feature more information than is possible in a Sunday bulletin. Newsletter/e-letter coverage could include a feature-style story about your DC4K group or a display announcement.

7-minute presentation

An effective way to get the word out to your church family is by giving "7-minute presentations" at already-scheduled church meetings. If every month you asked to be a "guest speaker" at a meeting like the deacons' meeting, choir practice, children's ministry meetings, Sunday school classes, men's and women's groups, etc., you would have covered 12 groups in your church by the end of the year. See the LeaderZone Library for step-by-step instructions on conducting this 7-minute presentation.

Helpful Hint

You can download files with the logo and sample ads in various formats for use in advertising, church publications, websites, and other promotional uses. Find them in the DC4K LeaderZone Promotion Tools section, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.

Brochure display

Many churches have a place to display brochures for people to find out about church ministries and activities. Encourage church members to take brochures and pass them on to divorced families they know. Make brochures easily available to people in your church and in your group. Distribute to your Sunday school or Bible study classes. Make it simple for them to help get the word out. Have a ministry “meet and greet” table where leaders can pass out brochures and answer questions before and after church services.

You might also be able to display brochures at Christian bookstores, libraries, apartment complexes, beauty and barber shops, child care centers, social services offices and their partnering agencies/services, laundromats, after-school programs, community centers, public schools, and other locations (use your creativity). Get permission as needed.

We’ve prepared an attractive brochure for such use (a sample is enclosed in the back of this Leader’s Guide). The brochure is designed so that you can use a copier or laser printer to insert information about your DC4K group. For information about ordering these brochures, call 800-489-7778 or visit **dc4k.org/store**. *Remember, the DC4K brochures are protected by copyright laws and may not be photocopied.*

Posters

Posters in your church and in other visible locations throughout your community can be an effective (and free) way to help you publicize your group. We’ve prepared posters for your use. Like the brochures mentioned above, they can be customized to fit your ministry’s needs.

Be creative in looking for places to post your posters. You can receive excellent exposure in locations such as those listed above for brochures, as well as grocery stores, public libraries, restaurants, workplace bulletin boards, and neighboring churches. Encourage church members, current DivorceCare or Single & Parenting group members, and “alums” to help put up posters. The posters can be laminated inexpensively, which will keep them fresh-looking longer and will enable them to be placed in outdoor locations, such as apartment complex mail kiosks. Get permission as needed.

A sample poster is located in the back of this Leader’s Guide. For information about ordering these posters, call 800-489-7778 or visit **dc4k.org/store**. *Remember, the DC4K posters are protected by copyright laws and may not be photocopied.*

Newspaper listings

Many newspapers offer free listings for “self-help” groups in their calendar sections. These listings are effective in reaching people who do not attend a church. Also look for calendar sections in publications such as shoppers, weekly entertainment guides, Christian newspapers, and other specialized publications. A sample letter to newspapers is available in the LeaderZone Library for you to use as a guide. Also, sample ads are available to download at **www.dc4k.org/leaderzone** in the Promotion Tools section.

Newspapers like to publish “people stories”; consider submitting a story about your group and/or a life that’s been changed because of it. Be sure to obtain permission before writing about any individuals in your group. Check the LeaderZone Forum archives for sample newspaper articles that have been published.

Radio/television stations

Many radio and television stations make public service and community calendar announcements. Contact stations in your area to find out the availability of this service. You might have particular success in getting exposure on Christian radio and television stations in your area. Look for online radio/television station calendars. We’ve included a sample announcement on the LeaderZone.

Online promo

In addition to church and radio/television sites, promote your group on blogs and e-newsletters. Look for local groups catering to divorced and single-parent families; they might have venues for online announcements.

Social media

Promote your DC4K ministry on social media outlets like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. *Note: We strongly caution against forming a Facebook page or other social network page. This can compromise safety and confidentiality.*

Radio/television interviews

Radio and television “talk” and “interview” format programs need a constant stream of guests to fill their programs. You’ll probably have the best success working with Christian programs, but don’t rule out the possibility of exposure on secular outlets.

Our DC4K staff is available to assist you in preparing for such an appearance. We’re also available by telephone for radio/talk interviews in support of your program. A radio station might choose to schedule local DC4K leadership and someone from the DC4K offices to appear via telephone on the program simultaneously. We are happy to help whenever possible.

Almost Free Publicity

Banners

Many churches report great success with banners or signs placed near the church, especially if the church is located on a busy street. (Please check local sign ordinances.) You can order attractive, custom-made banners through the DC4K LeaderZone at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone in the Promotion Tools section. Click the link “Create a Banner.”

Mailings

Direct mail can be effective. Your investment will be the cost of postage and materials (be sure to take advantage of bulk mail rates whenever possible). As your program develops, start building a mailing list. Send announcements before each new 13-week DC4K group cycle. Here are some suggested mailings:

DC4K parents & DivorceCare alumni

This group will become a powerful publicity tool for you. If your church has a DivorceCare ministry, we suggest you mail a letter and two brochures to each alumnus prior to beginning a new 13-week cycle. Chances are good they’ll give a strong, positive testimony when they pass on the brochure.

Area churches

Not all churches have a ministry to divorced families, but most churches have divorced families. You’ll find some churches will refer people to your program if they’re aware of it.

Social services agencies

Contact local social services agencies and partnering organizations. They work with divorced families every day and would be glad to know of the availability of your program.

Sample Ads & Letters

Need help composing your ads or letters?

The LeaderZone Library has samples you can use as a guide in writing to newspapers, professionals, alumni, and area churches. Be sure to include brochures and a poster in your mailings.

www.dc4k.org/leaderzone

Counselors

Christian and secular counselors in your area can be an excellent source of referrals. Make sure they know the details about your DC4K group.

Daycare centers

Many divorced parents have their children in daycare or after-school centers. This is an excellent location to put up a poster or have brochures available. Also, making the employees aware of your program will enable them to refer newly separated and divorced parents to your DC4K program.

Pediatricians

Pediatricians see many divorced families at their practices. As these doctors are always seeking what is best for the children, some might be willing to display your DC4K brochures or posters.

Paid Publicity

Typically, you'll find plenty of people interested in coming to your group using the free and almost free publicity, but purchased advertising can be helpful in reaching a broad audience, particularly those who don't go to church. Some media have special rates for churches and nonprofit organizations; be sure to ask if such rates are available.

Newspaper/print

On pages 73–74 you'll find samples of advertisements for placement in newspaper and other print media. You can download electronic versions of these ads from the DC4K LeaderZone at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone in the Promotion Tools section.

For sample articles in print or online newspapers, go to the LeaderZone Forum section and search the archives.

If you decide to buy space in a newspaper, avoid placing it on the church or religion pages. Many people who need your group will not read those sections. The entertainment or sports section of the newspaper is widely read and would be a good location for your advertisement.

You should also investigate weekly entertainment and "shopper" publications. They have widespread free distribution and might be more affordable than a newspaper.

Radio/television

You might find broadcast media cost-prohibitive. Television airtime is expensive. Radio commercials are less costly, but the radio audience is fragmented over many different formats and stations (this can work to your advantage if you are trying to target a specific demographic category). You might find affordable rates on a local Christian radio station.

Sample Logos & Advertising Materials



DC4K GROUP = HELP AND HEALING

HELP YOUR CHILDREN HEAL FROM THE HURT OF DIVORCE

DivorceCare for Kids, DC4K, provides a safe, fun place where your children will learn to understand their feelings, express their emotions appropriately, feel better about themselves, and develop coping skills.

555-5555 • Sponsored by
Riverwood Church



DC4K GROUP = HELP AND HEALING

HELPING CHILDREN HEAL FROM THE HURT OF DIVORCE

.....
DivorceCare for Kids is a special group to help children heal from the hurt caused by the separation or divorce of their parents. At our weekly DC4K group, kids make friends with other kids who understand how they feel and the things they are going through because of the divorce of their parents.

DC4K groups meet every [Date & Time] :
at [Church Name], [Church Address]. :
Call [Church Phone] for more information. :



Effective publicity tools for

- Church bulletins
- Church newsletters
- Newspapers
- Community publications (shoppers and weekly entertainment/community publications)

Help for children at DC4K



If you know a child hurting because of divorce, bring him or her to DivorceCare for Kids, a special place for kids ages 5–12 to find help and healing. At our weekly DC4K group, kids make friends with other kids who understand what it feels like when parents get divorced.

555-5555
Sponsored by
Riverwood Church

SAMPLE ADS

These advertisements are downloadable in high quality print resolution files and can be used in church bulletins, newsletters, newspapers, and community publications. The width of these ads is standard for 1&2 column newspaper advertising.

Grayed type indicates where your specific copy will be placed. Suggested type style is Myriad Bold. An alternative type style is Times New Roman. Type is 8.5 or 9 point in size.

