

Director's Manual



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Director's Manual

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Sock Hop is conceived, written and compiled by Rob Nelson. Songs by Rob Nelson. All instructions, illustrations, scripts, songs and lyrics are the property of Noslen Creative. Thanks to Karen Summers for valuable, consultant-like behavior.

All Scripture references in Sock Hop are paraphrased for ease of comprehension. No attempt is made to suggest that any scripture quoted is literal translation or used by permission from any published or copyrighted source.

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Sock Hop brings all the fun of the Fifties to your church and provides a rich setting in which important lessons about God can be communicated to children -- both regular attendees and the unchurched alike!



KICK OFF
(Songs, silliness and fun!)



ALL CITY GARAGE
(Craft Projects)



BOWL-O-RAMA
(Games)



MALT SHOP
(Snacks)



SOCK HOP
(Songs, skits, lessons)



SPUNKY'S CLUBHOUSE
(Bible Stories and Object Lessons)

What is Sock Hop?

It's like time travel! It's a mindset! It's two things in one! Think "Back to the Future" meets "American Graffiti" meets "Grease" in picturing the fictional, imaginary, fantasy setting for the SOCK HOP! five day program. And, as the name implies, it is a place that encourages classic, retro stuff of all kinds. The goal of the setting is to immerse the kids in so much fun that the truth of the lessons will be absorbed almost without thinking. That's where you come in. The more you do to create and maintain the... well... to use a fancy word... *ambience* (pronounce that `ahm-bee-ahnse) of an actual trip back to the days of malt shops, poodle skirts, and hot rods, the more fun the kids (and you!) will have. And for this program, FUN = LEARNING ABOUT GOD. So, here we are, revisiting 1959 in Anytown, USA – an illusionary setting complete with all the traditional retro trappings and activities. Imagine your perfect concept of what the 50's were like and that is what SOCK HOP! is -- if you make it so. Don't allow yourself to fall into the ordinary VBS frame of mind. Instead, do your part to make the SOCK HOP! experience lively and fun for everyone.

NOTE: Although SOCK HOP! has a script-like construction, and doesn't require anything else to be a success, you are encouraged to "make it your own" by tweaking the details to suit your situation and allowing your Staff to add their own flair and creativity. You won't be re-inventing the wheel -- you'll be improving upon it!

NOTES

The leader manuals provide plenty of information and ideas to produce a great SOCK HOP, but imagination is the most valuable tool to enhance the experience. You know your area and community better than we do. Change and adapt whenever you think it makes sense. Think of the information in the manuals as reference and a framework for your team to build upon.

A Word on the Philosophy of SOCK HOP

Our research indicates that many, many churches use their VBS programs simply as a summer activity for the children of their church members. We view this as an incredible waste of manpower and resources. So do many other churches. SOCK HOP, was made to answer the need of church staff members who told us they simply don't do VBS at all because, as a rule, the pre-packaged programs have no outreach focus.

Although our feeling is that any VBS program can be made into an outreach tool, we decided, from the beginning, to make SOCK HOP different. We designed every facet to appeal to prechurched and unchurched children. All kids love fun and silliness and we pumped SOCK HOP full of both, but we never lost sight of the goal -- to introduce children to our Heavenly Father in the simplest and clearest terms possible. To this end, we eliminated any use of "Christianese" in our scripts and lessons.

SOCK HOP does *not* use terms and phrases like *profession of faith*, *sanctification*, or even *worship*. Children who don't go to church don't know what these and many other words people at church use actually mean. The fact is (shhh! don't tell anyone...) most regular church attenders don't even know what they mean when *they* use them. We also purposely did not use any Bible translations. Even the clearest translations can be difficult to comprehend and again, our goal is to reach kids who know nothing about the Bible. So, we paraphrase all scripture.

We chose to operate from the position that SOCK HOP should be used to begin to educate children with no previous exposure to spiritual things about the truth of God. We assumed they did not even know that God is real, and developed five lessons to bring them to the realization that, not only is He real, but He is everywhere because He is Spirit and loves us all so very much that He has made a way for us to be forgiven. The message of hope -- that we can never be separated from God's love -- is what we feel the children of today need more than anything else. If the church can bring them this message, they will trust the church to bring them other messages. This is the purpose of SOCK HOP.

