

Junior Soldiers

Unit 5 : Lesson 9



Standing Up For Others

PURPOSE : For the children to explore and understand that, at times, God calls us to be someone who will stand up for others, support them and speak out against things that are unfair or unjust.

‘Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed. Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice.’

Proverbs 31:8 & 9

Consider & Prepare

Read:

Proverbs 31:8 & 9

Romans 12:9–21

Matthew 22:36–40

Micah 6:8

This is a justice lesson that explores standing up for others by being willing to speak up and support those who might be disadvantaged, bullied, segregated, discriminated against or being shown an injustice in some way. I am sure there will be lots of situations that you can chat with the children about and how they might be able or willing to stand up for others.

It is important to think through the situations of the children that you have in your group and deal with conversations appropriately—perhaps giving them opportunity to share some of their story but at the same time not spending too much time there. If this is relevant to your group, then it would be good to follow up with the Big Bud and family after this session.

Sharing some of your own journey or situations where you have been able to stand up for and support others would be helpful throughout this lesson, making sure that the appropriate amount of details are shared to help the children explore this topic but not breaching confidences, scaring the children or simply seeking sympathy.

What you will need:

For ‘Connecting In’

- Catalogues: a range of catalogues from the supermarket, department stores (e.g. Kmart, Target, Big W), toy stores, etc.

For ‘The Main Thing’

- Masking or gaffa tape to make a strip on the floor
- Bibles

- A copy of *Tusk Tusk* written by David McKee (Kane/Miller Book Publishers, 1990). You can purchase a copy online cheaply through Fishpond—free delivery—or you could check out your local library.

For 'Tying In'

- A range of images of people; you could source these from magazines, the internet, catalogues or old books or you could use some cardboard templates that the children could draw people onto.
- A large sheet of butchers paper
- Textas, glue sticks and scissors.

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off the Home & Beyond cards for each child.



Connecting In

Shout it out...

For this activity you will need a range of catalogues from the supermarket, department stores (e.g. Kmart, Target, Big W), toy stores.

Ask the children to get into pairs or small groups and look through the catalogues to find something they think is great; it might be because it is on sale, or it does something really cool or it looks really great. Get a few of the groups to stand up and 'shout it out'—what they have chosen and why, e.g. 'In this catalogue there is a special for buy one get one free for basketballs' etc.



Link: 'There are lots of things that we think are great, not just things that are in catalogues that we have looked at today. Maybe there are other things you might see in magazines or advertised on TV.'

- Get the children to share some of the things they have seen advertised elsewhere that they think are great.
- Get the children to share something that they love or think is great and why.
- 'This is something that I think is great; something that I love... (use some illustrations here, e.g. 'I think coffee is great [show a jar of coffee], I love my family [show photo of family] etc.)
- When you find something that you think is great, you want to share it with someone else. You are willing to stand up and tell others about it, or send them an email to share the news or ring them or text them to share this information with them.
- I want to remind you all today that I think you are great! God made each one of you, right from the oldest to the youngest, everyone that is here. He made us unique and loves us each as if we were the only one to love. He is willing to stand up and tell us that he loves us too.
- There are times when we need to stand up for others, or stand up for something that is important or great. We need to stand up and share this message with others too. Remember that if something is important or great, God might ask us to speak up for ourselves or for Him or to be a voice for others. Today we are going to explore what that might look like for us and the people around us.

The Main Thing

WHERE DO YOU STAND?

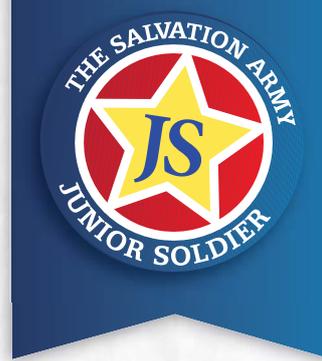
For this message you will need some masking tape or gaffa tape that you can place on the floor creating a line at the front of the church, on the platform, etc.

Invite some of the children to come and join you (make sure they are old enough to understand the choices otherwise you could just use some youth or adults to illustrate the point) and to choose a grown

up to come with them to participate in this challenge. Ask them all to stand along the tape line placed on the floor. Explain that for this activity they will need to choose 'where to stand'—on this side (pointing to one side of the line) or on this side (pointing to the other side of the line). Explain that you will give them two options and they have to choose which side of the line they are going to put themselves on.

Give some choices:

- Do you like chocolate or strawberry?
- Do you prefer cereal or toast?
- Would you rather have spaghetti or McDonalds for dinner?
- Would you rather support Geelong or Collingwood in the football?
- Would you rather watch a DVD at home or go out at the movies?
- If someone was saying nasty things about someone else would you join in or say nothing at all?
- Would you include someone who looked different to you in your game or ignore them?
- Would you help those who were being treated badly or pretend you didn't see what was happening?



