

BIG



DIRECTOR'S GUIDE



WELCOME TO



INSPIRE

I had a neighbor once named Ron, who lived in the apartment underneath my husband and I. For the first three months that we lived there I would rush past him with not much more than a nod. Ron was retired and lived alone and, as far as I could tell, his activities included sitting outside in a lawn chair and smoking. One day, I was running late for work, and as I stepped outside I could hear the elementary school across the street leading the children in The Pledge of Allegiance. As I came down the stairs I noticed that it wasn't just the loudspeakers from the school that I was hearing, it was Ron. There he was, standing with his hand over his heart. I was so taken by the moment, that I didn't know what else to do. So, I simply stopped, and joined in with him.

From that day on, Ron and I were friends. As I began to talk to Ron, I learned about his love for the Lakers, his love for our country, and his love for his father. I also found out that Ron wasn't just sitting in his chair all day, he was acting as our building's security system. He was protecting us, and it was a job he took very seriously. It breaks my heart as I remember how content I was to judge Ron from afar, and keep to myself. I had gone to the far ends of the world declaring God's love, but for so long, with my head down and my walls up, the man that lived 10 feet below me didn't even register on my radar.

Isolation is an easy and tempting trap to fall into, but it comes at a very high cost. Isolation is not the story we are called in to...we are called to the beautiful vision of community! And in that pursuit, imagine what it would look like to really connect with our neighbors in truly meaningful ways. Think about our church families and children caring for people in their community, in ways that express true love and value. Imagine hundreds of churches (that includes you!)...urban, rural, big, small...all pushing past their own walls, their own boxes, into living rooms, backyards, parks, schools, community centers, on the mission field, or simply opening their church facility. Imagine hundreds of churches taking The Big God Story to children and families who have never heard about God's promise or the love of Jesus Christ. Imagine being the church in our communities not just for a week, but beyond. This wouldn't be just another thing to check off the list of summer activities. This could be a movement!

Mallory Rae

- Mallory Rae, GO BIG! Writer



EQUIP


THE TALE OF THREE CHURCHES



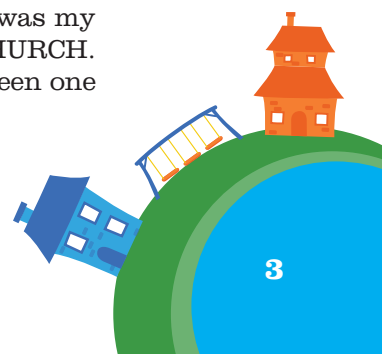
Most of us have long traditions with VBS, and **ROCKHARBOR** Church in Costa Mesa, California, was no exception. For years at **ROCKHARBOR**, hundreds of kids would show up to VBS for a week full of excitement, amazing productions and a chance to experience Jesus. And while these were some amazing experiences and God moved through them, it became apparent that the church was, essentially, spending a lot of money to reach mostly the same kids that were coming to the weekend services with the same message. A few years back, **ROCKHARBOR** began to sense that God was calling them to something more... something bigger!

As they prayed about it, God led them to change their paradigm for VBS and truly make it an opportunity for outreach. They dreamed about what it would look like to take VBS into the communities of Orange County instead of making Orange County come to them. They completely reimagined what VBS would look like if it were designed to take place in backyards, parks, schools and even senior centers! They trained and equipped their families and volunteers to lead these VBS sites in their own neighborhoods and communities.

In 2009, **ROCKHARBOR** launched **GO BIG!** with sites all over the county. That first year they went from having 650 mostly churched kids come to **ROCKHARBOR**, to having almost 900 kids, at 26 sites, who were mostly unchurched and who were hearing about God's story for their lives for the first time in their own communities. In the following years, this expanded to over 1,000 kids at more than 30 sites with hundreds of kids making commitments to Christ for the first time!

 1,500 miles away in Overland Park, Kansas God was leading Christ Church Anglican to take some of the very same risks. The vision was cast for taking VBS into neighborhoods and communities throughout their city, and in 2011 Christ Church dedicated the whole month of June to **GO BIG!** In those four weeks the church rallied to host 17 VBS sites throughout their city! They took **GO BIG!** into backyards, living rooms, and even an orphanage and a homeless shelter.

One of those 17 sites was hosted by a MOPS group who felt called to be intentional in inviting moms to meet and hang out with their kids beyond the church walls. The site ended up hosting 28 kids and three new moms joined the MOPS group because of their introduction through **GO BIG!**. One new mom said, "I had never heard of VBS before. This was my first experience. But this truly feels like the church being the CHURCH. I have met many of my neighbors and I feel so blessed. This has been one relationship building moment after the next."