Sock Hop Staff

As Director, you will be responsible for the smooth running of the entire SOCK HOP program. Whether you choose to use SOCK HOP as a Vacation Bible School or other, special, focused emphasis, your organizational skills spell the difference between chaos and control. This manual provides you with some of the tools you may need to effectively do your job. However, the methods you choose to recruit volunteers, publicize the event, and train your staff will be up to you.

If you are not part of the paid staff of your church, we recommend getting the active support of at least one person who is. He or she will be an invaluable ally as you attempt to make your way through the maze of church policy, building use, budget issues and more.

If you are on staff, chances are you were in charge of running VBS at your church last year. You already know who, in your church, will be the people who can best assist you in your task. You know you can't run this whole shebang all by yourself, so it stands to reason you'll have to assemble a staff. This manual will not attempt to tell you how to get your volunteers, but it will explain what types of help you'll need.

Basically, there are four types of staff required to effectively run SOCK HOP: Performers, Leaders, Assistants, and Helpers.

PERFORMERS are people who like being in front of an audience. These will be the "program" people who run the Kick Off and Sock Hop. There will be some script memorization required, and also a substantial amount of improvisation. The actors of your church will enjoy that. Some of the performers will help lead the singing and should, therefore, be able to sing a bit. They DO NOT need to be soloists, but shouldn't be bashful about letting others hear them sing. You also may need at least one competent puppeteer .

LEADERS are strong and capable teacher-types. They will be running the individual activity stations and must not only be able to handle the instruction in the activity, but will also be expected to present the spiritual lesson connected with it. Leaders should be doctrinally sound and emotionally mature as well as gentle, “kid-friendly” people. Age is not an issue, but the ability to connect with the “Students” is critical.

ASSISTANTS will take care of all the details of running **SOCK HOP**. These will be the people you trust to help with things like handling registration, counting the offering, and running the sound system. Assistants should be able to follow instructions well, but have the presence of mind to make spot decisions when needed. As Director, you will want them to require little or no direct supervision from you, although you may want to appoint a Lead Assistant to serve as supervisor for all of them.

HELPERS are the variables on your staff. The number and types you have will be determined by need. For example, the Hall Monitors for School divisions would be considered Helpers. They have no specific responsibilities other than assisting in moving “Students” from station to station; yet may, on occasion, perform other tasks such as shepherding a child to the restroom or first aid station, answering a question, or even just being ready with a hug. You may also want to consider having a helper or two assigned to you to act as messenger or gofer. And don’t forget your Activity Leaders may need or want helpers at their stations.

As a convenience, we have provided a **SOCK HOP Volunteer Sign-Up Sheet** on page 13 and a **SOCK HOP Staff Assignment Sheet** on page 12. It cannot be over-emphasized that volunteers should NOT be assigned a duty based solely on what they desire, but rather on what they may be best suited to do. We also recommend that you, as the Director, take on no other staff responsibilities, with the possible exception of doubling as Performer or perhaps something like Sound Engineer. Use your own good judgement.

Here is a brief description of each position and responsibilities:

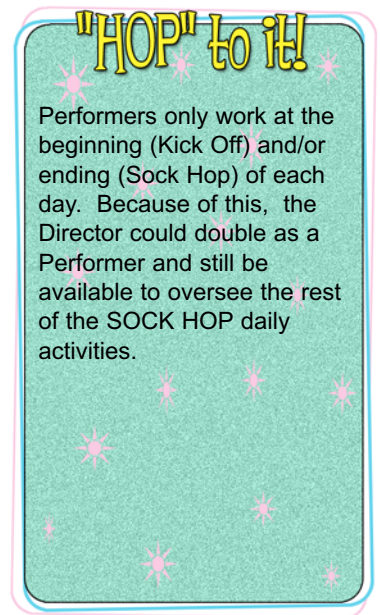
JOHNNY & MARY LOU: Act as M.C.s for Kick Off and Sock Hop. They help infuse each with fun and energy. Personality Type: fun and energetic, strong stage presence.

