



## Welcoming New Kids to your Class!

You can help eliminate or ease stomach aches, headaches, nervousness, anxiety, fear.... These are some of the physical symptoms that some students face when they will be going to a new school.

One of the most common reasons for the anxiety is that the child has to meet new classmates. The child may be worried that “they won’t like me”, or that “they don’t want me to join them”.

A very simple bit of preparation can help the new child to anticipate the new relationships and understand that the kids in his/her class are also looking forward to having a new student join them! BEFORE school ends for the summer, ask students from each grade level to write a few sentences or short paragraph of welcome on a letter which you will be able to send to new students who may enroll over the summer. About a month before school begins, send one of those letters of welcome to each of the new students that have enrolled. (If you divide the classes into smaller groups, you can make a few “original” letters to send to the new enrollees.) (We have included several different printable letters with this lesson plan. Download your copies now and give them to the teachers at the next staff meeting. To make it easy, there is a lesson plan included for you to give to the teachers.)

Not only does this activity help the new enrollee, but it also creates the perfect opportunity for the current students to think about the needs of new students and to grow in their awareness and sensitivity for being a “First Friend” to the new students. Encourage the students to be “First Friends” to any new kids in their neighborhood. Take a few minutes and ask students who might be willing to volunteer to invite any new friends over to their home over the summer if anyone new enrolls from their class. If you get new enrollees, you will have a list of kids who can begin the process of making that new family feel a part of the school.



*This letter accompanies a lesson plan created by the EXODUS Network for the Welcoming Community Newsletter. This newsletter is sent free of charge to any church, school or family that requests it at [www.WelcomingCommunity.com](http://www.WelcomingCommunity.com). The EXODUS Network is a free REALTOR referral network that connects moving families with highly recommended REALTORS throughout the US and Canada. The REALTORS are Christian Community Specialists and each provides resources to support their local Christian community and the families moving in and out. Each agent sponsors a national Church database and a Christian School database in his/her local communities so that people are able to connect with the churches and Christian schools as they desire. The EXODUS Network REALTORS also provide a free web-based Move Organizer for anyone who uses their service. Contact the EXODUS Network at 1-800-395-8556 or by visiting [www.ExodusNetwork.com](http://www.ExodusNetwork.com) to request the free services for yourself or a friend who may be moving. Make sure moving families are able to find your school by adding your school information to the [ChristianSchoolSearch.com](http://ChristianSchoolSearch.com).*



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## Lesson Plan

### Preparing to Welcome New Students Who Enroll over the Summer

#### Objectives:

- 1) To ensure that new students who enroll in our school over the summer are able to receive a letter of welcome from classmates during the summer. This will enable the new enrollee to look forward to meeting their new friends and to reduce the level of anxiety before school begins.
- 2) To make your students more aware and more sensitive to the needs of new students.
- 3) To create a list of current students who would be willing to invite new enrollees to their home over the summer to begin building a relationship with the new enrollee.

#### Procedures:

- 1) Read the story in Mark 10:13-16
- 2) Ask for children to talk about times when they felt as though they were not "welcome" in a situation.
- 3) Probe for examples of times when someone acted like Jesus in the story and instead of confirming the feeling of "you don't belong here" ; instead stood up for you and said, "No, this person belongs here!"
- 4) Talk about how it feels to have someone stick up for you and "invite" you to be a part of something.
- 5) Comment about the fact that on one level the story of Jesus and the little children is about something much more significant than just "welcoming" someone into a room. In this story, Jesus is saying that children are a part of the KINGDOM OF GOD! Children matter to God! Children don't need to be adults to accept Jesus as their Savior and to begin serving Him! Talk about some of the other meanings of this story. The story DOES have some surface meaning as well. Jesus is a great example for us.
- 6) Talk about kids that "will be coming" to the school next fall. Ask the students to talk about how those kids might feel when they come next year.
- 7) Ask them to think about ways that they can help that person to feel welcome, in a similar way that Jesus did for the children in our story. Encourage them to remember to do these things as they present ideas that would be practical and possible.



