

Christingle Programme Ideas

The Children's Society has developed programme ideas in partnership with BBUK Headquarters to fit the Anchors and Juniors programme zones. The resources will allow your Company to explore and celebrate Christingle in your regular meetings and how you could involve the wider community. A selection of programme ideas can be found in this 4-page pullout, but you will find even more online at www.christingle.org/boysbrigade including more about how you can get your free resources.



The Children's Society



Exploring Christingle



CREATIVITY

Aim: To bring to life the Christian message in a creative and interactive way, through the symbolism of Christingle.

Time: 1 hour (adaptable)

Group size: No maximum number

Equipment:

- Oranges
- Red tape
- Wax candles
- Silver foil
- Cocktail sticks
- Dried fruits /soft sweets
- Knife/apple corer
- CD player
- Festive music
- Matches/lighter

Instructions:

Part 1: The Symbolism of Christingle

Ask your group to form a large circle around the room. Turn off some of the lights if this is not a hazard, as this will immediately get attention and the Christingle will have more impact.

Stand in the circle with a lit Christingle, which can be made in advance. Ask the children if any of them can tell you what they think it is. They may know – they may not!

Tell your group that a Christingle is a symbol. Make sure that they understand that a symbol is something that represents something else, and give some examples, e.g. a rose is a symbol of love, an anchor is the symbol of The Boys' Brigade etc. Get the group to guess what each element of the Christingle symbolises. This can either be done in the circle with the lights dimmed, or you could use the following interactive game:

For each element of the Christingle, give three suggestions for what it could represent. For example; the orange – is it a spaceship, the world or a house? Designate three spaces at your venue for each of your three suggestions and ask your children to move to the suggestion area they think is right. This physical movement will get them to think about each element and engage more with Christingle.

By the end of the activity the children should know that the symbolism of the Christingle:

- o a lighted candle – symbolising Jesus, the Light of the World
- o an orange – representing the world
- o the red tape – indicating the blood/ love of Christ
- o four cocktail sticks bearing dried fruit or sweets – to signify the four seasons and the fruits of the earth.

Part 2: Making your Christingle

Next move on to the fun section – creating the Christingles. This can be a fairly messy activity, so make sure surfaces/children are well covered!

As this is a festive activity enjoyed at Christmas time, Christmas music played would be a nice accompaniment to this activity. The Children's Society's Christingle CD 'Hope of Heaven' is free to order (see Activity Specific Resources), and features a few festive songs sung by children. Maybe your group could learn the songs in advance.

Each child will need their own orange, some red tape, a candle and a square of tin foil (both best cut to size before the session), four cocktail sticks and access to a bowl of dried fruit/sweets.

Talk the children through these simple steps to making a Christingle:

- o Take your orange and fasten a piece of red tape around the middle
- o Make a small cross in the top of the orange using a knife or apple corer and lay a square of silver foil (7.5cm/3" square) over it
- o Place your wax candle on top of the foil and wedge it firmly into the orange
- o Load four cocktail sticks with the dried fruit/soft sweets, so the points are covered.
- o Insert the sticks into the orange above the red tape.

Part 3: Christingle Celebration

Stand back in a circle, with each child holding their Christingle. If it is not dangerous to do so, it is best if lights can be dimmed. Explain that each child will have their Christingle lit and that you trust each of them to be very careful.

From the inside of the circle, move round and light each candle. With close supervision you could ask them to help light the candle of the person next to them, thus passing on the light.

Singing a song whilst the Christingles are being lit is a great idea. As the children won't be able to hold song sheets, it is best to choose a song everybody knows or maybe project the words on a wall, if possible. You could ask your group to choose the song in advance.

After the song, a short prayer can be said for all the children in the UK. Suggestions can be found in The Children's Society's Create-a-Christingle magazine, Page 28.

Give each child a Christingle sticker for taking part (see Activity Specific Resources).

Safety Issues/Risk Assessments:

- o Wash hands before handling fruits/sweets
- o Safety using sharp objects – knife, cocktail sticks
- o Lit candles – for information on glow candles, an alternative to wax candles, see Page 8 of the Create -a-Christingle magazine or visit www.christingle.org.



Tips/Advice:

Invite parents and guests to either part of or the whole session to make a full, festive celebration. See Activity 3, Part 1 for suggestions on who to invite. The more the merrier! Hand out The Children's Society's collection envelopes to all those attending.