The advertisements on this page are printed for preview purposes only. High resolution electronic versions, in several formats, can be downloaded from the DivorceCare for Kids LeaderZone, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.



DC4K GROUP = HELP AND HEALING

**HELP YOUR CHILDREN HEAL
FROM THE HURT OF DIVORCE**



DivorceCare for Kids,
DC4K, provides a safe,
fun place where your
children will learn



DivorceCare for Kids

to understand their
feelings, express their emotions appropriately, feel
better about themselves and develop coping skills.

.....

Call today for more information.

555-5555

**Sponsored by
Riverwood Church**

DC4K GROUP = HELP AND HEALING

**HELP YOUR CHILDREN HEAL
FROM THE HURT OF DIVORCE**



DivorceCare for Kids,
DC4K, provides a safe,
fun place where your
children will learn



DivorceCare for Kids

to understand their
feelings, express their emotions appropriately, feel
better about themselves and develop coping skills.

.....

Call today for more information.

555-5555

**Sponsored by
Riverwood Church**

Publicity Planner Worksheet

Download this document from the LeaderZone Library at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.

Use this checklist to guide you on the release of publicity materials prior to the beginning of each 13-week DC4K cycle. Be sure to show the promotional videos on an ongoing basis to remind people of the availability of the DC4K program. Place a promo video on your church website.

PUBLICITY VEHICLE	RELEASE	CHECK DATE
Promo Video – to remind people of the program	Ongoing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Find a Group Listing	Two months prior to start	<input type="checkbox"/>
Church Bulletin Announcement	Six consecutive weeks prior to start	<input type="checkbox"/>
Church Web Page – announcement & promo video	Six weeks prior to start	<input type="checkbox"/>
Church Newsletter/ E-Newsletter	Six weeks prior to start	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brochures Available	Six weeks prior to start	<input type="checkbox"/>
Posters Up	Six weeks prior to start	<input type="checkbox"/>
Letters Mailed	Six weeks prior to start	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emails Sent	Six weeks prior to start	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspaper Announcement (Free Section)	One month prior to start	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radio/TV Announcement	One month prior to start	<input type="checkbox"/>
Show Promo Videos in Various Venues	One month prior to start	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pulpit Announcements	Four consecutive weeks prior to start	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paid Newspaper Advertising	Two weeks prior to start	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paid Broadcast	Two weeks prior to start	<input type="checkbox"/>

PUBLICITY DOWNLOADABLES

The following letters and forms can be downloaded for use in promoting your DC4K group. Use the sample letters as a guide for creating your own letter. The items below are located in the LeaderZone Library, with the exception of the Sample Logos & Advertising Materials, which are found in the Promotion Tools section.

- ❑ **Church Bulletin/Newsletter Announcement (Sample):** Use as a guide to craft an announcement for your church bulletin/newsletter (consider asking other churches in your area to do this as well).
- ❑ **Letter to Area Churches, School Teachers, Child Care Providers & Professional Agencies (Sample):** Use to help promote your DC4K ministry in the community.
- ❑ **Letter to Alumni (Sample):** Use to help promote your DC4K ministry to DivorceCare and Single & Parenting alumni.
- ❑ **Letter to Parents of Children of Divorce Enrolled in Various Church Classes (Sample):** Use to promote your DC4K ministry to parents within your church.
- ❑ **Newspaper Announcement (Sample):** Use as a guide to craft your own local newspaper announcement.
- ❑ **Radio/Television Announcement (Sample):** Use as a guide to craft your own local radio TV announcement.
- ❑ **Publicity Planner Worksheet:** Use this to help you plan your DC4K ministry publicity.
- ❑ **Sample Logos & Advertising Materials:** These are samples of advertisements that can be used in various publications. See the Promotion Tools section of the LeaderZone.
- ❑ **7-Minute DC4K Presentation to Your Church Leadership:** Step-by-Step instructions on conducting a presentation to inform church groups and leadership about your ministry.

Go to www.dc4k.org/leaderzone to download these resources.

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Start a Group

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Consultants

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Library

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Promotion Tools

Store

“I felt overwhelmed at first, but it gets much easier. I check the LeaderZone for everything, and when I have a question, it is the first place I go. It is a permanent shortcut on my desktop.”

Leader, MD

DC4K MAIN WEBSITE

www.dc4k.org

Tell your participants, parents, and leaders about the resources at **www.dc4k.org**.

Find a Group

Find a DC4K group in another city for a group member who's moving. Do a group search for friends or relatives who don't live in your area. You can search by zip/postal code, city & state, or country.

Bookstore

Parents and leaders can find helpful books organized by topic (e.g., Children & Divorce, Single Parenting, Forgiveness, Financial Survival) at the Parent Help Store. Leaders can order kits, Activity Books, Leader's Guides, Lesson Plans books, brochures, posters, kit replacement items, and other materials at the Leadership Store.

ParentZone

The ParentZone provides helpful articles to assist parents on their single-parenting journey. Uplifting messages encourage parents, and articles written from personal experience guide parents.

Start a Group

The public website also features a section called Start a Group, guiding pastors and church leaders on how to start a local DC4K group. As word about your group travels, you might begin to get questions like, "How do I start a group at my church?" You can point people to this portion of the website for more information.

DC4K LEADERZONE (LEADERS/CHURCH STAFF ONLY)

www.dc4k.org/leaderzone

This password-protected website is your home for all things related to a DC4K group.

The DC4K online LeaderZone is a resource hub for "leaders/church staff only" and provides free, ongoing support and news to make your DC4K group even better. At the online LeaderZone you can download DC4K logos and advertising art. All the forms and worksheets you need to run your group are available for download and reprint in the LeaderZone Library, www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.

You'll also find articles, promo tools, resources, training opportunities, downloadables, and a daily forum to communicate with other Safekeepers. You'll find the following tools and more:

Consultants

Our DivorceCare for Kids consultants and support staff are available to answer your questions at 800-489-7778. They can help you walk through problems and challenges that come up. They have suggestions on dealing with children and their behavior.

Leaders' Forum

Connect with other DC4K Safekeepers around the world. Through the Forum, you can share questions, ideas, praises, and prayer requests via email or web and search past posts for discussions on specific topics. The Forum is fully moderated—no postings are made without review from the DC4K staff. To begin participating in the Leaders' Forum, go to www.dc4k.org/leaderzone. When you register on the LeaderZone, you're automatically signed up to participate in the Leaders' Forum.

Library

Helpful worksheets, forms, certificates, articles, and handouts can be downloaded and printed for use with your group; all the forms, charts, and activity sheets needed to run your ministry are found in the Library. Find answers to ministry-related questions, and be sure to navigate through the different categories to discover what's available to you.

Frequently Asked Questions

This is a great place to find answers to your start-up and organizational questions.

Promotion Tools

Customize Online Find a Group

Listing: Update your group's information viewed in our "Find a Group" searchable database (www.dc4k.org/findagroup). When newcomers search for a group, they'll find up-to-date contact info, meeting times, dates, locations, and a personal welcome. To customize your online listing, go to the LeaderZone, My Church section, and follow the guidelines on that page. Be sure to do this ahead of each 13-week cycle to promote early.

Logos and Sample Ads: Download DC4K logos and ads for use in running and publicizing your group.

Promo Videos: View the promo videos, embed on your church website, or email to potential participants or organizations within your community.

Create a Banner: Design and order a banner that can be placed outside your church to promote your DC4K group to people who drive by your church property. This publicity technique has proven effective for many churches.

Logo Apparel: Purchase clothing, bags, hats, etc., with the DC4K logo for your leadership team or participants.

Store

There are two online stores accessed through the LeaderZone:

Leadership Store

This is the place where you can order additional DC4K supplies such as Activity Books, posters/brochures, and copies of the Leader's Guide. The Leadership Store carries all the items you need to help you successfully run the DC4K program at your church.

**"Don't be afraid to call.
(Your DC4K consultant) is
extremely willing to answer
any questions and never
makes you feel like a bother."
Leader, MD**

Items available for ordering:

- DC4K kit
- DC4K children's Activity Books
- DC4K Leader's Guide
- DC4K Lesson Plans
- 2 music CDs*
- Storybook*
- Flip chart
- Herby puppet
- Plastic case
- Energy ball
- DVD set
- Brochures and posters
- Herby's Feelings Poster
- DC4K Boot Camp DVDs

** Also available for purchase by participants' parents at www.dc4k.org.*

Order additional supplies for your group online at dc4k.org/store, or by phone, 800-489-7778, 919-562-2112. Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (eastern time).

Return Policy

DC4K kits are sold with a 30-day guarantee. If you're not satisfied, return the kit for a full refund (excluding shipping charges). The 30-day return policy does not apply to items purchased in addition to the kit. Returns for other materials will be accepted only if they are damaged or defective.