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- 8) Suggest that you will now work on a way that can help the Principal make sure that people are welcomed. Choose one or more of the “welcoming letters” for your class.
- 9) Ask the students to write a short paragraph or a couple of sentences that will help someone who may be coming into their class next year feel welcome. Explain that this is something we are doing “just in case” there is someone who decides to come over the summer. Divide the class into a group of 6 or 7 and have those members write their paragraph onto a letter. In this way your class can make a few different letters to be ready in case there is more than one new student coming.
- 10) Finally, ask the students to volunteer if they might be willing to be the “First Friend” to any new person who might be joining their class by inviting the new person at their house at some point over the summer. Have the attached letter to parents ready for kids who volunteer so that parents can give their consent to their child’s volunteering. Encourage the children to go home and explain the idea to their parents. Collect the signed volunteer parent letters and give them to the Principal to use “just in case” there are new families who sign up in the school.
- 11) Even if no new children arrive for their class for the next year, the lesson is an important one to generally reinforce the concept of welcoming and hospitality!



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# An invitation to be a “First Friend”!

Today, in class we talked about new kids who might enroll in our school over the summer. Your student wrote a paragraph of welcome to any to any potential student who might be enrolling in the school and joining his/her class over the summer.



We also asked for volunteers who might be willing to invite a new student over to his/her house for an afternoon this summer before school would begin again in the fall. This visit would be intended to help the new student get to know a friend or two before school starts so that the start of the new school year would be less stressful for the new student and his/her family. Your student said that

he/she would be interested in asking for permission from you to host a new student if the opportunity arose.

If you decide to give your permission, you are only saying that you would be willing to host the new student IF the circumstances worked out for your family. You are NOT committing to hosting anyone at this point. (We are not even sure there will be any new students enrolling in your student’s class.)

With that understanding, if you would be willing to have us contact you and your student to ask if you would be able to invite a new student to your home if the need arises, please sign the sheet and return it to your child’s teacher ASAP.

Thanks in advance for your help!

Sure, if we are able, we would love to help welcome a new family to our school!

Name of parent(s)/guardian(s)

Daytime summer phone number(s) Home

Cell

Other

Email

If you have students in different grades and would be willing to host for each, please note that on this form as well. You only need to turn in one form per family.

Student(s) name(s)

Grade(s) in the fall



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**We will celebrate  
when you join us!**

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A group of diverse young people, including men and women of various ethnicities, are smiling warmly at the camera. They are dressed in casual, light-colored clothing. The background is bright and slightly overexposed, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere.

**We can't wait til u join us! TTYL**

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**We are eager for you to join us!**