DJ: Leads singing and helps pump up excitement level. Works with the Hoppettes to teach motions to Students. Personality Type: strong

voice, comfortable onstage.

PUPPETEER(S): Will bring to life Madam Poopay (Spunky’s Clubhouse) and/or other characters as desired. Strong puppetry skills are a must.

SPACE COMMANDER JOE: Introduces the daily Bible memory verse (during Kick Off) as an astronaut communicating from space. A video of this is included but you may opt to have him played live as either a person or a puppet.



PERFORMERS
Johnny & Mary Lou (M.C.'s) DJ (Song Leader) Space Commander Joe (optional) Hoppettes (4-8)
LEADERS
Master Mechanic (Arts & Crafts) Spunky McLoon (Bible Stories) Professor Science (Object Lessons) Bowling King (Games) Cook (Snacks)
ASSISTANTS
Registration Workers (2) Offering Counters (2) School Nurse Audio Engineer
HELPERS
School Leaders (1 for every School) Counselors (1 for every 5 Students) Messenger/Gofer (1 or 2) Carpenter Activity Station Helpers (optional 5 - 10)

HOPPETTES: Sing along helpers who specialize in “doing the motions” for each song. They’ll have to help invent the motions, too!

SPUNKY McLOON: Host of a Children’s Television show featuring contests and games. This station is where the Bible Story and Object Lessons are shared.

PROFESSOR SCIENCE: Demonstrates the daily Object Lesson and shares its meaning during the activities at Spunky’s Clubhouse.

MASTER MECHANIC: Leader of All City Garage (crafts) Activity Station. Instructs Students in crafts, aids in assembly, and shares a short lesson tying the craft in with daily theme.

KING OF BOWLING: Leader of Bowl-O-Rama (games) Activity Station. Teaches and officiates games and shares a short lesson tying the recreation in with daily theme.

SODA JERK: Leader of Snack Activity Station. Helps students build snacks and shares a short lesson tying the snack in with daily theme.

REGISTRATION WORKERS: Welcome new Students as they arrive and help register them each day. Assign Students to Schools.

OFFERING COUNTERS: Count coins given in offering competition and keep careful record of accumulated totals.

SCHOOL NURSE: (optional) Standby helper ready to give first aid and/or call parents of Students in case of injury or emergency.

AUDIO ENGINEER: Operates sound system including microphones and CD playback during Kick Off and Sock Hop. Must be familiar with sound reproduction technique and authorized to operate church sound equipment.

CROSSING GUARDS: Responsible for getting one School of Students to appropriate Activity Station and other minor administrative tasks. Can be same as a Counselor.

HALL MONITORS: Responsible for shepherding 3 - 5 Students to and from Activity Stations. Should be very kid friendly and sensitive to children’s needs. Acts as a surrogate big brother or sister.

MESSENGER/GOFER: (optional) Assistant to Director. Duties may include passing on information or fetching needed materials.

CARPENTER: (optional) Someone with construction skills to build the Offering Competition Scale and other sets or props needed.

ACTIVITY STATION HELPERS: (optional) Helpers for Station Leaders. Will work in close cooperation with Leaders as needed.

SOCK HOP was developed with the idea of including as many different ministries from within your church as possible. Your **SOCK HOP** staff can easily be made up of teens from the Youth Department, Young Adults, Senior Adults, people from the Music Ministry, the Drama Department, and members of the Puppet Team. There is hardly a member of your church that couldn't, in some way, become a valuable part of your **SOCK HOP** staff.