Parent Help Store

The Parent Help Store contains recommended books and resources on divorce and children of divorce topics. This is the place to direct DC4K parents who are looking for additional resources and information. It is also a great source of books that will help you, as a leader, expand your knowledge of divorce issues. All of the books in the store have been prescreened by Church Initiative staff to ensure that the material in the books is consistent with what is presented in the DC4K sessions.

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THE NEED

Why DivorceCare for Kids Is Necessary

Beginning in the 1970s, our society began to experience tremendous changes. Divorce exploded, bringing negative consequences to thousands of lives. Even if a family hasn't experienced divorce directly, they've felt the ramifications indirectly.

Children of divorce are a continually changing paradigm in classrooms, churches, and social programs. They've been increasing in numbers, and society in general has grossly neglected this segment of the population. In *The Divorce Culture* Barbara Dafoe Whitehead states, "A mounting body of evidence from diverse and multiple sources shows that divorce has been a primary generator of new forms of inequality, disadvantage, and loss for American children. It has spawned a generation of angry and bereaved children who have a harder time learning, staying in school, and achieving at high levels."⁴

Many adults in their 20s and 30s have experienced their parents' divorce. For the most part, these adults are breaking long-honored traditions and customs in our families and in our workforce, that often bring our society countless problems, which include:

- Lack of commitment to jobs
- Inability to maintain stable relationships
- Inability to effectively parent in a two-parent home
- Disdain for organized religion
- Lack of church attendance and faith

Society is changing today because of yesterday's divorces. Even if the divorce rate could be curtailed immediately, we'd still have an entire generation raised in divorced families. Until we can help children heal from the devastation of divorce, society will continue to be impacted.

DC4K is a catalyst for long-term change in the overall social and economic welfare of children throughout the world. This program is an effective tool that will assist children of divorce in developing healthy lifestyles. It crosses over denominational lines and economic barriers to assist children in developing solutions that will positively affect their futures. It points children to a relationship with Jesus and assists them in finding comfort in the local church. It gives children a chance to break the cycle of divorce and become involved in committed marriages as adults.

Understanding the Child of Divorce

Creating the right environment for children of divorce is critical for success. This means understanding how divorce affects children.

Recent trends show that over 1 million children across the United States experience the divorce of their parents each year. Add to that the multitude of additional children who are impacted by divorce worldwide, and it's clear that this epidemic of emotional destruction is directly and negatively impacting society. Statistically, more than half of these children will also experience the divorce of a parent's second marriage.⁵ According to the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly 10 million children in America today live with a single parent as a result of separation and divorce.⁶ Worldwide, the number is massive and immeasurable.

The Legacy of Divorce

Divorce affects children for life unless intervention occurs. Few, if any, children are equipped with the needed skills to cope with the intense stress and overwhelming emotions that divorce brings. Research shows that children of divorce have more academic and behavior problems, more negative self-concepts, and more problems with aggression and getting along with parents and peers. Other effects can include regression, fear, grief, feelings of powerlessness, sleep disturbances, and anger.⁷

Children of divorce are at a higher risk for:

- Anxiety and depression
- Lower psychological well-being
- Poorer school performance and lower academic attainment
- Delinquency
- Promiscuity and unwed teenage pregnancy
- Substance abuse
- Becoming divorced as an adult
- Overachievers or the “perfect” child trying to overcompensate
- Poverty⁸

Although several studies have been done on the effects of divorce on children, few solutions and interventions have been presented that directly help children break these negative trends. In recent years, private and public initiatives attempted to strengthen marital relationships and thereby decrease the incidence and consequences of divorce.⁹ While these are excellent, hundreds of thousands of parents are still divorcing each year, and their children need help.

Spiritual Development in the Child of Divorce

Often, one of your greatest challenges in working with children of divorce is going to be their spiritual development. Research shows that many children from divorced homes have a hard time developing a trusting relationship with God. As adults we think of God as a heavenly Father who wants us to honor, serve, and worship Him. The Bible also tells us that God will provide for His children and promises to meet all of our needs. Yet for the children of divorce, their perceived needs aren't met. Their trust bonds have been broken. They don't respect the parent who walked out, and they don't want to honor or serve anything closely resembling this image.

So often their spiritual development is put on hold because of the divorce. This is understandable since church attendance for children usually drops after the divorce of their parents. If a child does attend church, it's usually at two different churches—one with mom and one with dad. Some children will question where they belong and whom they believe. It can be hard for children to grow spiritually and find comfort when they live in between two congregations.

Elizabeth Marquardt, affiliate scholar with the Institute for American Values, says that divorce can skew a child's view of God. According to Marquardt, for some adult children of divorce, “comparing God to a parent, as religious leaders often do, doesn't evoke a predictable sense of trust or security, but rather loss and pain.”¹⁰

WHAT IS DC4K?

DivorceCare for Kids is a biblically based, Christ-centered ministry tool designed to bring healing to children of divorce. It points them to God and introduces them to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It's a comprehensive 13-week program designed to run concurrently with the adult DivorceCare program in your church; although, DC4K can run as a stand-alone program if your church doesn't have an adult DivorceCare program. DC4K is set up to run 120 minutes but can easily be adapted to accommodate a 90-minute schedule. A 90-minute schedule is provided at the beginning of each Lesson Plan.

DC4K can also be an outreach program for your church. It provides an opportunity for your church to help children in your community who've experienced the divorce of their parents. DC4K can be a wonderful bridge between your church and community, providing a way for you to share how the love of Jesus can heal the hurting and the brokenhearted.

DC4K is a program geared to introduce and walk children through the grieving process that's brought on by the death of their once-intact family. It's a curriculum designed to give children the tools to develop healthier relationships within their own families.

Target Audience

The target audience for this program is children 5 through 12 years of age. The program materials are designed to accommodate children who are reading or learning to read. Since this program is set up for children who've entered school, we strongly encourage you not to include preschool-age children in your group. While the preschool-age children might find some of the material interesting, they might not be able to keep up or participate in many of the group games and projects. This could hinder the other children's progress as well as frustrate preschoolers.

Many churches have asked about including older children in DC4K. This will depend on how you structure your group, the number of younger children in your group and the maturity level of the teenager. You might find that your program will be able to accommodate a young teenager, such as a 13- or 14-year-old. Churches will need to determine what's best in their specific situations.

The DC4K LeaderZone Library has articles, Forum posts, and book/program recommendations for ministering to teens, including suggestions from DC4K leaders who've created their own teen programs. To access this information, go to the www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.

What DC4K Is Not

DC4K isn't a counseling service or a one-on-one program; it's not a Sunday school or a Vacation Bible School. DC4K is designed to help children from divorced homes heal in a group setting. It's designed to bring children of divorce into the loving arms of a church family and to feel God's love surrounding them.

DC4K OUTCOME OBJECTIVES FOR CHILDREN

In developing DC4K, we considered the negative effects of divorce and developed positive outcome objectives. This chart lists the immediate, intermediate, and final outcomes for children who participate in DC4K. DC4K is all about bringing healing and positive outcomes for both now and the future.

IMMEDIATE	INTERMEDIATE	FINAL
<p>short-term learning, children will:</p>	<p>medium-term action, results in:</p>	<p>long-term impact, will produce:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop positive interactions with parents • Realize they're not unique in their situations • Develop friendships with other children of divorce • Understand visitation schedules and other changes • Become involved in less family conflicts by developing positive attitudes • Recognize the various phases of grief in divorce • Develop skills to cope with current life-changes • Gain a better understanding of financial matters affecting their families • Improve positive communication skills with noncustodial parents • Develop healthy attitudes about relationships, church, the Bible, and God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in behavior problems in schools and daycares • Increase in scholastic achievement scores for elementary-age children • Reduction in absenteeism rates in elementary-age children • Less children being retained in school • The incidence of crime rates related to drug and alcohol use drop • Dropout rates for high school students drop • Increase in the number of students graduating and enrolling in college • Reduction in the number of children attempting suicide • More children develop personal relationships with Jesus Christ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults who have the ability to develop and sustain healthy relationships and lifestyles • Praying adults who turn to God when problems occur • Adults who want to help meet the needs of people who are hurting (2 Corinthians 1:3-4) • People committed to a growing relationship with Jesus and a desire to live out their faith daily

HOW DC4K CAN BENEFIT YOUR CHURCH

DC4K is a powerful ministry that not only serves divorced and separated families, it brings about effective outreach, evangelism, church awareness, and church growth.

Outreach and in-reach increases

DC4K is an effective outreach tool in your community. Divorced and separated families are found in nearly every church and community, but you might be surprised to find that the majority of group participants come from outside the church. While DC4K will be an effective outreach tool, it'll also become an essential ministry within your church.