Alternatively you could take this activity outside of your meeting and hold a Christingle celebration in your local church or in the community. It could be the theme of your next Parade Service. For a more formal service, you can add a couple of readings and songs – suggestions can be found in the Create-a-Christingle magazine (Pages 30 – 34). The children can take the lead in each section and enjoy being part of a large celebration. Invite other groups, friends or schools to your service and use it as a recruiting event. Remember to use some of the great new resources available through The Boys' Brigade. Go to www.boys-brigade.org.uk/recruitment and find out more.

Hand out collection candles to your group in a previous meeting for them to take home (see Activity Specific Resources). These can be taken home for them to fill with small change for The Children's Society and collected in at the end of your Christingle celebration.

Activity Specific Resources:

The following can be ordered free of charge from The Children's Society; visit

www.christingle.org/boysbrigade

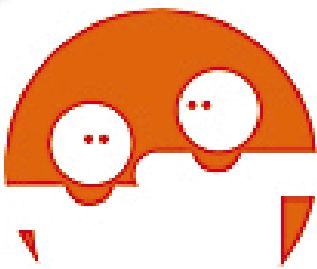
or call **0845 600 8585**.

- o Create-a-Christingle magazine – for a wealth of additional activities and advice
- o Christingle stickers – to give to all children involved
- o Red tape – to make your Christingles
- o Wax candles – to make your Christingles
- o A4 safety poster – with advice on safe practice
- o Christingle Song CD – to play during your session
- o Collection candles – making it fun for young people to collect for The Children's Society
- o Collection envelopes – to hand out to adults attending
- o Giro – to pay in any money raised (one will automatically be sent with any orders for materials)

* When ordering materials, please select 'Adverts – Boys' Brigade Gazette' when asked 'Where did you hear about Christingle'.



Shining the Light



COMMUNITY

Aim: To develop your groups' knowledge of The Children's Society's work with disadvantaged children in their community and remind the children that God wants us to help those less fortunate than ourselves

Time: 1 hour (adaptable)

Group size: No maximum number

Equipment:

- Magazines
- Large sheets of paper
- Cut out candle outlines (see Activity Specific Resources)

- Coloured pencils/pens,
- Scissors
- Glue
- Blue tac
- Laptop (if showing video clip)

Instructions:

Part 1: Making a Community Circle

Children can either work in pairs, in a small group or the Company could work together as a whole.

Draw a circle on a large piece of paper, making sure there are a few inches of blank paper around the outside of the circle. Tell your group that the circle represents their community.

Ask the children what the word 'community' means to them. Maybe it is the road they live on, the town where they live or maybe they think the UK is their community? There is not a right or wrong answer.

Next ask them to think about the other children in their community. Can they list where other children might be in their community? At school, in the park, at home, in hospitals, other groups or clubs for example. Create a list of all the places they suggest.

Ask the children to illustrate these children by drawing them in the middle of the circle or using cuttings from magazines. If working with younger children, it may be safer to either have them drawing or tearing out pictures.

Stick all the pictures in the middle of the circle next to the drawings and display the picture on the wall.

Part 2: The Children's Society

For this part of the activity, please be sensitive to any difficult situations within the group.

Tell your group that The Children's Society works in their community and all over the country, helping children and teenagers with their problems and making sure that they are safe and happy. These might include:

- o Children who grow up in unhappy homes, with parents who don't care about them.
- o Children who have moved to England from another country.
- o Children who care for their parents, brothers or sisters.
- o Children who are being bullied at school.

If possible, show one of the suggested video clips (see Activity Specific Resources).

Ask your group if they know any children in these situations in their community that they could help or befriend?

Explain to the group that The Children's Society is a charity. Ask if anyone knows what a charity is? Tell your group that lots of kind people choose to raise money for charities to help others. From putting on parties (see Community Christingle Party) to being sponsored to jump out of planes!

Can your group think of any good ways to raise money? Maybe they have done things for other charities or at school? Write down any good suggestions for later use.

Part 3: Shining the Light

Hand out an outline of a candle to each child and ask them to colour it in bright colours (see Activity Specific Resources). Whilst handing them out, tell the children that Christingle is a celebration that happens in every community in the country to raise money for The Children's Society. See if they remember/know the symbolism of Christingle (see Exploring Christingle).

Once the candles are all coloured in they can be stuck around the outside of the circle representing the community, with the children inside. Tell the children that the candles will now shine light on all the children in their community and help to make them happy – just like Christingle.

At this point, you could say a prayer with your group for disadvantaged children in their community. You may also like to sing a song (see Create-a-Christingle magazine – Pages 28 and 34 for suggestions). Perhaps your group could learn and sing the Christingle song 'Hope of Heaven' (see Activity Specific Resources).