Using the "Travelin' Music TIMER CDs

One of the innovations developed for SOCK HOP is our exclusive Travelin' Music TIMER CD's. While the "Activity Station" format VBS offers ginormous advantages over the *everybody-sit-together-in-one-classroom-for-2½-hours* approach, it lacks in one fundamental aspect: changing activity station logistics. If the stations don't let out at the same time, groups of children are left doing nothing and it doesn't take much to throw the whole schedule out of alignment - just one teacher who finishes too soon or one who goes too long. For this reason, we developed the Travelin' Music TIMER CD™. Here's how it works:

Each Activity Station is supplied with one, "boombox" style CD player into which is placed a Travelin' Music TIMER CD. **IMPORTANT: THE "PLAY MODE" OF THE PLAYER MUST BE SET TO "REPEAT ALL," AND THE VOLUME OF THE PLAYER SHOULD BE MODERATELY LOUD FOR THE AREA IN WHICH IT IS LOCATED.** At the end of Kick Off, the leaders for each Activity Station (Malt Shop, Bowl-O-Rama, All City Garage, Spunky's Clubhouse) walk to their respective areas and press "PLAY" on their CD players. Three minutes of fun music will play followed by 20 minutes of silence. When the music stops, it's time for class to begin. At the end of the 20 minutes of silence, the player will automatically return to the beginning of the CD and begin playing again. When the fun music starts, the Activity Station Leader dismisses the current bunch of kids. The same thing is happening at all the other Activity Stations - effectively maintaining the SOCK HOP schedule!

NOTES

It's really important that all the Station Leaders start their TIMER CDs at close to the same moment. Then, as long as nobody turns their CD player off, the technology will do its job. Nobody will have to watch the clock or wait for a new batch of children to arrive at the door to know when it's time to dismiss. And the end of the music signals starting time.

SOCK HOP Synopsis

Kick Off (Opening Assembly)

- Day 1 - Introductions, Singing and Memory Verse - Hebrews 11:6.
- Day 2 - Singing, Heavy Offering Contest begins, Memory Verse - John 4:24.
- Day 3 - Singing, Heavy Offering Contest continues, Memory Verse - Psalm 139:7.
- Day 4 - Singing, Heavy Offering Contest continues, Memory Verse - 1 John 4:8b
- Day 5 - Singing, Heavy Offering Contest ends, Memory Verse - John 3:17

Malt Shop (Snacks)

- Day 1 - Cracker Sandwiches.
- Day 2 - Cotton Candy.
- Day 3 - Cereal Necklace.
- Day 4 - Trail Mix.
- Day 5 - Ice Cream Sundaes.

All City Garage (Crafts)

- Day 1 - Decorated Sunglasses.
- Day 2 - Kite.
- Day 3 - Diorama.
- Day 4 - Popsicle Stick Treasure Box.
- Day 5 - Popsicle Stick Treasure Box continued.

Spunky's Clubhouse (Bible Stories / Object Lessons)

- Day 1 - Gideon & the Fleece / Ball on Air Flow.
- Day 2 - Conversion of Saul / Dry Ice in Water.
- Day 3 - The Fiery Furnace / Candle Under Glass.
- Day 4 - Jesus Heals 10 Lepers / Black Light.
- Day 5 - Jonah / Wow Powder

Bowl-O-Rama (Games)

- Day 1 - Thread the Needle.
- Day 2 - Asteroids.
- Day 3 - Squidiversion.
- Day 4 - Stop.
- Day 5 - Stow the Cargo.

Sock Hop (Closing Assembly)

- Day 1 - Singing, Fun Contests, Beach Ball Game, Memory Verse reciting.
- Day 2 - Singing, Beach Ball Game, Arm Pit Razzberries Contest, Memory Verse reciting.
- Day 3 - Singing, Beach Ball Game, Limbo Contest, Memory Verse reciting.
- Day 4 - Singing, Beach Ball Game, Hula Hoop Contest, Memory Verse reciting.
- Day 5 - Singing, Beach Ball Game, Limbo Contest, Memory Verse reciting.

SOCK HOP Day-At-A-Glance

DAY 1

Theme: God Is...