Church attendance rises

When people from outside the church experience the practical help and acceptance found in your DC4K group, they'll want to discover more about what goes on in your church. And many parents often want to become involved in church for the sake of their children. Parents and children will form relationships that they'll want to continue, so encourage families to get involved in other ministries your church offers.

Lay-driven design helps pastors

Even the most conscientious pastors and church staff are unable to come alongside every family in their church and offer continual care and guidance on a personal level. Through DC4K's weekly, ongoing ministry design, lay leaders with a heart for ministering to children of divorce can provide that consistent help and care.

TEACHING PRINCIPLES UTILIZED IN DC4K

Brain Research¹¹

DC4K utilizes both traditional and state-of-the-art research. Many children in the divorce process experience high levels of stress. When stress is elevated, the brain responds by releasing high levels of the chemical cortisol into the body. When this happens, the children's muscles tighten. Some children say they feel clumsy, awkward, and accident-prone. Some children indicate they feel like they're about to explode. Deep breathing and exercise will allow their muscles to relax and will de-stress their bodies.

Activities to help the brain focus include:

- Physical exercise synchronized to music
- Games to organize thought processes
- Stress-reducing stretching exercises
- Healthy snacks to help children process their stress
- Access to a safe environment

Children who are in stressful situations need organized movement in order to help their brains focus. Brain research tells us it's important for children to use cross-lateral movements and cross-midline movements.

Cross-lateral movements are when the arms, hands, legs, or feet stretch across one side of the body to reach to the other side of the body. Some examples of cross-lateral movements along with cross-midline are:

- Right hand to left knee; left hand to right knee
- Right hand to left foot; left hand to right foot
- Right elbow to left knee; left elbow to right knee

When children are focused and responsive to learning, they're better able to understand the divorce process as it relates to them. They open themselves to learning skills for coping and moving forward in their lives. They learn how to help themselves heal emotionally, and they develop healthy behaviors and thought processes.

Learning Styles

Through this all-inclusive program, we want to ensure that children of divorce learn and grow. DC4K includes instruction and activities that take into account the three most accepted learning styles of children—visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. Each session has something for all three types of learners.

Visual learners are children who learn by seeing. If you listen to their conversations, you'll hear visual words, such as, "Look at me. I'm happy." Visual learners like to look at your face when you're talking to them. They also need instructions written or drawn for them.

Auditory learners learn by listening. Their conversations are filled with, "I hear what you're saying." Auditory learners don't need to see your face when you're talking to them.

Kinesthetic, or hands-on, learners learn by doing.

For kinesthetic learners, there will be hands-on craft activities, journal writing, and role-playing through the use of puppets, skits, and pretend activities. For the visual learners, there are posters, charts, and dramas on DVD. For the auditory learners, we've incorporated a read aloud storybook as well as games, music, and other activities. When their ability to learn is increased, children develop a sense of self-worth and personal responsibility.

Behavior Modeling

Children will do 20 percent of what they hear and 80 percent of what they see.¹² As a program leader, your primary responsibility is to provide loving care and tenderness for these children while instructing them in how to cope with the divorce. It's important for you to model the behaviors you want in the children.

Children are egocentric in that they believe their entire world revolves around them; they don't understand that divorce is an adult problem. When someone starts talking about loving them, children can only comprehend this to the extent that their parents loved them, and now, what has happened to that love? Because these children are hurting, many times they want to strike back and hurt others. But we encourage you to be consistent and nurturing and to look upon the children through God's eyes as the hurting individuals they are.

When the children receive steady care and unconditional acceptance from you, they'll begin to see they don't have to act out to gain attention. They'll learn to imitate the healthy behaviors modeled and taught by you. They'll be reassured of their worth, and choose appropriate behaviors both within the group and in their lives outside of the group.

Group Management

Another idea is to decide in advance how you want the children to know it is time for Opening Circle Time. One attention grabber is to play the “Herby Rap” song. Tell the children that from now on when they hear the “Herby Rap,” it’ll be time to come to Opening Circle Time. Or you might develop your own ritual. Whatever you decide, be consistent each week.

Helpful Hint

For more ideas on group management, attention-getters, and interactive learning, check out the articles at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.

Flexibility

Flexibility is a necessity and should be foremost in the mind of a DC4K Safekeeper. It’s essential to put the kids’ needs before your schedule and structure. Stay open to the leading of the Holy Spirit during sessions, and be sensitive when children need to spend more time talking about a certain topic, when they’re struggling with hurt or pain, or when they need more time because they’re making faith discoveries.

Stations

Stations are small areas set up in a room to accommodate small groups of children involved in specific activities, such as snacks, Activity Books, journaling, or art projects. Safekeepers can facilitate each station or float in between several to interact with children, guide activities, and answer questions.

When you use stations, you’ll have several different activities going on at the same time and children can choose which station they wish to participate in. Stations are a great opportunity to have one-on-one time with a child or to get children involved in small group discussions. Many children need to have their hands busy when they talk, and stations provide the avenue to do that. Here are some examples:

- Areas made up of a table and four chairs
- A floor space with a piece of carpet and three places to sit
- Two school desks put together for two people
- A soft, comfortable chair for one person

You’ll have two times in the session where you’ll use the station concept, the first 15 minutes and again after the first hour. Children should be allowed to choose the following:

- Which station to go to
- How long to stay at that station
- When to leave
- What will be the next station they go to

Children don’t have to go to all stations; they might feel safe only sitting at one station, but encourage them to experience other stations. **You can control the number of children at a station by the number of chairs at the station;** then incorporate a rule that the chairs can’t be moved, so if all of the seats are occupied, kids will move to another station.

Mixed-Age Groups

DC4K is set up to replicate a large family environment by using mixed-age groups. Mixed-age groups can be very beneficial, especially in the DC4K program. Here are some of the benefits of using mixed-age groups:

- Provides sibling comfort and enhances family relationships when siblings are kept together
- Helps siblings to see and understand each other’s healing, which is important
- Acts as an equalizer for children who are stressed or have digressed developmentally due to the stress of divorce
- Encourages older children to help younger participants, teaching them servanthood and leadership qualities

- Can prepare kids for the possibility of a future step-family environment

Multi-age groups work best for DC4K, creating a more family-like atmosphere. It can also create unique challenges, so here are some tips to make sure all age groups are engaged and valued at DC4K:

Younger children: Understand that younger children might express more fear, tears, and anxiety through acting out or attention-seeking behaviors. Encourage younger children to explore various stations, especially those that have active projects.

Older children: Upper-elementary age children might arrive at your group with behaviors that can range from withdrawn to overenthusiastic, from helpful to angry and bitter. Kids this age are biologically dealing with changes that affect their emotions, and it can become quite evident in their behavior in a setting such as DC4K. Plan activities specifically designed for older children, such as journaling with more in-depth prompts or art stations where they can create something that reflects their feelings and emotions.

Helpful Hints

For more insights into ways you can integrate and minister to all age groups, go to the LeaderZone Library.

Awareness: Be alert that because of the hurt and stress these kids are going through, no matter what their age, they might regress to an even younger behavioral stage during different DC4K sessions. Don't pressure kids to "act their age," instead, meet them where they're at as they work through their pain and begin to heal.

Mentoring: Pair older children with younger children to encourage mentoring and helping relationships. Older kids can assist younger ones with reading and writing. Older children will feel empowered by helping, and both age groups will benefit from listening and learning about how their partner is handling divorce. Also younger children can often help older ones become more in touch with their feelings.

Valuing Each Child

For the most part, children don't feel valued when their parents divorce. Here are ways DC4K values each child:

Weekly Job Sheet: Each week children sign up for a "job" to be done during the session. Kids can read the job description and decide if they'd like to sign up for a job. Their contribution becomes important to those around them and to the DC4K program (download a sample Job Sheet and Job Descriptions from the LeaderZone Library).

Helping Atmosphere: All children are encouraged to help each other and contribute to the DC4K program. Younger children will experience an elevation of their self-worth when they help an older child. Older kids will feel validated when they mentor and comfort younger children. DC4K gives children a chance to share sufferings and comfort.

Large Family: Many children of divorce miss their former, intact family. DC4K can become an extended family for children as they bond with each other and their leaders. They'll feel they are a valued member of their group.

Ongoing Ministry

The DC4K program consists of 13 weekly sessions, designed to be repeated in regular cycles throughout the year. Children are encouraged to attend two 13-week cycles, but not more than three cycles. (There might be exceptions to this that need to be considered on a case-by-case basis.) Our experience shows that they will absorb new levels of information as they continue to grow. In addition, children will benefit from sustained interaction with their group, which becomes much like a family for many of them.