At another site one leader reported, “My highlight from this week was when our guest, a 10-year-old, shared with me that he believes in God now. He had many questions about God including ‘Does He exist?’ But the last day of **GO BIG!** he came running into our yard and said, ‘I believe in God now!’ Shocked at how different this response was from the previous days, I asked why? He responded, ‘Because I prayed and God brought me to church.’ Curious, I asked, ‘What church?’ His response, ‘This church. The one here in your backyard.’ I was blown away. I would say **GO BIG!** hit the mark in the life of this little boy.”

As June came to a close the stories of life change and new relationships kept pouring in, and families are already making plans for their sites in the next year!



During some of those same weeks of June, Briarlake Baptist Church in Decatur, Georgia took **GO BIG!** and The Big God Story to the children and families of Cape Town, South Africa. Briarlake's team had the chance to get to know and love over 500 kids in the community of Delft in Cape Town.

They also had the chance to train and equip families and leaders from six churches in South Africa with the experience to be able share The Big God Story on their own. Those churches took **GO BIG!** and The Big God Story back to their own communities and continued doing weeks of VBS on their own once Briarlake's team had left! Because of those six churches nearly 2000 children and adults in South Africa heard the good news about Jesus through **GO BIG!** during the summer of 2011! The simplicity of the curriculum, the storytelling techniques, the games and the creative projects were easy for Briarlake to implement overseas, and better yet they were easy to pass on!

Through **GO BIG!**, we are so excited to be able to share with you some resources to jump into the middle of God's movement in your own communities. This will be a weeklong adventure with The Big God Story and a chance for you to engage and reach out in some incredible ways. And this will be just the beginning, because **GO BIG!** is not an end unto itself. It's a jump, it's a catalyst, it's a push, it's a start, and in many ways it's a risk! But our desire is that the resources provided here would serve as inspiration as your church reaches out beyond its own walls into the hearts of your neighborhoods and communities. We can't wait to hear where God takes you as you **GO BIG!**



SUPPORT

Sometimes, it's so easy for us to get caught up in our church world. How could we not? We have our kids and families that we interact with every week and ministering to them is a full-time job! However, there are probably more families who don't know God within just a mile of our churches than we even realize.

Before you dive into **GO BIG!**, take some time (either alone or with your team) and pick a nearby neighborhood. (Maybe even your own!) Before you go, pray that God will open your eyes to the opportunities He has for you in that community. Then, head over there and just spend some time observing. Walk down the street. Walk past the local school during playtime. Pass through a park where children are playing. What is God showing you? Are there opportunities for outreach here? Are there places where community could be created? Where is God already at work? How could you come alongside what He's already doing?

It's our prayer that **GO BIG!** will be a tool that you can use to help reach the families in the neighborhoods of your town.

- The David C. Cook **GO BIG!** Development Team



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Planning Timeline

Phase 1: Casting Vision, Calling Leaders, Securing Locations

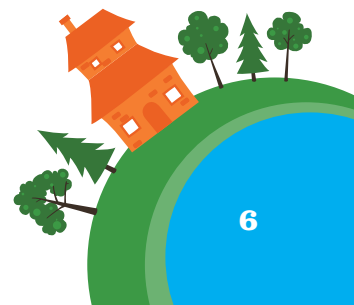
- Communicating the **GO BIG!** Vision
- Recruiting Site Leaders
- Site Leader Expectations
- Site Requirements

Phase 2: Building Teams and Building Excitement

- Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities
- Recruiting and Placing General Volunteers
- Promotion
- Child Registration
- Budgeting

Phase 3: Equipping Leaders

- Role of Site Shepherds
- Supplying a Site
- Volunteer Training
- The Missions Project
- The Family Remember and Celebrate Event



RUNNING A SITE 48

Daily Schedule

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- Prayer and Preparation Time
- Registration
- Anticipate
- Connect//Games
- Connect//Small Groups
- Announcements
- Celebrate//Large Group
- Respond//Small Groups
- Create
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THIS GO BIG! KIT INCLUDES

DIRECTOR'S GUIDE

In the Director's Guide you will find everything you need to know about creating your own **GO BIG!** experience. You will find resources for understanding the Site Model, as well as tools for planning, implementation, and follow up. You will also find creative suggestions for how to use **GO BIG!** in other contexts.

LEADER'S GUIDE

The Leader's Guide is the go to resource for all volunteers. This Guide will provide volunteer leaders with everything they need to know about their roles and responsibilities, volunteer policies, VBS timelines, supply lists, curriculum for the daily activities, ideas for the Family Remember and Celebrate Event, and more!

THE BIG GOD STORY FLIP BOOK

This easy to print booklet can be given to children for use during their small group times. This booklet will serve as a fun and interactive tool to help children remember their **GO BIG!** experiences.

REPRODUCIBLE RESOURCES PACK

To aid you in creating the best **GO BIG!** experience possible this pack will include reproducible documents such as the...

