

Kings' Kids: Nurturing children's spiritual life during COVID-19

Beverly J. Christian
Avondale University College
bev.christian@avondale.edu.au

with

Kimberly Houliston
Abide Family Ministries
kimberly@abide.com.au

When planet earth stepped over the threshold into 2020 everyone was expecting normality. Now, as we prepare to see the year out it seems everyone is talking about the new normal. The year 2020 did not turn out as expected, forcing change and challenges on school leaders, teachers, parents and children. As churches were physically closed down or limited in their operation of children's and youth ministries, the role of Christian schools became even more crucial

in providing spiritual nurture. Seeing a gap in children's ministries online programs, Abide Family Ministries, operated by Kimberly and Robert Houliston, decided to step into the void with a new online children's program with Christian content.

Called King's Kids, each 30 minute episode is a mix of original songs, storytelling, drama, Bible study, craft and other special features. Kimberly is a primary school teacher and is aware of the elements that create an engaging program for primary school aged children. Throughout each episode, Bible stories are presented in a variety of ways and from different perspectives. The resurrection of Jesus is seen through the eyes of a young girl and told skilfully using sand art; a scale model of Noah's ark is used to bring the Old Testament story of salvation to life; and puppets are used alongside children to explore biblical lessons. The Discovery Bible Reading method presents a child-friendly way to explore biblical passages.

The series to date have been broken into thematic chunks of around four episodes each, providing flexibility for teachers to share in their classrooms. For example, there is a series of four episodes ideally suited to Easter, another shares

“
As churches were physically closed down or limited ... the role of Christian schools became even more crucial
”



Figure 1. The King's Kids team in action on the set: from left to right Kyrah Page, Ella-Jean Livah, Zayne Livah, Rosie Magus and Josiah Page.



Figure 2. Shane and Andy modelling how to study the Bible using the Discovery Bible Reading method.

the story of Noah, while others focus on the New Testament church, Old Testament families or the stories and miracles of Jesus. Each episode is designed with a focus on grace, worship, service or community.

King's Kids has now completed its fourth series and has been operating for a full year. The fifth series has just commenced. Kimberly's prayer for the King's Kids programs is "that children will come to know and experience that they are all valued and loved members of God's royal family; and that the best decision they can ever make, is to invite Jesus into their heart."

For more information go to the Abide Family Ministries website at abide.com.au and look for the King's Kids tab or access programs on the Arnie's Shack YouTube channel.



Figure 3. Arnie, one of the puppet characters, wrapping up the program with a reminder to viewers that they are children of the King

“
that children
will ...
know and
experience
that they are
all valued
and loved
members of
God's royal
family”



'Cause Noah and his family chose to obey

Figure 4. A scene from Series 1, Episode 8 about Noah's ark.