We encourage children to repeat DC4K cycles. As children learn through repetition, they'll benefit from repeating many of the games and activities. Some children might even need to process DC4K a third time. If this happens, the children will be able to assist the Safekeepers more, and this too will allow the children to continue the healing process.

As time goes by and the children grow into teenagers, allow them to be assistants in your DC4K class. Teens from your youth group can also make excellent assistants for DC4K, even without ever attending the program. Be sure an adult is always present with a teenage assistant. (If your church provides a program for teens of divorce at the same time as DC4K, you should encourage students to attend for age-appropriate healing and spiritual growth.)

Helpful Hint

We suggest each child gets a new Activity Book for each DC4K cycle, whether the child is new or repeating.

What's next for DC4K graduates?

Become part of the DC4K team: As older children complete their time as participants of DC4K, consider asking them and their parents if they'd consider coming back as a teenage helper in future DC4K cycles.

Guide into broader church life: The time will come to guide your DC4K children to find their place in the broader life of your church or their home church. For some, that will be:

- A Sunday school class
- Participation in the children's choir
- Attending midweek programs
- Taking part in VBS or other children's ministry programming in the church

Help children and their parents see where they might fit and how they're gifted.

Safety Guidelines

Some churches have established regulations about who can work with the children in their church; it's important to follow these guidelines. If your church doesn't have a system for registering and screening children's workers, we've included a sample form for you to use as a guide (see LeaderZone Library, DC4K Leader Application). Contact your local police department to see if they do background checks for individuals working with children; most conduct background checks and fingerprinting for a fee. Police agencies can also refer you to other agencies and organizations that conduct background checks in your area.

The **Safekeeper concept**¹³ can be helpful if you have to report a situation involving neglect, physical or sexual abuse, or any other child endangerment issues. If a child reveals to you that something of this nature has happened, you can reassure the child that not only are you a Safekeeper, but there are other Safekeepers outside the church who want to help keep him or her safe in all areas of life.

It's a federal requirement that all states have a law establishing guidelines to report child abuse and neglect. This means that anyone working with children is legally bound to report child abuse and neglect to the local authorities. Please check to see what the reporting law is in your state. Know your church's policies on the specific steps to be taken if a safety, neglect, or abuse situation arises. The National Child Abuse Hotline phone number is 1-800-4A CHILD or 1-800-422-4453.

A WORD OF CAUTION: How will you handle the situation if you, as a leader, are approached by a child asking for your phone number? Before giving your phone number to a child, you should ask your pastor about the church's policy in this area and ask the child's parent for permission. Keep in mind that a female leader shouldn't give out her personal phone number to a young male, nor should a male leader give his phone number to a female participant. Please be very careful in areas such as this. When in doubt, err on the side of caution. Realize that the dynamics of your DC4K group will be unlike other programs you might have led in the past. These children are hurting, with hurting and emotional parents.

Addressing Confidentiality

Make sure to discuss setting boundaries and rules with your group, including the importance of confidentiality. When addressing confidentiality, be very careful to use the term “private” instead of “secret.” Many children who are abused or sexually assaulted are told to “keep this secret” or “this is our secret.” In DC4K we want to avoid any confusion that would prevent a child from trusting the adults in the group.

The Importance of a Safe Environment

The DC4K environment should be one in which children and families feel safe and secure, a place where children can grow and heal. Because this caring environment is unique, it’s important to maintain some guidelines to assure an appropriate environment for this type of group. Here are tips to assure you’re protecting the DC4K environment:

Drop off and pick up: The time of “drop off” and “pick up” shouldn’t involve venting. If a parent or caregiver needs to communicate an issue, ask the person to call or email you. Also, ensure safety and security by knowing who is and isn’t permitted to pick up the children, and make special notations of any custody issues, including restraining orders.

Security: It’s essential to ensure participants and staff have a safe, secure environment and to be able to respond quickly and effectively in the event of an emergency of any kind. This starts with having general security in place in and around your church. If your church doesn’t have adequate, proactive security measures in place, develop them ASAP. A good place to start is www.churchsecuritymember.com. At the very minimum, make sure your Safekeepers have emergency contact information with them at all times, including phone numbers for the following: the DC4K director, church security, local law enforcement, and 911.

Safety Zone: Establish a designated place or area that’s visible to leaders but also offers space and privacy for a child. This isn’t a place of punishment but a place where all of the emphasis is on the child’s safety. Think of your Safety Zone as a place of comfort and peace for the children in your group; it’s not a time out and shouldn’t be used for time out.

The Safety Zone is a spot you designate for children to go to when they:

- Don’t feel safe
- Need to regain composure
- Need to change their state of mind
- Want to calm down

In the Safety Zone, children can:

- Relax
- Regain composure
- Do calming things
- Breathe (exhale s-l-o-w-l-y)
- Stretch

Creating a Safe Environment

1. Arrive early (30–45 minutes). You’ll need time to settle down, pray with your Safekeepers, and set out the snacks and supplies before participants arrive.
2. Set up the stations and meeting area, including Herby’s Feelings Poster and the Job Sheet.
3. Arrange audiovisual equipment. Be sure the CD player, DVD player, and discs work before participants arrive.

4. Maintain small group atmosphere (ideally 12–20 in a group). However, if only one or two show up, you should minister to them just as you would a larger group.
5. Greet children as they arrive. Make sure they feel welcome. It was very hard to come in the first place, and if they don't feel welcome, they probably won't return.
6. Allow children to participate in whatever station they wish.
7. Clarify and establish ground rules: safety, privacy, respect, and voluntary participation. Be sure kids are comfortable with knowing they can participate in their own time.
8. Help children understand the concept that "This is a safe place to come and share their feelings no matter what they are," being careful to explain that this group is about healing.
9. Provide adequate discussion time.
10. Be flexible. If the group goes in a different direction from the activities, and the Holy Spirit seems to be leading in that direction, be willing to let it run for a time. God might have a different agenda for the session. Recognize when it's time to bring the discussion back to the session's subject.

ACCEPTING THE DC4K CHALLENGE

As you begin your DC4K adventure, approach it with zeal.

- Pray for the children who will come to your church.
- Pray for each other.
- Pray for God to give you wisdom, grace, patience, and unconditional love for the children and families you'll minister to through DC4K.

You've been challenged and commissioned to help children of divorce connect with caring adults, kids like themselves and ultimately to Jesus. Be encouraged and inspired as God uses you to help children grieve, heal, and grow in their relationship with Jesus.

CONNECTING WITH DC4K KIDS AND PARENTS

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COMMUNICATING WITH THE CHILD OF DIVORCE

When children are emotionally struggling or hurting, they might appear withdrawn, quiet, or unwilling to engage in group conversation. Look for opportunities to engage in conversation with children in your group, such as during snack time, while kids are at stations, or during other less structured times. Use open-ended questions that will encourage conversation rather than a quick “yes” or “no.”

Feeling Safe

Children might be apprehensive about attending DC4K. Many children don't feel safe when one parent moves out of the home, and they experience a great deal of anxiety as a result. During Opening Circle Time, introduce the Safekeeper concept.¹⁴ Tell the children that this is a safe place. Tell them you are the Safekeeper and it's your job to keep things safe. Explain that all of the leaders are Safekeepers. Tell the children it's their job to help you keep things safe.

We understand from brain research that children under tremendous stress have a hard time taking in information and learning. We also know that children must feel safe in order to learn.¹⁵ Do everything you can, therefore, to help each child feel safe and comfortable. Create a warm, nurturing environment. Have someone available to greet each child personally as the child arrives. Take time to calmly show each child around; don't appear to be rushed or flustered.

Spiritual Guidance

Children might come to your DC4K program with little or no exposure to church or the Christian faith. DC4K can be a wonderful tool to open the doors of faith to children for the first time. Each week look for ways to share the gospel and open the windows for children to make discoveries about God and faith.

In regard to salvation, your first consideration is to help the children learn to feel safe. These children are hurting. In order to help them come to know a loving heavenly Father, you'll want to help them feel comfort from their pain. The Holy Spirit can use their hurts to propel them to the Father, but you must help them apply the salve to the wounds of their hearts. This can be done through your nurturing and loving witness. The saying “You might be the only Jesus this child sees” might be true for many of the children who attend your DC4K program.

Your second purpose is to expose God's unconditional love to them throughout the entire 13-week program and point them to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The DVDs, Activity Books, and the other materials introduce the children to Jesus and to the Bible. Each child's situation is delicate and unique, and we recommend that leaders prayerfully work with each child on an individual basis. Introducing children of divorce to the plan of salvation will be a special process.