Bible Verse:

"Everyone who comes to God must believe that He exists and will reward the ones who look for Him."
Hebrews 11:6"

Location/Event	Focus: In a nutshell...
Kick Off	This is Day One. Students are introduced to the flow of things. FUN is established as a prime directive. Students meet Johnny and Mary Lou, Song Leader, the Hoppettes, and Space Commander Joe. Songs, laughter and anticipation.
All City Garage	Today in the All City Garage Students will be working on projects that remind them of the reality of God...even though He cannot be seen with our eyes. The Master Mechanic will lead the children in decorating sunglasses -- protection from invisible, but very real, UV light rays.
Bowl-O-Rama	Game time. Here's where the Students get to burn off a little excess energy. Today they will play a game called Thread the Needle - in which teams must pass through a hula hoop while holding hands. The experience underscores the reality of experience while contrasting it with the difficulty of explanation.
Spunky's Clubhouse	The Students hear about the Story of Gideon and the Fleece. Professor Science demonstrates how a ball can be suspended on a flow of air. Both are used to compare how God is everywhere, although he cannot be seen.
Malt Shop	We're making peanut butter and jelly cracker sandwiches... or maybe cream cheese and jelly cracker sandwiches... or maybe spray cheese cracker sandwiches, who knows? There will be crackers involved, anyway. And the lesson connects being able to taste things to the reality of God.
Sock Hop	Singing, the Beach Ball Game, and other silliness cap off the day's activities with a celebration of fun. A contestant is chosen and given the opportunity to recite the day's memory verse for a prize. An exciting end to an exciting and purposeful day.

SOCK HOP Day-At-A-Glance

DAY 2

Theme: God Is Spirit

Bible Verse: “God is spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.
John 4:24”

Location/Event	Focus: In a nutshell...
Kick Off	We start the day singing songs from Day 1 and learning a new one with Johnny and Mary Lou, Song Leader, the Hoppettes. Space Commander Joe presents the memory verse for the day. Heaviest Offering Contest begins. More singing in an atmosphere of excitement.
All City Garage	Today in the All City Garage Students will be introduced to the difference between physical and spiritual through the making of kites. A comparison is made between the aerodynamics of flying a kite and connecting with God at a spiritual level.
Bowl-O-Rama	The game: Asteroids. The play: slightly complicated. The point: You can't identify everything about other players just by looking at them. A correlation is drawn to not being able to know about God without looking through "spiritual" eyes -- because God is spirit.
Spunky's Clubhouse	Madam Poopay tells about the conversion of Saul as found in Acts and the Object Lesson with Professor Science demonstrates the behaviors of dry ice with water of different temperatures. Both share the dynamics resulting from making spiritual contact with God.
Malt Shop	Cotton candy. That's the snack. You know how it's kind of invisible when it's being spun out of the maker? Well that's the point of the lesson. It takes the gathering up of the strands on the paper cone to make cotton candy readily visible and it takes seeing through spiritual eyes to "see" God.
Sock Hop	Lots of singing, the Beach Ball Game, and an Armpit Razzberry contest end the day on an exciting and fun note. A contestant is chosen and given the opportunity to recite the day's memory verse for a prize. Reminders of today's lesson and hints about tomorrow's fill the time.

SOCK HOP Day-At-A-Glance

DAY 3

Theme: God Is Everywhere

Bible Verse:

Where can I go from Your Spirit? How can I hide from Your presence?
There is nowhere I can go that You are not already there.
Psalm 139:7

Location/Event	Focus: In a nutshell...
Kick Off	Well, there's singing with John and Mary Lou, Song Leader, and the Hoppettes. Space Commander Joe presents the memory verse for the day. Heaviest Offering contest gets serious about now. All the students are revved up to have a great day.
All City Garage	Dioramas (which sounds like something invented by the guy who named the Bowl-O-Rama but isn't) are the order of the day. Students are encouraged to use their imaginations and create a diorama of a place (either real or imagined) that is far away. The lessons underlines the fact that there is no place we can go that God isn't already there.
Bowl-O-Rama	Squidiversion is the game for today because it's both fun to play and fun to say. Essentially teams encircle themselves with a hula hoop (creating a single entity with many legs) and attempt to navigate an obstacle course. The connection to squids that live in the deepest part of the ocean is made and the lesson that God is there (and everywhere else) it taught.
Spunky's Clubhouse	Spunky and Madam Poopay discuss the story of the Fiery Furnace and Professor Science demonstrates that air, like God is everywhere. The Professor uses a candle under a glass jar to show that, even though oxygen is everywhere, we can create places where it is not -- which is NOT true of God
Malt Shop	Cereal necklaces illustrate how, no matter where we go, when we are wearing our cereal necklaces, they are always with us. Even more importantly, we don't have to "wear" God to always have Him near. He is everywhere -- including places we can't go.
Sock Hop	Singing, the Beach Ball Game, more singing, a Limbo contest and even more singing. A contestant is chosen and given the opportunity to recite the day's memory verse for a prize followed by additional singing -- including learning tomorrow's song of the day.

