

MATERIALS FOR MISSION EDUCATION

THE MISSION CLUBHOUSE

Where there are kids and clubs, there are clubhouses! A Mission Club deserves a space for members to meet and create.

Even if it is not large enough to accommodate a class, the clubhouse is a space set aside for the work of the students: a place to do research on issues, an area to hang posters and pictures of people from around the world, a corner to store things they will use for displays and presentations, and a place to emphasize the importance of making the world a better place. The clubhouse is a room where first graders can work with seventh graders, and a place where one student researching an injustice can post information for others to learn. It is a welcoming place where visitors come and see the good work of the kids. Ultimately, a mission clubhouse is a home where children see the world through the lens of what Jesus asks them to do, of how Jesus loves everyone and wants us to love one another.

If you are working with younger children, the idea of an actual clubhouse will generate a great deal of energy. For older students who may find the clubhouse idea too childish, ask them to find a name that suits them. Here we will refer to a variety of spaces as clubhouses.

The space available dictates your parameters, but creativity and imagination are the only limits in the inside of the clubhouse! Brainstorm with children, offer materials, get messy, and have fun creating this busy but holy place.

SUGGESTIONS OF BASIC CLUBHOUSE MATERIALS:

- Maps and a globe
- Posters of Catholic Social Teaching (see materials on making these posters)
- Posters/Pictures of people of many ethnicities, cultures, ages, etc.)
- The Mission Rosary and information on the meanings of the colors
- Other sacramentals (a statue such as of Mary, the Risen Christ, or saints that did mission work such as Peter Claver and Katharine Drexel)
- Paper, pens, markers, and other art supplies
- Wall space or room dividers where posters and paper can be hung
- Books that show readers the great variety of people and places on God's earth.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS:

Depending on the type of space you have you may be able to use:

- A computer
- A table and chairs
- Floor pillows
- Counters/cupboards for storage

CREATING A CLUBHOUSE SPACE:

A Room:

A room used just for a Clubhouse is ideal. For many situations, this may seem unreasonable or unlikely, but if your program is large, it can be justifiable to request this space. It never hurts to ask! Before asking, look at the building space with fresh eyes and think creatively. The end of a hallway, a supply room, a classroom that gets only periodic use, etc., may be turned into a wonderful Mission Clubhouse.

A Section of a Classroom:

If you have permanent use of a classroom, designate a corner to be the clubhouse. Hang cloths or use room dividers to create a separate space. If you use cloths such as an India-print bedspread or a blanket from Mexico, you have already begun creating a whole-world atmosphere. Bring in artifacts from different cultures to further this.

There may not be room for large meetings or work such as creating presentation materials. The rest of the classroom can be used for that. But this space can be the holding place, the place of reminder of what mission work is all about. Here issues information, along with pictures, posters, and newspaper clippings can be hung. Place pillows on the floor for small group prayer or reading time. Keep books and mission magazines there. It can also be a place for prayer.

A Moveable Clubhouse:

If your program meets in a room used by others and you cannot leave anything out or hang anything up, you can still find ways to create a clubhouse.

- If there are bookshelves that are easily moveable, ask if you can move them and put up information, posters, etc. on the backs of the shelves. Then move the shelves to create a space with the poster side facing inward.
- Tables can be used to enclose a space too. For this, mount posters, etc. on heavy poster board and have these hang down from the tables' edges.
- If a clothesline can be quickly strung across the room, hang a cloth from it to make a space.
- Invest in 'tri-fold' boards. Using several can create an enclosure. Attach Mission Club photos, etc., which can remain on the boards. These are easily set up and taken down and can be stored flat.
- Find out if small room dividers on wheels are available.
- If enclosing a space is not an option, lay a large blanket or sheet on the floor to designate a space
- Use flip chart easels for displays.
- Have a covered container that holds artifacts, sacramentals, books, etc. that can be brought into the room and quickly set up.
- Enlist the children's help in doing a fast set-up and takedown.