When working with an individual child, take him or her to the children's Activity Book and point out the plan of salvation (Activity Book, p. vi). Read this through with the child. Take time to stop and ask questions to make sure the Holy Spirit is prompting the child to make this decision. Give the child ample opportunity to ask questions. Respond truthfully and go to the Bible for answers. Then pray with the child as the child asks Jesus into his or her life as Savior and Lord. Here is another simple way to present the gospel to children:

- God created us and loves us.
- We've all disobeyed God (sin). But God sent Jesus, His Son, to earth to save us. Jesus took our place and was punished on the cross.

- We can trust God no matter what and believe in Jesus.
- When we confess that we've disobeyed, accept God's gift of forgiveness, and ask Jesus to be our forever friend, we can know that we'll one day live with Him in heaven.
- When Jesus is our best friend, we can depend on Him for everything and follow Him.

God the Father

The concept of God the Father can be difficult for children of divorce, especially if they've experienced a parental figure who's been neglectful, distant, or is no longer around. That's why with DC4K we need to strive to do the following:

- Show the children that there are adults who are dependable and trustworthy.
- Help heal the pain the children are experiencing in the breakup of the family.
- Replace the loss of an earthly parent with the image of a heavenly, never-forsaking-you parent.
- Introduce children of divorce to the concept of God's family being loving and caring.

Helpful Hint

For a gospel presentation you can send home with the children, download "Meet Jesus" at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.

If we do these things, then hopefully the concept of God as a loving and caring parental figure can follow them into their adult years. Be aware, though, that some children will take offense at any suggestion that they have a dysfunctional relationship with their earthly father. Tread cautiously in this area. To keep children from becoming defensive about their parent, use words such as, "It seems to me you're feeling a little lonely without your dad (or mom)." You can then lead them into a conversation about what to do when they're alone and can't turn to their parent. Then you can tell them, "God is always with you. God can be there for you."¹⁶

Prayer

Be very careful in how you word your prayers when praying with children of divorce. If you pray that Mommy and Daddy not get a divorce and the parents go through with the divorce, you'll be setting the children up to fail with God. Instead, follow these guidelines:

- Pray with them and teach the kids to pour out their hearts unto the Lord.
- Pray that God will take care of the relationship between the child and the parent.
- Ask God to let love grow between each parent and child.
- Pray for comfort with the children, reminding them that God will comfort them and that they can comfort others with the love Jesus has given them.
- For children who don't have a relationship with a parent, and will likely not be able to develop this relationship, pray for the children to realize that God can still be their heavenly parent. Ask God to be the parent in their lives. (You can still pray for the parent's safety, the child's safety, and for love for the departed parent.)

Tell the children that God can take each situation and use it for His glory, even divorce.

Establishing Routines

The routine for each week shouldn't vary. This way the children can depend on what's going to take place. Routines lend themselves to security. We want these children to feel safe every time they walk in the door. Children can't learn if they don't feel safe. Your environment should bring comfort and relief from the anxiety associated with divorce. Should you have to change your routine for some reason, be sure to let the children know in advance that the routine will be changing.

Take time to explain what will be happening each week at DC4K. Tell the children that each week when they arrive, there will be a project to do, an Activity Book page and games and snacks. Give brief details about the DVD dramas, the storybook, and the songs. Explain that a schedule will be posted each week for them to see. **By displaying the weekly schedule,**

Helpful Hint

Enlarge your Session Schedule and laminate it.

you'll be empowering the children to look on the schedule to see what comes next. Being able to see what's next gives the children a feeling of independence. For visual learners it's especially important to have the schedule on display. See the LeaderZone Library for a sample Session Schedule.

Rituals Disappear

Another element that often disappears is rituals. It has been said that rituals are the emotional glue that holds relationships together. "Rituals are not routines. Rituals have connection as their goal."¹⁷ Children naturally delight in rituals, and they're drawn to them. For children, rituals with special foods, certain activities, and the gathering together of people they love, are an important part of their daily lives. Children become ritual makers very early in life.¹⁸ Rituals connect people with people, parent with child, and other adults with children.

Introducing the concept of rituals in DC4K will help the child develop healthy rituals with each parent. This can be especially advantageous when children have to travel between two homes. In *Rituals for Our Times* authors Evan Imber-Black and Janine Roberts state, "The movement of children from one household to another requires special attention to the rituals of leaving and returning, as these express more complicated issues of family membership, loyalty, or unresolved conflicts between parents. Children might receive the hidden message that they're not to express sadness in leaving one household to go to another, and that their good-bye ritual should be swift or secretive."¹⁹

We encourage you to develop rituals within your DC4K group. A good start to each session would be a greeting ritual. Enlist several children to help you create a special handshake or other greeting. It'll be up to you as the Safekeeper to

carry through each week with your created greeting ritual. Another time to create a ritual is at the end of each DC4K session. We've already suggested you use the song "United in Love" each week. Watch for other ways children are developing their own rituals within your group.

Helpful Hint

An example of a parent/child ritual would be a dad who tousles his daughter's hair every morning at the breakfast table. When the dad moves out of the house, however, that ritual disappears. Even though the dad can't be replaced, a new ritual can take the place of the old one. It might be that the mother greets the child with a high five at the breakfast table each morning.

Children create rituals that adults don't realize are rituals. Rituals happen because children begin to count on a certain thing happening at a specific time in a particular way. In the case of a child of divorce, new rituals will automatically develop. With guidance and awareness, children can create healthy rituals. If we don't help them, the children might develop unhealthy rituals that will only drive their pain deeper.

CONNECTING WITH PARENTS

Connecting with parents is an important component of DC4K as the parents also are working through the pain and hurt of divorce and are the primary reinforcers of the DC4K concepts in the home. Safekeepers can connect with parents each week at the check-in and check-out time, or they can touch base during the week through phone calls and emails. Leaders should make copies of the weekly Parent Page, downloadable in the LeaderZone Library (also found in the DivorceCare workbook), and encourage the parents to look at it each week. In addition, provide parents with a Welcome Packet when their kids first attend DC4K to fill them in on the program, important policies and concepts, and to encourage them to partner with your team in the child's healing process.

Welcome Packet

At the beginning of each new cycle of DC4K it is important to establish a relationship with the parents of DC4K kids, whether this is done in an Orientation/Registration Session or during Session 1. One way to help facilitate good communication is to provide each parent with a Welcome Packet (pages are downloadable on the DC4K LeaderZone). This can include information on the DC4K program and highlights of what their children will experience in the program:

- Welcome Letter to DC4K Parents
- Talking Points for DC4K Parents
 1. Attendance Guidelines
 2. Addressing Confidentiality
 3. Safekeeper Concept
 4. Items to Leave at Home (toys, headphones, or electronic games)
 5. Parent Resources
 6. Information on Children's Programming at Your Church
 7. Primary Safekeeper Contact Information (for parents to contact primary Safekeeper or main ministry person)
- Registration Form
- DC4K Child Information Form
- Postcard from the back of DC4K Activity Book (tear out from each book)
- Session Schedule
- Parent Page (Session 1)
- Parent Session List with Weekly Themes
- Parent Feedback Form
- Ad for DC4K CDs and Storybook
- Two brochures each for DivorceCare, Single & Parenting, and DC4K (as applicable)
- Church bulletin or brochures

Helpful Hint

Have Welcome Packets available each of the 13 weeks to give to parents of children who are attending for the first time.

Include a phone number and email address in the packet so parents can contact leaders both during a DC4K session and between sessions.

Helpful Hint

Be sure to follow your church's policy regarding cell phones, but security items such as teddy bears, blankies, etc., should always be allowed in the DC4K group as long as they don't become a distraction.

Attendance Guidelines

Communicate the importance of weekly attendance with the parents. Verbally remind kids and parents each week as they leave that you can't wait to see them the following week. Send a note home with the following reasons why consistent attendance is important at DC4K:

- Relationships/team building provides support.
- Each session deals with a different piece of the healing picture.
- Much like a team, the group needs their consistent presence.
- They're greatly missed by the leaders and other children when they're gone!

Parent Resources

Equip parents for the journey their family will be on for the next 13 weeks and beyond. In addition to recommended counselors or therapists in your area, include the following:

DivorceCare and Single & Parenting: List days and times that these adult groups meet at your church, or provide information about these programs in your community. Include a brochure on each program that highlights the ministries and their attributes in the Welcome and Exit Packets.

ParentZone: At www.dc4k.org/parentzone, parents can find great articles on divorce-related topics. In addition, parents who live out of town but want to connect with what's happening in DC4K can receive the Parent Pages on this website.