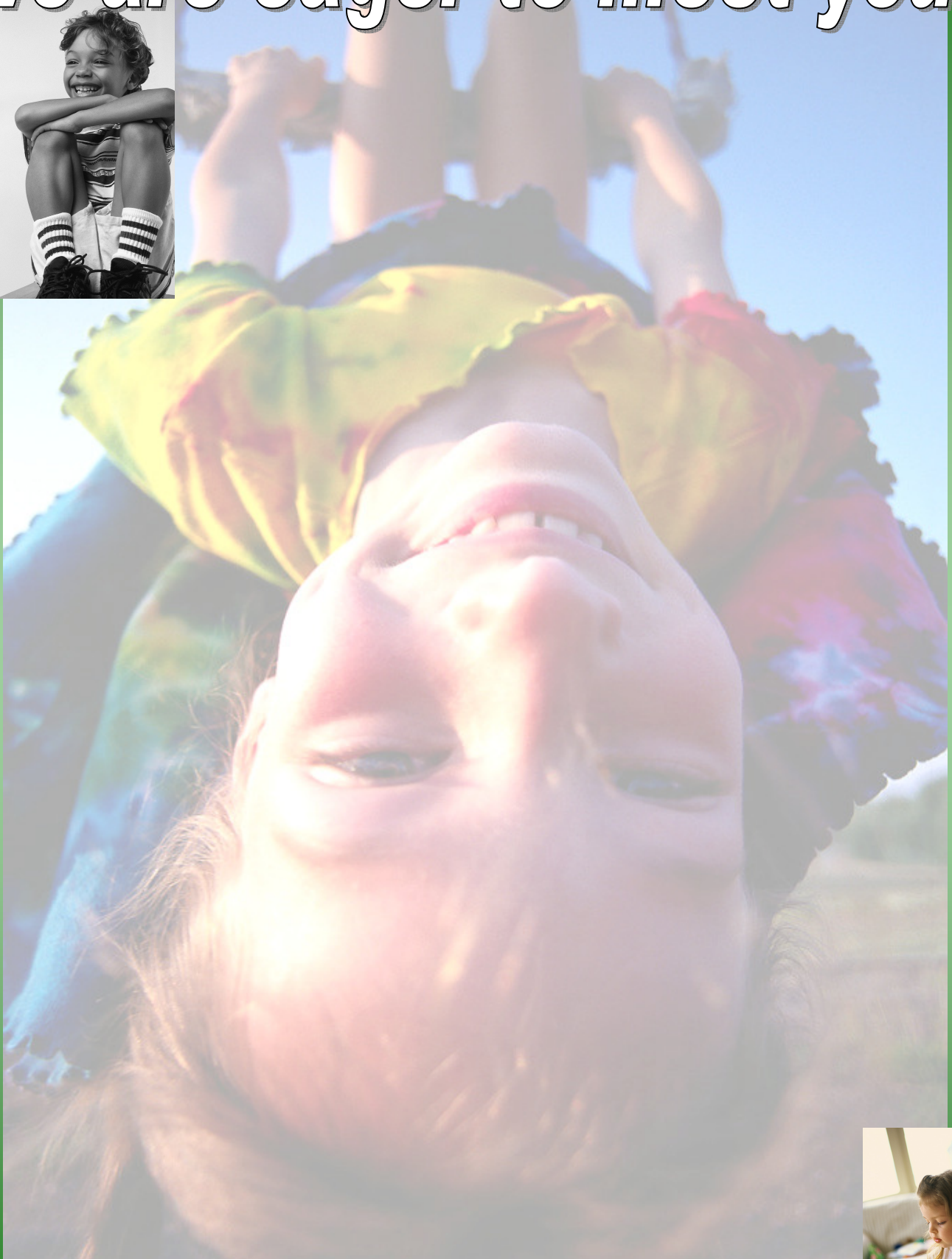
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# We are eager to meet you!



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The best things  
about our class  
are....



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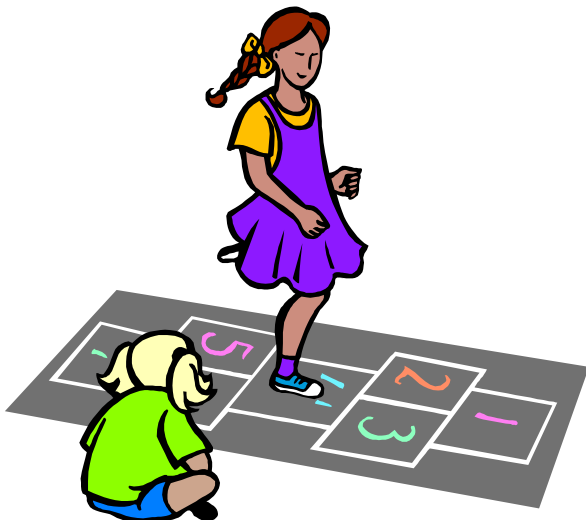
hope you join our team.

