



# Vacation Bible School Promotion and Communication



What strikes simultaneous fear and joy in the hearts of church staff and volunteers every year? Yep, you guessed it, Vacation Bible School (VBS). Anyone who has been a part of planning VBS knows the vast amount of time, resources and imagination that go into making these events memorable experiences for kids.

Unfortunately, all of that planning is for naught if no one shows up. Don't overlook one of the most important factors of a successful program—promotion and communication.

Delegation is the key to planning a large-scale event like VBS. And when it comes to tackling modern-day communication, who better to delegate to than your teens? In addition to their ability to spread the word, their involvement will also encourage the younger kids to attend when they see the enthusiastic participation of the teens they revere. It's the perfect community service project for youth groups seeking to help in the church and wider community.

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**“You can do anything, but not everything.”**

– DAVID ALLEN, Best-selling author and creator of Getting Things Done® methodology

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## **Roles to Recruit for an Awesome Communications Team**

### **Public Relations**

Look for the student with great interpersonal skills who is adept at interacting with adults. Tasks to assign this role include:

- Working with local businesses and organizations to see if they will display post cards and posters promoting the event. Any place with foot traffic should be approached: retail stores, libraries, swimming pools, rec centers and fast food restaurants are all good options for visibility.
- Many communities publish a local magazine and/or website that lists kid's events. Your PR person should make sure your VBS is listed in all of those.



- Connecting with the community at summer events can be very effective. Fourth of July picnics, parades, and festivals are all great opportunities for outreach. Depending on your budget you can sponsor a float or a booth, or simply distribute your promotional post cards. These options can be identified, researched and planned by your PR person with adult leader oversight.



### Photographer/Videographer

Teens love to take pictures (have you looked at Instagram lately?). Harness their inner photographer and assign them to:

- Take pictures during the event (you'll be happy you did this next year). Make sure your permission slips include a photo release.
- Make a short teaser video from pictures of past events. There are lots of photo and video apps that teens are already adept at using. Set their creativity free on a 60-second teaser promotional video that can be posted on your website, social media and used in meetings and services to promote your event.

### Webmaster

Many teens have a talent or interest in web or graphic design. If not, recruit your best tech whiz on staff to:

- Create a dedicated landing page on your website (ChurchforChrist.org/VBS for example). Include pictures from previous years as well as your promotional video. Use the page for all-information- VBS including dates, times, locations, agenda, and permission slips. The URL of the landing page should be on everything—your promotional cards, banners, yard signs as well as in your bulletin and on your church home page. All digital promotions—emails, social media posts, etc.—should link to this page.

### Blogger/Social Media Specialist

All that's required for this role is someone who is reliable, a decent writer and committed to attending the entire VBS. They'll be responsible for:

- Writing a short blog each day during the event. This can be posted on the VBS page of your website and will let the community and parents know what your kids are up to each day. It will serve as a great promotional tool for the following year.
- Posting regularly on social media before, during and after the event. Posts before the event will be important for spreading the word and should link directly to your website for information and registration.
- Evaluating what works and what doesn't. Social media is constantly changing, so it is important to have someone who is eager and knowledgeable in this role.

## Graphic Designer

This is your artist. They will be an essential asset by:

- Helping you with the Vacation Bible School theme. There are lots of ideas and inspiration to be found on a number of websites including [familychristian.com](http://familychristian.com) and [lifeway.com](http://lifeway.com).
- Designing your promotional materials such as post card invitations, posters, yard signs, and t-shirts.
- Editing and enhancing your photos and images. If your church has a logo, put it on the images you share on social media. Your church deserves some extra “brand recognition”.

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All of these roles may seem like a lot to ask of your youth, but it is great experience for your tech savvy students. It is also a great way to keep them active and involved in church life. Empowering your youth will lead to other opportunities to serve your church and community.

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## The Adult Leader's Role in Communication and Promotion Success

As an adult leader, here are some actions you can take to ensure success:

- Send regular calls, emails and text messages (where permitted) to your youth, their parents and the church community well in advance of your VBS.
- Make sure that all of your messages link to the VBS website (hint: make the website page a top priority in your planning. It will be your go-to-place to direct people for information and sign-ups).

## The use of a group messaging product like OnSolve Call Now can be invaluable for events such as VBS. Here's why:

- Once you have your contact list compiled, you can easily send email, text and phone reminders to everyone on the list all at once or to any particular subgroup that you choose to create (parents, for example). They can receive the message in the manner they prefer—email for parents, text messages for youth and phone calls for those who aren't techy. Your messages can link or direct them to your website for the full details.
- It can create a subgroup of parents or other adults and send messages asking for volunteers to help. The recipients can even respond to your request on their phone keypad and you receive a full report of the results.
- The polling, or survey feature, can be used to ask participants simple questions that they can reply to easily—“will you be participating in the water slide event tomorrow?” or “do you prefer chicken or pizza for lunch?” Again, you get a full report without having to create a tally or take notes regarding their responses.



Getting kids to Vacation Bible School is big step. It's a great way to help kids during the vulnerable summer months and introduce new families to your church. Communication and promotion are key steps to ensuring your church reaches as many kids and their families as possible. There's a lot that can be done to promote it, so remember to call on your teens and a powerful group message product like OnSolve One Call Now.



## About OnSolve

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### About OnSolve

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