- Child Registration Form
- Site Leader Commitment and Application
- General Volunteer Application
- Supply Lists
- Incident Report
- Daily Sign-In Sheets
- FAQ's
- Daily Take Home Papers
- Reimbursement Form
- Sample Letters to Parents
- Evaluations
- Follow-up Suggestions for Leaders
- Next Steps for Parents



PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS PACK

You will find here the materials to create the basics of your promotional campaign. This includes templates for...

- Promotional Cards
- Posters
- Site Welcome Banners
- T-Shirts
- A Digital Slide
- The **GO BIG!** Logo
- **GO BIG!** Thank-You Notes

DAILY STORYTELLING VIDEOS

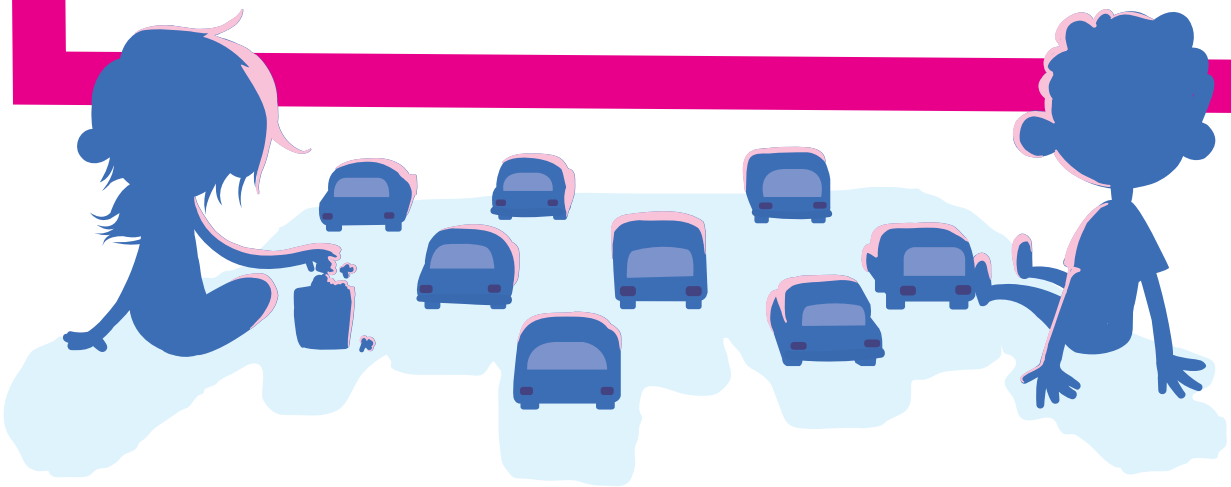
These videos offer the option of video storytelling in any of the **GO BIG!** contexts (off-site, on-site, or on mission).

THEME SONG

This fun **GO BIG!** theme song is a great way to kick off the day at **GO BIG!**.

VISION VIDEOS

We've created a few different videos that you can use to help cast the vision to your parents, leaders, and volunteers for **GO BIG!**



THE VISION

Who doesn't love VBS? The kids coming out of the woodwork with anticipation and excitement? Then, we have the opportunity to share the most exciting truth with them-God loves us and has sent Jesus to be our savior!

But many of us wanted a VBS that was also in alignment to our growing hunger to provide something that truly upheld the family as primary, which centered on formation and information, that made relationship paramount, and that honored The Big God Story narrative. We knew that this was going to be a paradigm shift in the way we approached VBS.

This has led us to create a structure in **GO BIG!** which is simple enough that it can be taken out of the church, into a backyard, a park, a living room, or even a soccer field in South Africa. Although this VBS can be adapted to use on a church site, taking it off-site has allowed our families and parents to get involved, with more ownership, than we ever imagined possible.

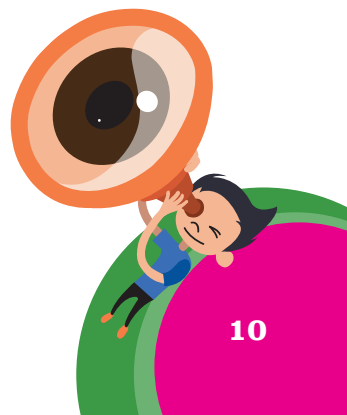
In this Director's Guide you will find resources on how to run a decentralized, multi-site, neighborhood based **GO BIG!** experience (referred to as simply the "Site Model" hereafter). Understanding the opportunity in this model, the "why" behind it, and the "how" in doing it are all key elements to catching the vision.

OUR OPPORTUNITY

- To equip God's people to be ministers of His grace in their own communities. [Ephesians 4:11-13]
- To create a safe and loving environment for kids in our communities so that they can come to an understanding of who Jesus is.
- To live out the Gospel in word and deed amongst our neighbors.

