

# Junior Soldiers

## Unit 1 : Information Page



## Things you need to know

### Format

You will find that the 10 new lessons for Unit 1 have a slightly different look and feel about them than previous lessons; the new format is explained below. You will also notice that these lessons are more interactive and based on the children exploring the topic. Children are not linear thinkers and need to engage with a variety of learning experiences if they are truly going to learn, understand and apply these lessons to their everyday living.

We would also like to encourage you to be creative with how you use the Junior Soldier material. Some corps are stretched for leaders and also limited in times in the week to hold the program, this means that we need to be creative to get the best from what we have. We also want to be showing families that we value their time and commitment, so we need to consider how we can best do that with the programs we offer and the expectations we have.

We have written the material in such a way that you could use it in your Kids Church or purely as Junior Soldier classes. If you use the material in your Kids Church, you might like to have a special day once a month or once a term where you do some 'Salvo distinctive' stuff or work on projects together. I am sure that you could add some music to your lessons especially if you are doing them in a Kids Church format. Let us know if you would like some suggestions.

### FORMAT

→ LESSON TITLE

→ PURPOSE

(Why are we doing this lesson? What is the key phrase or understanding that you want a Junior Soldier to go away with from this lesson?)

→ CONSIDER & PREPARE

(This section includes any background information or reading for leaders, to help them prepare for the lesson, as well as a list of the things you need to obtain, organise and plan in preparation for the lesson.)

→ CONNECTING IN

(This is the fun time when you might play a game or have an activity that makes the link/connection into the topic. This will also include a link into 'The main thing', the focus for the lesson.)

→ THE MAIN THING

(This is the main teaching time when you will engage with the children in a creative, hands-on way of exploring the topic and the key message to understand. There might

be a variety of ways that this is communicated or a number of elements to explore on the topic. This might include one activity or several that reinforce the same key point.)

→ TYING IN

(This section is about making the connection from the key understanding back into the world of the child; it's the 'So what?' section. 'What does this mean for me and how will I be different because I know and understand this?')

→ HOME & BEYOND

(This section helps the children to take what they have learnt and continue the conversation at home. How can we help and equip children and their parents to continue these faith conversations at home and help to make such conversations a normal part of everyday life? There might be a question to be discussed, a challenge, an activity, some scripture or sharing something together. This might not be a big task but just something to help make a link into the home and make 'faith talk' become a part of a family's natural language and conversations.)



## New Units

Unit One, that is available on the website, is the first of the new units. At this stage there will be 10 new lessons available at the start of each term. Each unit will include eight general lessons, one Salvation Army Distinctive Lesson and one Salvation Army Doctrine Lesson. We are working towards having a full Salvation Army Distinctive Unit and a full Doctrine Unit as well as a Unit that includes a variety of Special Occasion lessons. We will then just upload eight lessons and it will be up to you to choose the lesson you want from the Salvo, doctrine or special occasion units.

## Home & Beyond

As mentioned above, the final section of each lesson is called 'Home & Beyond'. This section helps the children to take what they have learnt home to continue the conversation. How can we help and equip children and their parents to continue these faith conversations at home and help to make such conversations a normal part of everyday life?

For this section you might like to make up some cards for the children to take home and stick on their fridge or you might like to get each Junior Soldier a special note book that they can write or stick information in that outlines the information for their challenge or questions. I think the second option of the notebook where you are keeping the notes together will help the children get into a good rhythm with this part of Junior Soldiers.



## Big Buds (formerly 'prayer pals')

This is a new term that you will see used throughout the Junior Soldier material. This is building on the 'prayer pal' element of the program.

Prayer pals are such an important part of the discipleship of the Junior Soldier, however, we want to build on this positive element as well as connect with those that are not currently in the Junior Soldier program. Big Buds is a mentoring framework that is available to all corps and is available for all children connected with the corps—you might have children in your Kids Church that have Big Buds but also Junior Soldiers that have Big Buds as well. Rather than having kids in Junior Soldiers with prayer pals and those that are not having Big Buds, we have merged the two together.

We are working on a new certificate for the Big Bud that they will sign when the Junior Soldier gets enrolled as well as an information sheet for them to fully understand the commitment that they are making when taking on this role.

There are many prayer pals who fill this role in a much broader capacity, i.e. doing more than just praying for a Junior Soldier. While we can encourage those wanting to be a prayer pal to do more, with the 'prayer pal' title there will still be some who only fulfill the prayer element of the role. Prayer is an essential element for all children but encouragement and support on their spiritual journey are also essential to young lives that are on the discipleship journey.

A Big Bud is someone who is willing to be a part of the overall discipleship process of a child. It requires the adult to make a commitment to be a part of the

spiritual development of the Junior Soldier. This includes being willing to pray for the child, connect and engage with them at church and other activities and events, supporting them, remembering significant dates like birthdays and special events and showing encouragement and interest in the things that the child is doing, e.g. at school, at home, at church or outside activities like sport or interest groups.

For more information regarding Big Buds, refer to your corps' Big Bud manual or speak to your divisional children's ministries secretary.

## New Badge & Certificates

When you are enrolling new Junior Soldiers, you will find that there are now new badges and certificates. u #