Give each child a collection candle to take home and ask them to fill it with pennies, if possible. They can also be given a Christingle sticker to wear home for taking part in the activity.

Safety Issues/Risk Assessments:

Safety around using scissors

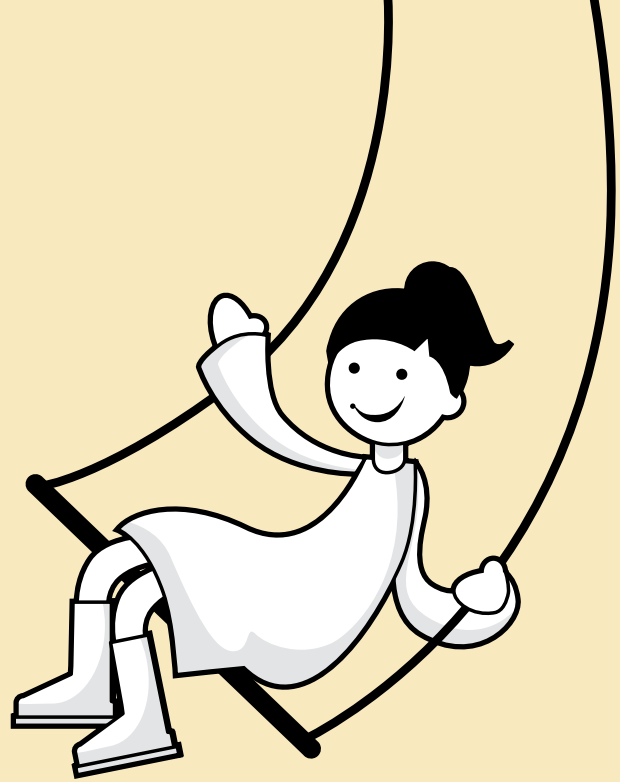
Tips/Advice:

The finished picture could be displayed on the wall at any Christingle celebration you may be involved with.

Activity Specific Resources:

A wealth of information on The Children's Society is available to support this session:

- o The Children's Society videos – www.youtube.com/childrenssociety (Recommended for a younger age group – Sophie's Story (Mentoring) and Emma's Story (Bullying)).
- o Kids Zone – www.childrenssociety.org.uk/kids_zone
- o The Children's Society website – look up to see the nearest project to your Company
- o My Life 4 Schools website (schools resource) – www.mylife4schools.co.uk

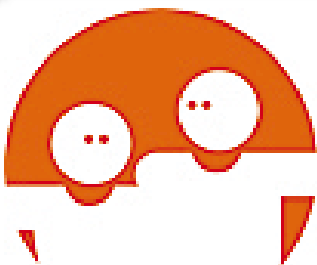


The following can be ordered free of charge from The Children's Society; visit www.christingle.org/boysbrigade or call **0845 600 8585**:

- o Create-a-Christingle magazine – including candle outlines for colouring (Page 22) and project cards detailing information on The Children's Society's work in communities around the UK (Pages 10-12)
- o Christingle stickers – to give to all children taking part in the session
- o Giro – to pay in any money raised (one will automatically be sent with any orders for materials)
- o Collection candles – making it fun for children to collect
- o Sponsorship forms – should any of the children wish to do a sponsored event for The Children's Society

* When ordering materials, please select 'Adverts – Boys' Brigade Gazette' when asked 'Where did you hear about Christingle'.

Community Christingle Party



COMMUNITY

Aim: To join together with your wider community at Christmas time through Christingle and help raise money for The Children's Society's work with disadvantaged children

Time: 1 hour (variable)

Group size: No maximum number

Equipment:

- Pens/pencils
- Paper
- CD player
- See activities for extra equipment

Instructions:

Part 1: Planning Your Party

A Christingle party offers a real opportunity to reach out to the wider community at Christmas time. Ask the children who they would like to invite and draw up a list. Maybe family, friends, other Boys' Brigade Companies or uniformed youth groups in the area?

Christingle invitations are included within The Children's Society's Create-a-Christingle magazine (see Activity Specific Resources). If photocopied in advance, the children can fill in the invitations and help hand them out to those you agree to invite.

Perhaps the children could divide into groups, each taking a different area of the planning.

What music would they like to play? What food and drink should be served? What role will each group take at the party? Can they talk to their guests about Christingle and The Children's Society?