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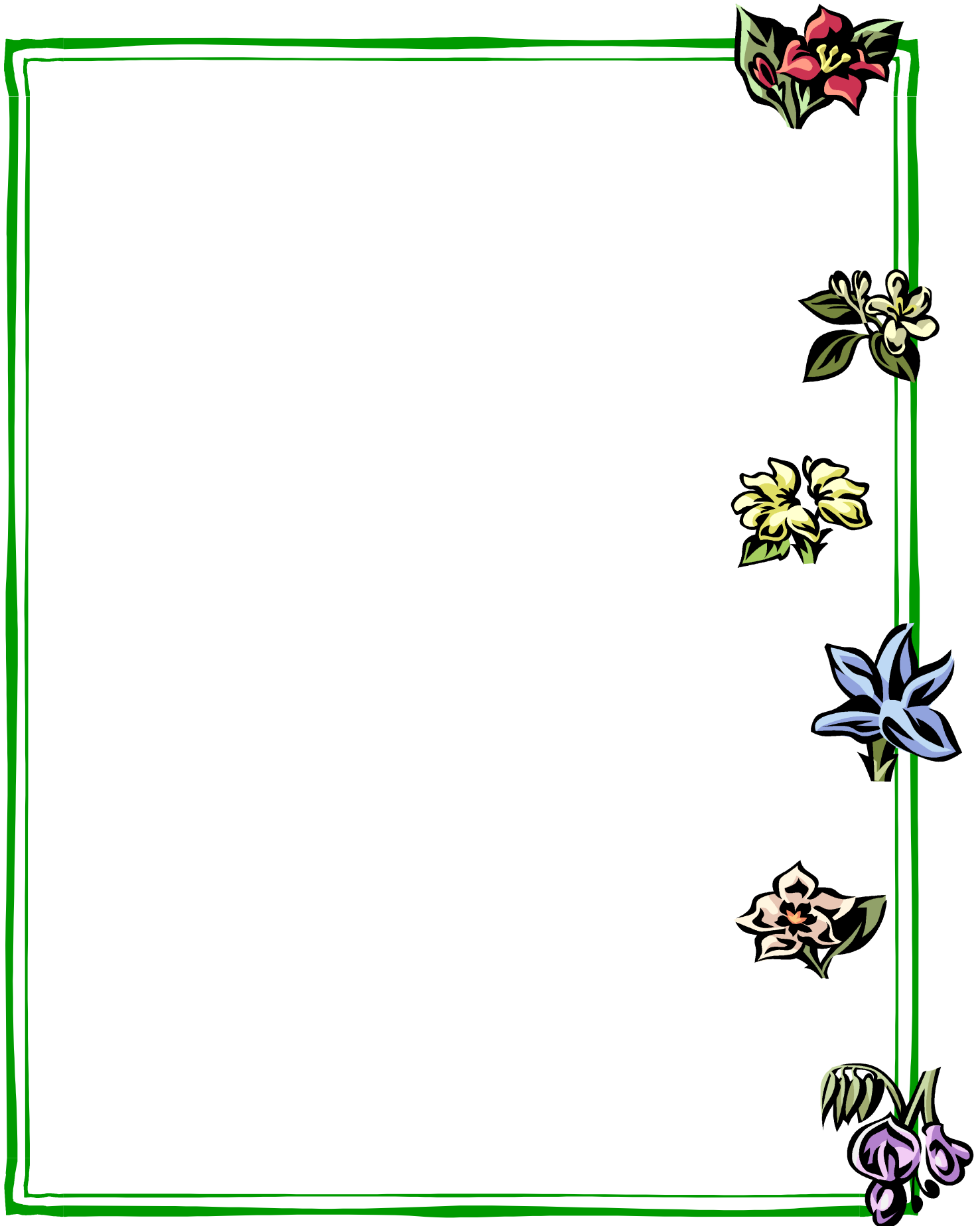
# We can't wait to play with you!



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*Our class just heard the good news!*



*We are eager for you to join us!*

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WE WANT YOU TO KNOW  
WHOOOO YOUR NEW FRIENDS WILL BE!



WE ARE EAGER  
TO MEET YOU!

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# Our class is lots of fun!

## We can't wait until you join us!



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# Here's the report from our class!



# We are eager to have you join us!

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