SOCK HOP Day-At-A-Glance

DAY 4

Theme: God Is Love

Bible Verse: "God is Love. 1 John 4:8b."

Location/Event	Focus: In a nutshell...
Kick Off	Johnny and Mary Lou, Song Leader and the Hoppettes lead singing of the new song for today and others from earlier in the week. Space Commander Joe presents the memory verse for the day. Heaviest Offering Contest continues. More singing.
All City Garage	Students begin construction on a two-day project: Treasure Boxes made from popsicle sticks into which they will put strips of paper featuring today's memory verse. The lesson is that the love of God is a very valuable treasure that we all claim.
Bowl-O-Rama	Stop! is a game that is played (with minor variations) in many countries around the world. The key to the game is the possibility of having one's name called -- instantly adding a personal aspect to the play. The lesson for the day is that God is calling everyone's name to be loved by Him. That makes each Student catch a glimpse of how special they are.
Spunky's Clubhouse	Madam Poopay tells the story of Jesus Healing the Ten Lepers -- stressing that He loved them all, even though only one returned to thank Him. Then, Professor Science uses a black light to demonstrate how special things look when they are seen under that special kind of light.
Malt Shop	Trail Mix has many ingredients and love has many facets. And since God is love, He exhibits all aspects of love and loves each of us individually as we especially need to be loved.
Sock Hop	There's lots of singing again, and also the Beach Ball game again, and then a Hula Hoop contest and of course more singing all in the middle of it. A contestant is chosen and given the opportunity to recite the day's memory verse for a prize and all are encouraged to return tomorrow.

SOCK HOP Day-At-A-Glance

DAY 5

Theme: God Is Forgiving

Bible Verse: ““For God didn't send His Son to condemn the world. Instead He sent Him so everyone in the world, through Him, can be saved.
John 3:17.”

Location/Event	Focus: In a nutshell...
Kick Off	Lots of singing, of course, led by John and Mary Lou, Song Leader, and the Hoppettes. Space Commander Joe presents the final memory verse. Last day of the Heaviest Offering Contest. Final encouragement for a great day to be had by all.
All City Garage	Students finish construction on their Treasure Boxes made from popsicle sticks. A discussion of making mistakes on the boxes leads to an opportunity to present the Plan of Salvation.
Bowl-O-Rama	The game is called Stow the Cargo and revolves around tossing Frisbees™ into a box. The facts connected with being unable to always hit the target are correlated to being imperfect as people. God's desire to forgive us is the main truth associated with the game and leads to an opportunity to present the Plan of Salvation.
Spunky's Clubhouse	Professor Science uses Wow Powder to demonstrate how God's forgiveness is strong enough to take away sin. The Bible Story told by Madam Poopay is that of Jonah -- illustrating the power of God's forgiveness even when people are not perfect.
Malt Shop	Ice Cream Sundaes -- nobody is doing anything special to deserve having one, but everybody who wants one, gets one. Nobody can do anything to deserve salvation, but God gives it to anybody who asks Jesus for it.
Sock Hop	Well, of course, there is singing and lots of it. The Beach Ball game, another Limbo Contest and the final opportunity for someone to recite the day's memory verse. Final tallies for the Heaviest Offering contest are announced and everything ends with more singing.



At left is an example of how one church chose to decorate their main assembly room. Much of the decor was made from craft paper.



Here's "Johnny" and "Mary Lou" along with some of the Hoppettes in action before the Kick Off. Notice the high energy "fun" they are demonstrating and the character costuming.



These were a couple of the teen Hall Monitors. Their costuming was simple but effective.