



Breakaway Bay Centers



These centers can be incorporated into Breakaway Bay Sensory Station to reinforce elements of each session. Additionally, daily Tide Pool Centers found in the *Preschool Bible Story Leader's Guide* as well as activities from Pelican Pier make wonderful activities for children who need to spend more of their time in the quiet environment of Breakaway Bay.

SESSION I: GOD KNOWS ME!

Search-&Find Sensory Bin

Materials: large bin or bucket, dried beans to fill bin halfway, assorted objects to highlight the day's theme (see below)

Session 1: small plastic people and animal figures

Session 2: small plastic fish

Session 3: small plastic ships or boats

Session 4: small wooden crosses or plastic hearts

Session 5: green items to remind kids to GO

One of the goals of this activity is to teach familiarity of the elements in each day's session of Deep Sea Discovery. While teaching pictures and books can beautifully illustrate the persons and items involved in each story, children who seek tactile stimulation will internalize the story more quickly if they can collect and touch the individual items. Additionally, children who are not yet adept at joining a story circle might be more inclined to sit and search through a tub of dry, cool beans for story figures.

Bury the figures in a container of dried beans. Be sure to hide them deep enough to encourage the children to spread their fingers and receive the stimulation on their hands from the pressure of the beans. Children who seek interaction through touch will enjoy searching for these items again and again. As you proceed through the sessions, this makes an excellent review activity or early-arriver activity.



Be aware that children who avoid tactile stimulation will also avoid this activity. These are typically children who also avoid Play-Doh, holding crayons or markers in their hands, or other types of hands-on activities. Typically this is a sign of avoidance due to either the unwelcome sensation of anything on their sensitive skin or low muscle tone in their hands. For these children, this can be a kind of therapy that, over time, reduces their sensitivity and incorporates them in typical childhood activities at their own pace. Be sensitive to their integration in these matters and let them move at their own pace. If they are overly sensitive to the sensation of the beans at first, allow them to dig using an implement like a small trowel.

Figure Find

Materials: flashlights, people and animal figures to search for

Hide people and animal figures in a dimly lit room, and have children use flashlights to find them. What makes this an ideal activity for some children with developmental delays is the reduction in the visual senses by the dimming of the lights. This decrease in sensory input can be a great comfort, especially as fluorescent lights can be harsh and even noisy to children who are oversensitive to visual and auditory input.

This approach is also particularly successful with children with limited verbal capacity as they can simply shine a flashlight on an object without speaking. Just allow children to use the flashlight to indicate what object they spy in the classroom.

Talk about how the world had grown dark with sin, and how God looked over His creation and saw Noah. God knew Noah was a good man who tried to do the right thing. So God made a plan to save Noah, his family, and the animals from the flood. God knew Noah—and God KNOWS us. He's with us wherever we go!

Quiet Time

Children may enjoy spending some time relaxed in a beanbag chair or on a pile of pillows looking at picture books of animals and landscapes. Consider making copies of magazines featuring nature and animals available. Talk about the beautiful world God made, and how He KNOWS and loves us—no matter how small we may feel. He's with us wherever we go!

SESSION 2: GOD HEARS ME!

Search-&Find Sensory Bin

(see session 1)

“Tag You’re It”

Materials: flashlights

Children who may not be able to play a traditional game of “tag” can use flashlights with a buddy in a quick game of flashlight tag. Rather than having kids get up and move around the room to avoid the flashlight, have them turn off the light and aim it at a spot in the room. When they turn the light back on, have their Diving Buddies use their flashlight to “tag” their lights. This activity encourages social interaction as kids work with another person to anticipate where their light will be next. You can also make this activity therapeutic by having kids follow the lights with their eyes only, increasing their visual-motor skills.

Talk with kids about how God always knew right where Jonah was—even when he was inside the belly of a fish! God heard Jonah’s prayers, and God HEARS us too. He’s with us wherever we go!

Feed Me! Feed Me!

Materials: jumbo clothes pins (found at office supply stores), 2 buckets, picture or drawing of a fish, marshmallows (This game can be used as a relay with multiple children, or as a one-on-one activity with a Diving Buddy.)

Tape a picture or drawing of a fish to each bucket. Place the buckets at a designated “finish line” in your designated space. Allow the children to use the jumbo clothespins to pick up marshmallows. Then encourage the children to “feed” the fish by dropping marshmallows into the buckets.

When the children are done feeding the fish, talk about how a giant fish swallowed Jonah—not to eat him, but to save him! God heard Jonah’s prayers from inside the belly of the fish, and God HEARS us too. He’s with us wherever we go!

SESSION 3: GOD STRENGTHENS ME!

Search-&Find Sensory Bin

(see session 1)

Blow and Go

Materials: 2 cookie sheets, feathers, straws, tape to designate start and finish lines, 2 large containers for finish line

Children will work in pairs during this fun game to keep the feathers from flying off cookie sheets as they move slowly to a finish line. Divide children into 2 teams to play this game relay style. (If using this as a one-on-one game, modify from a relay format to playing in cooperation with their Diving Buddy.)

