



# Junior Soldiers



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### WHO?

#### Who can become a Junior Soldier?

The Junior Soldier material is targeted at 7-14 year olds. However, any child who wants to follow Jesus and commit to the Junior Soldier promise can be enrolled.

#### Who can help with Junior Soldiers?

An adult can help with Junior Soldiers when they have completed all the training and checks required by Safe Salvos for working with children.

They should have a desire to make spaces where children can connect with God.

#### Who can be a big bud?

An adult who has completed all the training and checks required by Safe Salvos for working with children can become a Big Bud.

They should have a faith in Jesus and be actively participating in the Christian life.

They should be willing to journey with children.

#### Who can attend and participate in Junior Soldiers?

Lessons may be run in many different contexts. Anyone can participate in the lesson even if they are not an enrolled Junior Soldier.

All children can also participate in the passport work but will not receive the certificates if they are not enrolled.

#### Who do I send the completed passport to?

Passports need to be sent to your Divisional Youth and Children's Secretary. This gives the divisional leaders the opportunity to maintain divisional records, to sign the passport and to be personally involved in the process and connected to the children in the division.

## Who needs to sign the award passports when they are finished?

The passports need to be signed by the Junior Soldier leader, the Big Bud and the divisional children's leader.

## WHAT?

### What if I have a small group of children?

Most of the lessons have options that are suitable for a small group or an individual child. Be creative and adapt the lessons to fit with your group.

### What passport is the best for a specific child? What passport level does a child need to start on?

Each award level will take time and this will vary for young people depending on their spiritual, emotional and intellectual development as well as their age.

It is important not to rush the Junior Soldiers through the awards. The aim is to develop their spirituality, not to finish each Passport as quickly as possible. It is equally important not to hold young people back if they are ready to move on. Developing relationships as discipleship partners is vitally important to gaining insight into the spiritual growth of Junior Soldiers as they move through the awards.

For most children, the best place for them to start is the bronze level, regardless of their age. However, the local Junior Soldier leader is the best person to assess the suitable level. If you are unsure, please talk to your corps officer or divisional leaders.

### What happens if a child starts Junior Soldiers when they are older? What passport do they start with?

If a Junior Soldier starts when they are older, have a chat with the child.

New Christians will still need to start at Bronze.

Those who have been on the discipleship journey for some time may not need to start at Bronze or may work through the passports more quickly until they reach the level that will challenge them.

### What happens if I run out of time?

(Do I need to do everything included in the lesson?)

The lessons are designed to be flexible. Choose the options that best suit your group, time frame and setting. If your time is limited try to focus on 'The Main Thing'.

### What does a Big Bud do?

Big Buds are intentional about mentoring and discipleship.

They engage children in significant relationships. They establish a safe mentoring relationship with their Little Buds. They work alongside their Little Buds as they complete their project and award work.

See Big Bud section for more information at [toolit.salvos.org.au](http://toolit.salvos.org.au)

### What does a young person need to do before they get enrolled?

Before a young person can be enrolled they must be prepared to follow Jesus and commit to the Junior Soldier promise.

They must complete the preparation material so that they understand the promise they are making. They must choose The Salvation Army as their faith community.

## What do I do if a Junior Soldier does not want to sign their renewal promise?

Each year children grow in their intellectual, emotional and spiritual understanding of what it means and what is required to be a disciple of Jesus. It is okay if they choose not to sign a renewal card. They can still continue to be a part of your group. Let them know that they are welcome to sign the re-commitment card at any time throughout the year if they change their mind.

## What do I do when I have finished all twelve units of lessons?

Start again! Young people will benefit from repeating the lessons at a different stage in their intellectual, emotional and spiritual development.

There may have been options that you didn't use last time or you may have some ideas for activities that will support the material and add some variety to the lesson.

The lessons are reviewed and updated so you may find there are already some differences from the last time you did the lesson.

## WHEN?

### When can a young person be a part of Junior Soldiers?

A child can begin Junior Soldiers when the leader assesses that they are able to participate in the lessons.

The lesson material is targeted at 7-12 year olds and the passports are targeted at 7-14 year olds however many children are able to participate outside these guidelines.

This may vary for individual children. Younger children attending lessons may need assistance, for example, with reading.

### When do children receive their certificate and award pips?

The certificates and award pips will be received after the award level has been completed and sent to the divisional leader. Each level is designed to be completed in approximately twelve months but this time frame will vary.

Keep in mind the purpose of the Passports (to build faith) and don't rush through but also don't hold those Junior Soldiers back who need to move on.

### When can we hold Junior Soldiers?

The Junior Soldier material may be used at any time throughout the week that suits the leaders and the families involved. This could be on a week day afternoon or evening, a Sunday, as part of a Kids Club or Kids Church.

Be creative and flexible to get the most out of your time together.

## WHERE?

### Where can I find ideas for projects?

Find out what other ministries at your corps are involved in or check out Divisional and Territorial projects.

The Leaders notes in the 'Junior Soldiers : Optional Award Work' section at [toolkit.salvos.org.au/youthandkids](http://toolkit.salvos.org.au/youthandkids).

SAGALA, women's ministries, connect with local community groups, LIST in Project Section, talk to other Junior Soldier groups about the projects they have done.