Exit Packet

At the end of your 13 weeks together, we suggest that you provide parents with an Exit Packet (pages are downloadable on the DC4K LeaderZone). Here are some suggestions for what you can include in the packet:

- Thank You Letter to DC4K Parents, including ongoing ministry information.
- Information on any future family programs at your church.
- Specific programs, activities, or small groups geared for single-parent families.
- If you have a DivorceCare ministry, include alumni activities for DivorceCare and DC4K.
- Include two brochures for all related ministries that your church or a neighboring church has (DivorceCare, DC4K, Single & Parenting).
- Return the photos from the Session 2 Families Tree project, if you have not yet returned them.
- Parent Feedback Form – Let parents know how important their feedback is as you seek to continue to provide children and families with excellent programming; encourage them to return the Parent Feedback Form. Note: We recommend you pass this out at the end of Session 12 to be returned the following week. Including these forms in the Exit Packets is an optional idea, but might be helpful for parents who forget to return the form from Session 12.

CONNECTING WITH DC4K KIDS AND PARENTS DOWNLOADABLES

We have provided tools you can download from the LeaderZone Library to help as you connect with DC4K parents.

The forms labeled “Sample” are provided strictly as guidelines for you to create your own forms. Laws and regulations concerning children vary by state/province and denomination. Please check with your state/province and denomination to create your own forms. Check with your church’s children’s department for existing forms and policies.

- Parent Session List with Weekly Themes:** Use to give parents a brief overview of the 13 weekly themes.
- Parent Feedback Form (Sample):** This form can be given to parents to fill out in Session 12 when they pick up their children, in Session 13, or at your Celebration Session. This form is also part of the Welcome Packet so parents are aware that you’ll be asking for their feedback at a later date.
- Welcome Letter to DC4K Parents (Sample):** Use to welcome parents to your DC4K ministry.
- Thank You Letter to DC4K Parents (Sample):** Use to thank parents for bringing their children to DC4K.
- Talking Points for DC4K Parents (Sample):** Use to describe some of the key aspects and goals of DC4K to parents.

Go to www.dc4k.org/leaderzone to download these resources.

MINISTRY FOLLOW-UP

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THE DC4K MINISTRY ECOSYSTEM

There are two ways you can view your new DC4K ministry:

1. A vital, stand-alone program that's an effective outreach to children of divorce
2. The heart of a broader "ecosystem" of programs for families of divorce

Both approaches are valid. It's likely you'll start small, along the lines of option 1 above, but we want you to understand that, over time, there's potential for an even bigger ministry to families of divorce. If you're a part of a very large church, you might already have programs in place for families of divorce. DC4K can serve as the foundation that supports those programs.

Don't let the following conversation of a DC4K ministry ecosystem overwhelm you. We want to paint a vision of the potential for this ministry as it grows. Remember, if you offer DC4K as a weekly group, and that's all you and your church elect to do, you are offering a vital and powerful ministry!

An ecosystem is simply defined as a "community of interacting organisms and their physical environment." That term can serve as a metaphor for a growing divorce recovery program. Think of your DC4K ministry as part of an ecosystem involving your community, your church, caring leaders, and divorced parents and their children interacting with one another inside a biblically based, Christ-centered environment using great ministry tools and resources.

In this approach, the DC4K program at your church should be considered the entry point or introduction to your church for divorced parents and their children. As they find practical help and support in your DC4K group, they might also discover additional support and encouragement through support groups dealing with other life issues and through the wide variety of programs offered by your church.

Here are examples of other ministries or programs that can work in support of DC4K in this ecosystem:

DivorceCare

A DC4K parent who has experienced separation or divorce will find healing, comfort, and hope in a DivorceCare group (www.divorcecare.org): a seminar/small group resource to help people who are hurting because of separation and divorce.

GriefShare

A DC4K parent who has lost a significant person in his or her life through death will find support in a GriefShare group (www.griefshare.org): a seminar/small group resource to help people who are grieving the death of a loved one.

Single & Parenting

Single parents from divorced, separated, widowed, and never-married situations will find healing, comfort, and hope in a Single & Parenting group (www.singleandparenting.org): a seminar/small group resource to help people facing the many responsibilities of single parenting.

Benevolence Ministry

Your church might have a fund to meet immediate or urgent needs of people in your church and throughout your community. Divorced families will be among those served by such a ministry. In addition to meeting their practical needs, your benevolence team will have the opportunity to direct these divorced parents to the help and hope found in your DC4K and DivorceCare groups.

Single-Parent Family Programs

Your church might want to develop a program that creates activities, recreation, and events for single parents and their children. Single parenting is often a long-term lifestyle, and carefully designed activities can provide recreation and fellowship for single-parent families. Note: Such events shouldn't be perceived as a substitute for the core Single & Parenting program, but rather as an extension for those who have successfully completed participation in it.

Practical Needs Programs

Many churches mobilize the men and women of the church to offer practical help to single mothers, such as basic household repairs, car maintenance, and occasional child care, allowing the mother to take care of shopping, errands, or to take a few hours of much-needed rest and relaxation.

Mentoring Programs

We know of churches that offer effective mentoring programs for the children of single-parent families. If the head of the home is a mother who has sons, godly men from the church can provide a much-needed role model for her boys. The inverse is true for single-parent fathers who are raising girls.

You likely can think of many other programs and ministries that could become part of this ecosystem. Again, we want to remind you of these important points:

- Never let a supplemental ministry consume resources required to keep your core DC4K ministry operating year-round.
- Don't feel bad if you're not able to offer any extensions to your DC4K ministry. It's a powerful program in and of itself.
- There are many existing groups, programs, and activities in your church that aren't specific to single parents, but that are excellent ways to help meet their unique needs. For instance, a musically gifted single parent can find friends, fellowship, and an outlet for his or her gifts by serving in the church choir.

PREPARING FOR YOUR NEXT 13-WEEK CYCLE

As you approach the close of your DC4K 13-week cycle, we encourage you to take seven steps to help your ministry grow and develop beyond its current form.

1. Have parents complete the Parent Feedback Form

The Parent Feedback Form gives you suggestions and ideas that can help you change, rearrange, and make adjustments. Pray and ask God to give you discernment and wisdom for implementing changes and improvements.

2. Have leaders complete the Leader Feedback Form

Ask your leaders to complete a Leader Feedback Form to gain their perspective on how to improve your DC4K ministry. Let leaders know how helpful and instrumental their feedback can be in creating an effective DC4K program.

3. Prayerfully recruit new people

Retain leaders as well as add enthusiastic recruits to your DC4K leadership team with the next cycle of ministry. Your DC4K group won't grow if you don't expand your leadership team! Always be prayerfully looking for new team members whom God is calling to serve. There's plenty of room on your leadership team for Safekeepers, apprentices, administrators, teen helpers, someone to help with publicity, and a prayer team. For specific ideas on recruiting team members, be sure to read pages 16–21 in this Leader's Guide. Don't forget to use the leader recruitment video!

4. Finalize the dates for your next group

Look at your church calendar. We recommend that you reserve a room and your audiovisual equipment for the entire year (or at least two to three 13-week cycles).

5. Promote your new cycle using ideas in this Leader's Guide and on the LeaderZone

Use the many promotional strategies contained in this Leader's Guide (pages 68–76) and on the LeaderZone to help promote your next DC4K cycle. Of special importance is to make sure you are listed on our Find a Group website. It's free and is one of the best publicity tools available. Print your DC4K brochures with your group details (date, time, church location, etc.) and make them available throughout your church and other venues frequented by single parents. Be creative. Many businesses, organizations, and social service agencies would like to be able to refer people to you and might not even know you exist. Bless them so they can bless others!

6. Schedule a kickoff meeting for your next session with your leaders

If you're adding to your leadership team, schedule a training session. Invite the entire leadership team to attend along with your new trainees to enrich your training as your leaders share tips and stories. It will also remind your more "seasoned leaders" of the basics and get them focused on the fundamentals of leading a group.

7. Take advantage of your church's free DC4K consultants

They're ready to answer your questions and be there for general support.

SUPPLY LISTS

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WEEKLY ART TOTE

Create a tote with the following supplies that are commonly used every DC4K session. Bring this to every session, and make sure you keep it stocked.

- Washable markers and crayons
- Multiple pairs of child-size scissors and adult-size scissors (all with rounded ends)
- Glue and glue sticks
- Spiral notebook or three-ring notebook with paper (for prayer journal)
- Construction paper of various colors
- White paper and lined paper
- Large paper or poster board
- Sticky note pads
- Tempera paint of various colors
- Stamp pads of various colors (at least 1 per 5 children)
- Sharpened pencils
- Ball of yarn
- Ribbon or string
- Tape (clear, masking)
- One-hole punch
- Plastic tablecloths for messy art projects or activities

Helpful Hint

Many activities require large paper. An excellent option is to purchase a roll of white paper at a craft, office supply or teacher supply store. Also consider using a dry erase board if your church has one available.