WHY WE GO

- To BE the church together in our neighborhoods. When we embody love for God in our love for our neighbors, people begin to see a new picture of who God is.
- To meet both the physical and spiritual needs of people in our communities.
- Because the Lord commissions us to go [Matthew 28:18 – 20]. We desire to be disciples, hearing the Word and following through in action.
- We have been given much and to whom much has been given, much is required. [Luke 12:48b]



HOW WE GO

- **Intentionally:** We will be intentional in prayer and in building relationships.
- **Humbly:** We go humbly as servants, modeling after Jesus who came to serve not to be served. In humility we also recognize that the Holy Spirit goes before, with, and behind us.
- **Prepared:** We will work diligently and in unity to create environments where children and families will feel known, cared for, and loved.

Many parts of **GO BIG!** (the content of the daily lessons, and the flow of group time, as well as our foundational understandings about how we do ministry) will look very familiar to you. Yet, there will also be some things described in these pages that might be new, and might strike you as risks. We invite you to lean into some of those risks, knowing that we have worked hard to provide the best resources to help you along the way. As always, this work is tempered with the wisdom and learnings of others who have stepped out to take some of these same risks and who in return have encountered God in powerful ways.

However, we recognize that you know your church, your community and your families best, and you know what is going to be the best use of this curriculum in your specific context. We want to give you the freedom to take these tools and create the **GO BIG!** experience that is the best fit for your community. In that spirit, we will also offer some suggestions for how to best implement the experience for a large group in a centralized location using a rotational model, and also instruction for how to use the **GO BIG!** experience on a mission trip.





VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

SCOPE & SEQUENCE

| DAY | PONDER POINT | BIBLE LESSON | MEMORY VERSE | CREATE |
|------------|---|--|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | GOD IS CREATOR | GENESIS 1—3 CREATION | PSALM 139:14a | BACKPACKS |
| 2 | GOD SAVES | GENESIS 37, 43—45 JOSEPH | PSALM 117:2 | ROCKS TO REMEMBER |
| 3 | GOD IS ALWAYS WITH US | ESTHER 1—10 QUEEN ESTHER | DEUTERONOMY 31:5 | BRACELETS |
| 4 | GOD LOVES YOU AND ME | LUKE 2:1–21; 22:39—24:12 JESUS | JOHN 3:16 | LOVE MAGNETS |
| 5 | GOD WANTS US TO BE PART OF HIS STORY | GENESIS– REVELATION THE BIG GOD STORY | MATTHEW 28:19 | FRAMES |

THE SITE MODEL

Some of you have been hosting block parties, backyard clubs, and neighborhood-based summer events for years. For others, adopting this model is going to feel like a big risk. Our goal is to give you the tools necessary for 1) understanding what is meant by Site Model and 2) deciding if this model is right for your church.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE MODEL

1. In the Site Model, the focus is on building community in the places where people live and play. This gives families and individuals in your church the tools to reach out to their neighbors and create safe spaces to build relationships and to share The Big God Story.
2. VBS takes place in multiple locations throughout your community rather than only on your church campus.
3. Site Leaders are key to your volunteer structure. These are the people who will open their homes, gather their neighbors, research and find potential venues, ask friends to be a part of their team, and more!
4. A typical site would utilize a home, park, school or a neighborhood community building as the gathering space.
5. An average site would host anywhere between 7 and 40 children ages 4 to 12, but is flexible to fit the needs of that area.
6. The church supplies each site with promotional materials, the **GO BIG!** VBS curriculum, creative projects, game supplies, first-aid supplies, and staff support.
7. Normal volunteer procedures apply with regard to application and screening.
8. While an established week and time is set aside for VBS within your church community, sites can run their gatherings at times that work best for those in their communities.
9. Children are not required to pre-register or to pay a fee for attendance. We know that sounds scary, but we promise to show you why (and how) it works!



Consider ahead of time what some of the rewards/risks will be involved with taking on a Site Model for your VBS:

| REWARDS IN THE SITE MODEL | RISKS IN THE SITE MODEL |
|--|--|
| Realizing your church's outreach potential. | Asking for buy-in from church and ministry leaders. |
| Empowering your church families and key leaders to minister to their own communities. | Getting people to be bold and step up as leaders in this new way. |
| Potentially being more budget-friendly by spending less on traditional production expenses. | Not charging children a registration fee. |
| Providing a good solution for how to do VBS if your church has multiple campuses. | Decentralizing things can sometimes feel like disorganization. |
| Putting more into the prep work, thus leaving the week of VBS for church staff to enjoy and engage the experience. | Asking your staff to take on new tasks and different roles when you have a system they already know. |