There are lots of things we are willing to support, be connected with or be seen doing, e.g. following a particular sporting team, listening to a particular group's music, choosing to buy and eat a particular food. When that sporting team or music group is doing well or is popular it is easy to stand up and say you like them and support them, but when things are not going so well it can be a little bit harder.

When everyone is being friendly it is easy to support each other, but when someone starts to pick on someone else or something is happening that is not fair or right, it can be more difficult to 'stand' with them and support them and help them.

God wants us to treat others the way that we would want to be treated, He reminds us of that in Matthew 7:12 'Treat others as you want them to treat you.' (*Get the children to find this verse in their Bible and put a sticky note/tab in to remind them of it this week.*)

So it is always good to think about how we would feel if we were in that situation someone else is in. How would we feel and what would we want others to do? I am sure you would want others to stand and support you. Remember our game today and think about the choices you make and how you can support and stand with others.

TUSK TUSK

Tusk Tusk was written by David McKee (Kane/Miller Book Publishers, 1990).

'Once elephants came in two colours: black or white. They loved all other creatures but hated each other, and each wanted to exterminate the other. Peace-loving individuals ran and hid in the deepest jungle, and battle commenced. The warmongers all succeeded. For a long time it seemed that there were no elephants in the world at all, not of any colour. But then the grey descendants of the peace-loving elephants emerged from the jungle, only to eventually find new differences to set them against each other.'

This is a great book for you to share with the children that talks about some of the struggles that we have in how we treat each other. Begin by reinforcing Matthew 7:12.

Read the story.

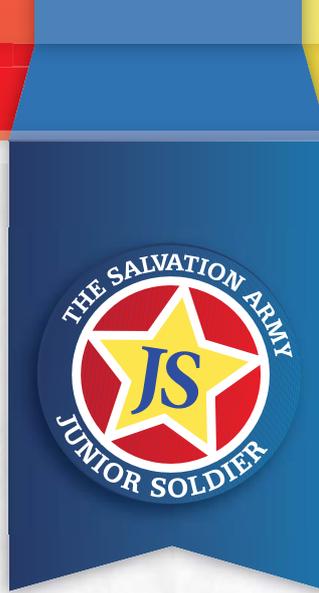
Work through the following questions together either as a whole group or in smaller groups.

- Have you ever done anything to hurt someone because you didn't like them or because they were different?
- Has anyone ever done anything to hurt you because they didn't like you or because they thought you were different?
- I wonder how that would feel.
- Is this a good way to treat or judge someone? Why/why not?
- Should the peace-loving elephants have run away, or could they have done something to help solve the problems?

- Do you think the elephants' skin colour or the size of their ears means that they are bad elephants?
- I wonder if you think that the way someone looks on the outside reflects what is on the inside (your inner qualities). I wonder if you can dislike someone before you even get to know them.
- I wonder how God would want us to treat others, including those we don't like and those that seem different from us.

Jesus spoke up for people who had no voice in the Jewish culture of his day. That doesn't mean they couldn't speak, it means that no-one listened to them or noticed them or respected them. He spent time with Samaritans, lepers, beggars, women, tax collectors, the poor, etc.

If we are truly to aim to be like Jesus, then we, too, have to ask who are the people in the world today who 'have no voice'? Who should we be speaking up for? Who needs us (i.e. Christians) to stand up and say 'We'll support you; we see you; we recognize your value; we want the best for you'?



Tying In

Unity...

For this activity you will need a range of images of people; you could source these from magazines, the internet, catalogues or old books or you could use some cardboard templates that the children could draw people onto. You will also need a large sheet of butchers paper, textas, glue sticks and scissors.

On the sheet of butchers paper write the word UNITY in large bubble letters. Then get the children to cut out as many different people that they can (showing diversity) and add them to the picture. They can either add the images of people to the inside of the letters or colour in the letters and try to fill all the space around the word. While completing this activity it would be good to reinforce some of the questions from above.

Prayer for others...

When the picture is finished place it either in the middle on a table or on the floor. Get everyone to stand around the word 'UNITY' either joining hands or arms. Encourage everyone to participate in this prayer time as we pray for others and how we can stand with them and support them when there are things that are unfair or struggles that they are having. Ask a leader to finish this prayer time together.

It would be good to place the 'UNITY' picture in the church foyer or even take a photo of it and share it on the screen during church. The children could share what they learnt during this lesson about standing up for and with others.

Home & Beyond

Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

Stand together and pray...

As a family/household it would be good to talk about some places where you might see injustices happening or where things are happening that are 'not fair', you might even like to make a list that can help you with your prayers this week.

- Each night after dinner choose one of the situations on your list.
- Stand together as a family (*you might like to join hands or arms as you pray*) and pray for these people who are dealing with tough situations.

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