Ask children to use straws to pick up 4 feathers each by gently sucking on the straw while placing it over the feather. (If this is too difficult or physically taxing, children may simply place the feathers on their cookie sheet.) Once the feathers are on the cookie sheet, have the children pick up the pan and move it to the finish line as a pair, each holding one side of the cookie sheet. They will need to move slowly, as the object is to get as many feathers as possible to the finish line. If playing with a large group, continue play until each pair has had an opportunity to play.

When the game is finished talk about how hard it was to keep the feathers from blowing off the cookie sheet. Tell kids that the wind was blowing very hard when Jesus walked out to His friends on the water. They were all afraid, but Peter got out of the boat and walked to Jesus. When Peter started to sink, Jesus reached out and helped Peter. God gave Peter the strength he needed—and God STRENGTHENS us too. He's with us wherever we go!

Safe and Sound

Materials: large appliance box, cushions, pillows, calm water sounds

The disciples in the boat that night were very afraid. But God kept them safe and gave Peter the strength to do something very brave! Children with special needs often understand all too well feelings of fear and being generally overwhelmed by their environment. Provide a place of shelter for them today by creating their very own refuge. Create a boat out of a large appliance box, leaving at least one side open for accessibility and adequate supervision. Fill the box with cushions and pillows. Play calm water sounds as a tool in retelling today's story. Children may also find this a relaxing place to look at books or just rest from their busy day.

Talk about how afraid and uncertain the disciples must have felt. But even though the storm was raging around them, God kept them safe. God gave Peter the strength to be brave—and God STRENGTHENS us too. He's with us wherever we go!

SESSION 4: GOD LOVES ME!

Search-&Find Sensory Bin

(see session 1)

Peaceful Praise

God showed His love for us by sending His Son, Jesus. We can show our love for God by praising Him! Singing is a common way to express praise to God. For children with noise sensitivity, the prospect of many voices raised in song can be particularly distressful. Additionally, non-verbal children or those with language delays may feel unable to participate fully and become frustrated at the prospect of singing. Consider these ideas for peaceful participatory praise as a means to worship.

- Pencil in a mural depicting scenes from today's Bible story. Allow children to color or paint along to quiet, classical music. Consider a variety of mediums that they might use to fill in the mural—crayons, watercolors, chalk, or Blow Pens (great for respiration and especially calming).
- Instead of musical instruments, allow children to move scarves and pieces of fabric through the air to the music. If possible, have them mirror your actions and follow you in a quiet time of praise through movement. This can be adapted for children with limited motor skills or those confined to wheelchairs.
- Consider allowing children to blow bubbles along to praise music or to clap their hands as they pop them while the music is playing.

Talk about the many reasons we have for praising God. We praise Him because He KNOWS, HEARS, STRENGTHENS, and (most of all) because He LOVES us! He's with us wherever we go!

A Fishin' Mission

Materials: Hula Hoop, several tossing bags

Lay the Hula Hoop on the floor. It will be the empty net of the fishermen in today's story. Children will pretend to be Jesus' disciples and will toss the bags into the Hula Hoop. When a bag lands inside the hoop, have the rest of the children cheer, "God loves you! God loves me!" This game can be played to music for a fun free-play time that reviews today's lesson.

Remind children that Jesus performed a miracle and filled the fishermen's net to overflowing. Jesus loved the disciples—and everyone! God LOVES us too, and He's with us wherever we go!

SESSION 5: GOD SENDS ME!

Search-&Find Sensory Bin

(see session 1)

Go, Go, Go!

Materials: masking tape; large open floor space or tabletop; straws; lightweight objects such as: cotton balls, tissues, feathers, Ping-Pong balls, etc.

Clear a space, either on the floor or a tabletop. Use masking tape to mark a finish line. Give children a straw and encourage them to blow on objects to move them toward the line. Children may choose object after object as they learn the force it takes to move them. You can vary the activity by trying to keep a tissue in the air by blowing it, or blowing a group of feathers in a bowl and watching them disperse. Blowing and puffing promotes oral-motor awareness and strengthens lip and cheek muscles.

Finish the activity by talking about how ships can use the wind to move. The wind pushes against the sails, which moves the ship across the water. Paul traveled in this way as he crossed the sea to tell about Jesus. God sent Paul to tell His story—and God SENDS us too. He’s with us wherever we go!

Room for Everyone

Materials: several throw rugs, Hula Hoops, mats, or paper; CD player; music CD

Emphasize that God has room for everyone by playing this non-competitive form of musical chairs. Allow players to move from rug to rug while the music plays. When the music stops, children must find a rug. Each time the music stops, remove one rug and explain that there is room for everyone. Cue children to invite those not on a rug when the music stops to invite others to join them. Instruct the children to change their movement by hopping, walking, tip-toeing, etc. This activity improves coordination and social awareness.

At the end of the activity, explain that just as there was room for everyone during your game, there is room in God’s family for everyone who loves Him! God wants everyone to know about, love, and serve Jesus. God sent Paul to tell His story—and God SENDS us too. He’s with us wherever we go!