Part 2: Fundraising for Children

This is a great opportunity to fundraise for The Children's Society – working with the children and your community to raise money for disadvantaged children at Christmas time.

Ask your group if they can think of ways to raise money for The Children's Society at their Christingle party. You might get some great ideas! Here are a few to get you started:

Selling items – Invited guests can either make a donation to The Children's Society on entry or pay for any food or drink at the party. You could involve the children in deciding what to sell and how much you would charge for each item.

Collecting – Your group could hand out The Children's Society's collection envelopes to all those attending the party and collect any filled envelopes at the end. If you have worked with your group on Activity 2 the children could tell guests in their words about the work of The Children's Society.

Each member of your group could take a collection candle home, with the tasks of filling it with coins. Ideas for collecting change are included in the 'Christingle Countdown' section of The Children's Society's Create-a-Christingle magazine (Page 23).

Passing the light – If the children's parents are at the party, they could promise to carry out some 'good deeds' at home in exchange for their parents donating to The Children's Society. Tidy bedrooms, washing up etc!

Part 3: Food

Making Christingle foods to either eat or sell is a great way to help the children get creative.

The following suggestions are very quick and easy for the children to make. If you choose not to make food at the party, you could ask your group to bring food items along that they prepared at home in advance.

Christingle Biscuits

For this you will need: plain digestive biscuits, orange icing, red laces (sweeties) and hundreds & thousands. Each child can design their own biscuit Christingle with the biscuit as the orange. If you talk through what each element symbolises with the children they will in turn be able to explain this to your party guests. Christingle biscuits can either be sold to eat, given as a gift or taken home to remind people of Christingle.

Loaded Sticks: Representing God's Good Gifts

For this you will need: bowls of cheese cubes and pineapple chunks for savoury, banana slices and marshmallows for sweet, cocktail sticks. Give each child a cocktail stick and access to each of the bowls. Ask them to decide if they would like to make a sweet or savoury loaded stick. Next they can start putting the food items onto their stick – suggest alternating item or leave to them to decide!

Part 4: Games

If you would like to play games with your group at the party, either choose from the following or visit www.christingle.org/boysbrigade for more suggestions. All games are focused around the idea of 'God's Good Gifts', as represented by the four loaded cocktail sticks on a Christingle.

Mixed Veggies

Create a circle of chairs with a clear space in the middle of the circle and enough room for children to move. Ask the children to sit in the clear space in the middle of the circle of chairs. Going round the circle, give each child the name of one of four vegetables.

Stand in the centre of the circle and call out a vegetable. Everyone who is that vegetable must get up and move to an empty chair.

Those who are not that vegetable remain seated. Whoever ends up without a chair/is the last person to sit then has a go at calling out the vegetable names. More than one vegetable can be called out at the same time and everyone should move at once when you call out 'mixed veggies'

Sleeping Seeds

Ask the children to spread out, lie down on the floor and pretend to be seeds sleeping in the ground during winter. Ask one child to move around the room and try to make any of the 'seeds' move, laugh or make any kind of sound without touching them. Any 'seed' which moves is 'out' and joins in trying to wake other 'seeds' up. The game continues until everyone is awake or until the last sleeping seed is declared the winner.

Give out Christingle stickers as prizes or to all children attending.

Safety Issues/Risk Assessment:

- o Washing hands before handling food items
- o Safety using sharp object – cocktail sticks

Tips/Advice:

A Christingle party would be a great culmination of all the activities, but it could also be a standalone activity. If you choose to hold a party in isolation, it may be a good idea to take a few ideas from all the activities to give the children some background on Christingle and The Children's Society, e.g. Making a Christingle, The Children's Society etc.

It is advised to involve the children as much as possible in the planning and execution of your event.

Invite other groups, friends or schools to your party and use it as a recruiting event. Remember to use some of the great new resources available through The Boys' Brigade. Go to www.boys-brigade.org.uk/recruitment and find out more.

Activity Specific Resources:

The following can be ordered free of charge from The Children's Society; visit www.christingle.org/boysbrigade or call **0845 600 8585**:

- o Create-a-Christingle magazine – containing Christingle invitations to photocopy (Page 25) and a wealth of additional food and games suggestions
- o Christingle stickers – to give to all children involved
- o Christingle CD – to play at your party
- o Collection candles – making it fun for young people to collect
- o Collection envelopes – to hand out to adults attending
- o Giro – to pay in any money raised (one will automatically be sent with any orders for materials)

* When ordering materials, please select 'Adverts – Boys' Brigade Gazette' when asked 'Where did you hear about Christingle'.