## Where do I get all the resources needed for the lessons?

The lesson material will contain a list of resources that you will need. Your corps officer or other groups within your church community may be able to assist with these resources. Be creative and adapt the lessons to use the materials you have on hand.

## Where does a child go for discipleship after Junior Soldiers?

A young person who is ready to move on from Junior Soldiers may choose to commence Corps Cadets or a LIFE group.

They may choose to continue a mentoring relationship with their Big Bud or a new mentoring partner.

They may also choose to keep on doing the passport material.

## Where do I get passports from?

To order Passports, use the 'Contact Us' function on the Territorial Youth and Children's website [toolkit.salvos.org.au](http://toolkit.salvos.org.au)

## Where do I get help if I need it?

Any questions can be directed to your corps officer, your DYS or use the 'Contact Us' function on the Territorial Youth and Children's website [toolkit.salvos.org.au](http://toolkit.salvos.org.au)

## Where do I get lessons from?

Lessons are available for free download from the Territorial Youth and Children's website [toolkit.salvos.org.au](http://toolkit.salvos.org.au)

If you are unable to access these lessons online a hard copy can be requested through the 'Contact Us' function on the website.

## HOW?

## How are the lessons organised?

The lessons are organised into 12 units. Each unit consists of ten lessons and contains material on each of the eight key teaching areas.

These are Salvation Army History and Information, Prayer, Holy Living, Word (Biblical), Special Occasions, Junior Soldier Promise, Doctrine and Justice.

The lessons may be completed in order from Unit 1, lesson 1, by themes, or as individual lessons.

## How can a young person be a Junior Soldier without being a part of weekly lessons?

They will need to find a person to support them as a Big Bud. This could be a parent.

They can become a Junior Soldier if they have done the preparation material and are prepared to make the Junior Soldier covenant with God.

The Big Bud or parent can support them to do the passport work. They may like to do some of the lesson material with their Big Bud, parents or Corps Officer.

## How old does a child need to be to participate or be enrolled?

A child can be enrolled as a Junior Soldier when the leader assesses that they are interested in developing their journey of faith, able to understand the promise that they are making and able to participate in the lessons.

This will vary for individual children however the majority of children will be ready around the age of seven.

## How long can a child be a part of the program?

The Junior Soldier lessons are targeted at children up to the age of 12. The Passport work is designed for children up to the age of 14. However, there is no formal age limit for Junior Soldiers. Any child who remains interested can be encouraged to continue.

## How do I run a Junior Soldier program in my church?

Visit the Territorial Youth and Children's website for information about what Junior Soldiers is about as well as the Passport and Big Buds component. See [toolkit.salvos.org.au](http://toolkit.salvos.org.au)

You will need to begin with Safe Salvos training for yourself and anyone you have identified as leaders and assistants.

If you want to enrol Junior Soldiers then download the Preparation materials from the website and begin with these.

Alternatively, you can choose a lesson and use the material without taking up the enrolment option.

## How can I fit the Junior Soldier program into what already happens at my church?

There are three components to the Junior Soldier program. These are the lessons, the Passports and the Big Buds. Each of these components may be used separately but are most effective when used together.

The lessons may be used as curriculum for a group of young people that you currently have meeting together. For example, in a Kid's Church or Kid's Club.

The Passport work can be completed by children with the support of an adult even if regular Junior Soldier meetings are not currently running.

'Big Buds' may be introduced as a way of supporting all children in your church community in their development. 'Big Buds' also facilitates intergenerational interaction within your church.

## How are the Junior soldier lessons put together?

The Junior Soldier lessons are put together by writer's throughout three territories of The Salvation Army. They are prepared according to guidelines which provide consistency throughout the units.

## How many leaders do I need to run Junior Soldiers?

The number of leaders that you require will depend on the number of Junior Soldiers that you have attending.

Check Safe Salvos for the current requirements.

## How can I best connect with parents?

You can connect with parents by making use of the 'Home and Beyond' component which is included with every lesson.

Communicate with parents about the things that their children are doing with you.

Have conversations with parents while they are signing children in and out.

Involve families in special projects.

Ask families to help with providing resources where possible.

Schedule specific family times where parents and siblings are invited to join in.

## How do people know a child is a Junior Soldier?

When a child is enrolled as a Junior Soldier they will receive a Junior Soldier badge and certificate. As they complete their Passport work they will also receive pips which can be worn with the badge.

Junior Soldiers may also choose to wear a t-shirt which can be purchased through Salvation Army Supplies.

## WHY?

### Why is Junior Soldiers important?

Junior Soldiers is about discipleship. It is not just a program, or lessons and awards that need to be completed.

Junior Soldiers participate in, explore and practice the disciplines that will help them build faith and a relationship with God.

### Why is a Big Bud important to a Junior Soldier?

A positive and significant relationship with at least one adult is essential to the spiritual health and wellbeing of every young person.

Big Buds is an intentional mentoring and discipling initiative aimed at engaging children in significant relationships with adults.

### Why is it important for all children to be involved in an agreed project?

The projects help to build community across the age brackets, providing an opportunity for participation. All members of the church community are able to work together as the body of Christ instead of competitively as individuals.

### Why are there only 12 units?

The 12 units cover the key areas that a child needs to explore in this area of faith development. A smaller number of units allows for repetition which will reinforce important points.

