

What is a Control Tool?

A control tool is any question you ask the kids to which they give a response. They might yell some responses, whisper others, and so forth. It's a way of drawing children back into a small or large group discussion without having to say, "Listen up," "Hush," or "Eyes up here," and it is a great transition between activities. It accomplishes refocusing the kids on the leader as well as teaching them an important point and it is a thousand times better and more effective than shushing your kids.

Sample Control Tool:

SAY: When I say, "Who should be number one in your life?" I want everybody to say, "Jesus!"

Leader—"Who should be number one in your life?" / *Students*—"Jesus!"

Other Samples:

Leader—"God's got a gift..." / *Students*—"For me and it's free!!"

Leader—"The truth is..." / *Students*—"Jesus Lives!"

Leader—"What are you?" / *Students*—"I'm Special!"

Leader—"Who does Jesus love?" / *Students*—"Meeeeeeeeeee!"

Leader—"God's got a call..." / *Students*—"For us all!"

Leader—"What life all about..." / *Students*—"It's all about Jesus!"

Leader—"Big or small..." / *Students*—"God cares about it all!"

Leader—"God loves who?" / *Students*—"You!"

Almost any key point can be turned into a control tool. Have fun with them. Include accents in them. Have some that are slow, some that are fast, some that are whispered, some that are yelled. Have kids in competition to see which side can yell it the loudest—Remember, an effective children's ministry isn't always a quiet children's ministry. Or, have a boys verses girls competition. Or, tell the kids that anytime you see them for the next month you might ask them the following question: "You might be walking down the hall and suddenly I might be right there in front of you and I might ask you this question...You might be picking your nose and suddenly I might be right there in front of you and I might ask you this really important question...Or, you might be crawling out of the bathroom and suddenly I might be right there in front of you. I might even kneel down (kneel down in front of a girl) and put my hands together and ask you this very, very important question...and no, it's not, 'Will you marry me?' I'm going to say, 'Who should be number one in your life?' Anytime I say this, I want you, as loud as you can, to say, 'Jesus! Who should be number one in your life? Jesus! Now, let's have a boy verses girl competition to see who can say it louder. Are you ready, boys?" etc.