OTHER ITEMS TO BE USED WEEKLY

- Television and DVD player
- CD player
- Table and chairs
- Pillows and blankets
- Dry erase board with markers of assorted colors (particularly green and black for Session 11)
- Bible
- Small dustpan and broom (for cleanup)
- Wet wipes (for cleanup)
- Sponge or cloth with sanitizing agent to be used to clean up after snacks
- Napkins
- Plastic knives and spoons
- Small paper plates
- Small disposable cups
- Small plastic/paper bowls

SUPPLY LISTS DOWNLOADABLES

These lists are downloadable for your use in the LeaderZone Library.

- Weekly Art Tote:** Fill a tote with these items to bring every session. We recommend a tote on wheels.
- Other Items to Be Used Weekly:** Miscellaneous items to be used weekly.
- Week-by-Week Art Projects Supplies List:** A list of art supplies for all 13 weeks.
- Week-by-Week Suggested Snacks List:** A list of snacks for all 13 weeks.

Go to www.dc4k.org/leaderzone to download these resources.

ABOUT CHURCH INITIATIVE

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ABOUT CHURCH INITIATIVE

Church Initiative, the producer of DivorceCare for Kids, creates video-based resources for churches to offer effective care and support group ministries to people experiencing a life crisis, such as divorce and grief.

We believe God wants ministry done in the church, by the people of the church. Our resources are designed to work in that context, and we offer free, ongoing support to those who lead the groups.

Our job is to produce materials to help you effectively minister to people in your community through your church. We believe lay members of a local church should be on the front lines of gospel ministry, and our materials have been designed to help church members do that job. All our materials are based on these core values. They are (1) Christ-centered, (2) biblically based, and (3) designed for ministry through the local church.

Church Initiative is a nondenominational, nonprofit ministry serving thousands of churches worldwide. Listed below are other Church Initiative care group resources, which must be used within the context of a local church ministry. For more information about our church-based ministry philosophy, see “Who Can Sponsor a DC4K Group?” on page 111.

RESOURCES FOR LOCAL CHURCH USE



www.divorcecare.org

DivorceCare is a seminar/small group resource to help people who are hurting because of separation and divorce.



www.dc4k.org

DC4K is designed to bring healing to children of divorce and to give them hope and the tools to develop healthier relationships within their own families.



www.griefshare.org

GriefShare is a seminar/small group resource to help people who are grieving the death of a loved one.



www.singleandparenting.org

Single & Parenting offers help, encouragement, and effective parenting strategies to single parents.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH CHURCH INITIATIVE

There are several ways you can become involved with the ministry of Church Initiative:

“Champion” the use of ministry materials such as DC4K, DivorceCare, Single & Parenting, and GriefShare at your church.

Pray for our ministry: We believe that your prayers are powerful and effective, accomplishing much (James 5:16).

Financial support: As with most ministries, we seek contributions to help fund our activities. If you believe the Lord is leading you to give to this ministry, or if you know of a person who might be interested in contributing to our work, please feel free to contact us. We have information outlining our ministry needs and the future funds needed to meet the objectives the Lord has laid before us.

Ideas: We would love to hear your ideas for the ministry, comments about our programs, or questions about how we can minister to you or your church.

WHO CAN SPONSOR A DC4K GROUP?

Since Church Initiative’s mission is to equip churches with our resources, all our materials must be used within the context of local church ministry. Any use outside the sponsorship of a local church is not allowed. This includes use by private individuals or any group not directly affiliated with and under the oversight of a local church.

We believe local church sponsorship of our materials is important for many reasons. First, our materials are designed as tools for pastors, church leaders, and lay people to further their church’s ministry.

Second, Church Initiative materials are designed in a way that mandates the oversight of local church leadership. Group leaders of our programs must be chosen by the leadership of the sponsoring church. This assures that leaders are qualified and called by God to carry forth the church’s ministry. Unqualified leaders who are not chosen by a local church can do great damage to the people in their groups.

Third, as our programs address sensitive personal issues, a support system is needed that only a local church can provide. We encourage church leaders to provide that support and to help group leaders guide their groups. Church leaders can also come alongside individual group members who have further physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual needs.

For further information about Church Initiative or any of our resources, call **800-489-7778** (US and Canada) or 919-562-2112 (local and international); visit our website at **www.churchinitiative.org**; or email us at **info@churchinitiative.org**.

ORDER ACTIVITY BOOKS AND SUPPLIES

Items available for ordering at dc4k.org/store:

DC4K children's Activity Books – Weekly goals, Bible verses, games, puzzles, Bible stories, and journaling activities to correspond with the DC4K program.

DC4K Leader's Guide – Instructional and promotional materials, leadership training materials, and more.

DC4K Lesson Plans – Detailed instructions for the leaders, an agenda for each of the 13 sessions, and a weekly Preparation List.

2 music CDs* – *Kids Like Me* and *Kids Singing Bible Songs*.

Storybook* – *Stories for Kids in Divorce: A Read Aloud Storybook*.

Flip chart – Alphabet Stretches & Weekly Scriptures.

Herby – Mascot puppet with six red interchangeable feelings faces.

Case – Durable plastic carrying case for easy storage and transport of DC4K materials.

Energy Ball – Used in DC4K Sessions 1, 2, and 13.

DVD set – Four DVDs (in a case) containing 13 *Kids Like Me* dramas, 12 *Stories from the Bible* dramas, and a 3-part Leader Training Video session.

Brochures and posters – For mailing and bulletin boards.

Herby's Feelings Poster – Poster (sized 22 x 34") of Herby expressing 25 different feelings that a child of divorce might go through.

** Also available for purchase by participants' parents.*

Online: Order additional supplies for your group online at dc4k.org/store.

Phone: 800-489-7778; 919-562-2112

Fax: 919-562-2114

Mail: See internet or call for current pricing. Download an order form at www.dc4k.org/leaderzone.

DC4K kits are sold with a 30-day guarantee. If you're not satisfied, return the kit for a full refund (excluding shipping charges). The 30-day return policy does not apply to items purchased in addition to the kit. Returns for other materials will be accepted only if they are damaged or defective.

NOTES

¹ Adapted from “His Heart Our Hands” by SBC North American Mission Board and “The Single Adult Ministry Solution” compiled by Tim Cleary with LifeWay Publishing.

² The Safekeeper concept has been reproduced/adapted from the following with permission from Loving Guidance, Inc.: © Becky Bailey, *Conscious Discipline*, 61. Loving Guidance, Inc., 1-800-842-2846, www.consciousdiscipline.com.

³ Adapted from America Reads at Penn State, <https://www.ed.psu.edu/educ/america-reads>. Used by permission.

⁴ Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, *The Divorce Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, a division of Random House, Inc.), 189.

⁵ Barbara Dafoe Whitehead and David Popenoe, “Marriage and Children: Coming Together Again?” *The State of Our Unions: The Social Health of Marriage in America* (June 2003) The National Marriage Project, www.marriage.rutgers.edu, and Kreider, Rose M. and Renee Ellis, “Living Arrangements of Children: 2009, *Current Population Reports*, P70-126, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2011.

⁶ “Children’s Living Arrangements and Characteristics: March 2002” (July 2003) U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov.

⁷ The many effects of divorce are repeated in numerous sources, including Sara Eleoff, “An Exploration of the Ramifications of Divorce on Children and Adolescents” (November 2003) The Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine, www.childadvocate.net; Don Gordon, Ph.D., “The Effects of Divorce on Children” (2003) Indiana Judicial Center www.in.gov; and Whitehead and Popenoe.

⁸ Eleoff, Gordon, and Whitehead and Popenoe.

⁹ Whitehead and Popenoe.

¹⁰ Phone interview by Linda Ranson Jacobs (DC4K creator) with Elizabeth Marquardt, March 2, 2004. Elizabeth Marquardt is the author of *Between Two Worlds: The Inner Lives of Children of Divorce* (Crown Publishing).

¹¹ Reproduced/adapted with permission from Loving Guidance, Inc.: © Becky Bailey, Conscious Discipline®. Loving Guidance, Inc., 1-800-842-2846, www.consciousdiscipline.com.

¹² Gary and Anne Marie Ezzo, *Growing Kids God’s Way: The Single Parent Supplement* (Growing Families International, 95259 Elton Ave. Chatsworth, CA 91311, Phone: 818-772-6264), 22.

¹³ Reproduced/adapted with permission from Loving Guidance, Inc.: © Becky Bailey, Conscious Discipline®, www.consciousdiscipline.com.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Phone interview by Linda Ranson Jacobs (DC4K creator) with Elizabeth Marquardt, March 4, 2004.

¹⁷ Reproduced/adapted from the following with permission from Loving Guidance, Inc.: © Becky Bailey, *Conscious Discipline*, 61.

¹⁸ Evan Imber-Black, Ph.D., and Janine Roberts, Ed.D., *Rituals for Our Times* (HarperPerennial, a division of HarperCollins, 1993), 95, 97.

¹⁹ Ibid., 149.