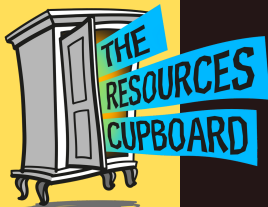


Making Young Disciples Framework



theresourcecupboard.co.uk

www.facebook.com/theresourcecupboard

At The Resources Cupboard, we journey with the local church to make young disciples. Our research-based model is guided by five principles:

- Listening to what God says about the place of children in His kingdom, through the Bible and in our walk with Him.
- Knowing and loving our community first.
- Sharing the good news of Jesus with all children and young people, through the whole church.
- Journeying with children from birth to adulthood.
- Engaging with children and young people in four spheres of life: home, gathered church, school and community and culture.

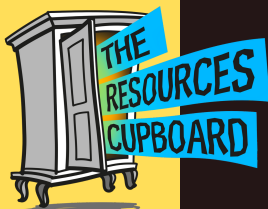


This simple Making Disciples Framework has been designed, trialled and developed to help churches keep their focus not simply on the busyness of activity, but rather on the God-given task of making disciples. We believe that the mission of passing on our faith to the next generation should be with the sole aim of making disciples, continuing the mission which began in Jesus' final words on this earth, and not motivated by a desire to reverse decline in the church, nor to preserve the status quo.

There is a wealth of good thought and research available to help us consider what it is to be a disciple, but less so about children and young people. Our Making Disciples Framework draws on some of this, and provides a helpful, simple toolkit to introduce the idea within your local church. We encourage you to use this booklet as a first step, and take your own reading and research further, developing your own understanding of what it is to be a disciple.

In the final words of Jesus (what we now refer to as 'The Great Commission') Jesus charges his disciples to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."

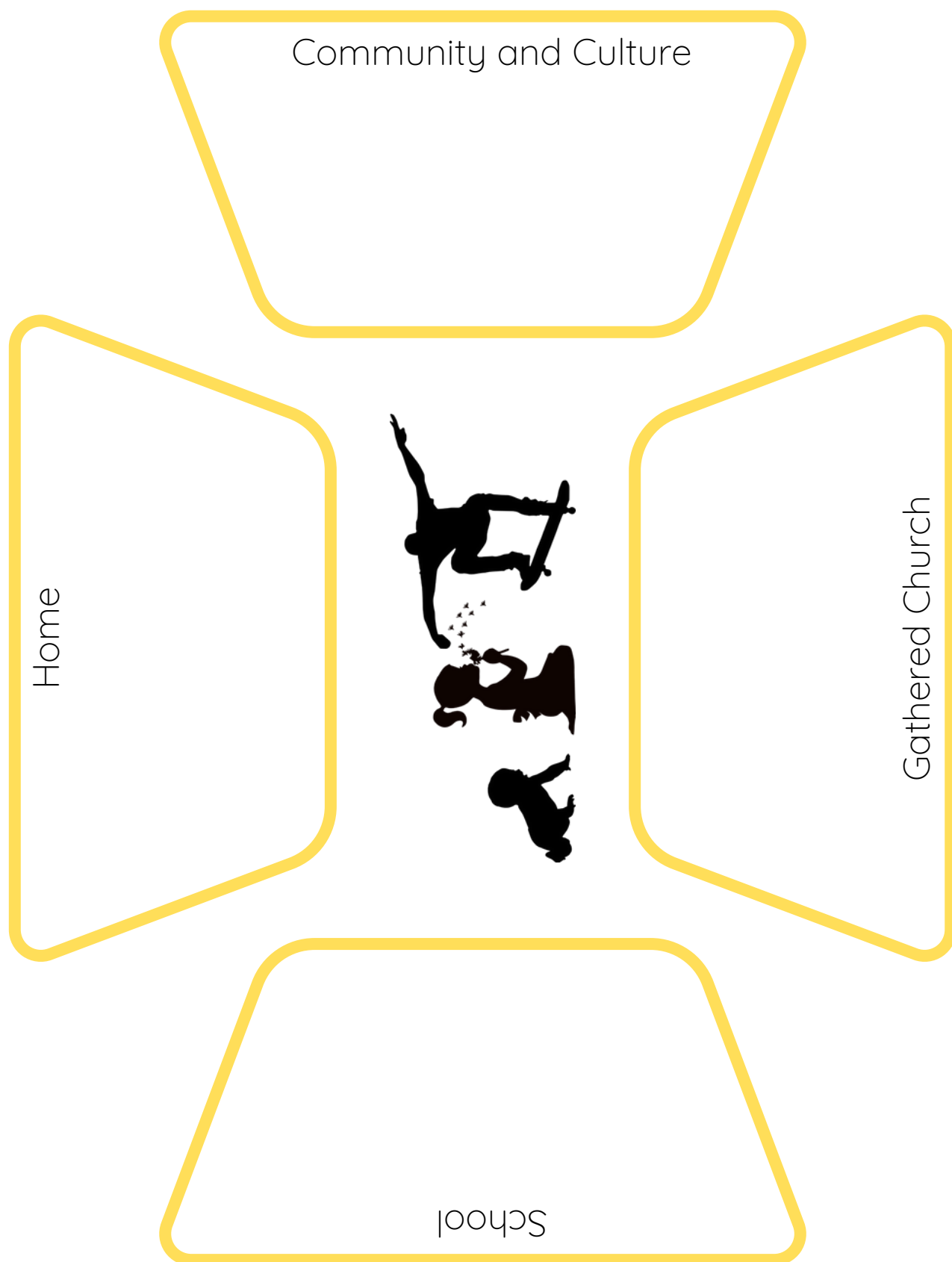
To this end, we believe that as the church, we need to be involved in the lives of children and young people from birth through to adult and engaged in all aspects of their lives. This leads us to be actively involved in four spheres of life; home, school, community and culture and of course in the local, gathered church/ This model is shown in the diagram on the following page.



theresourcecupboard.co.uk

www.facebook.com/theresourcecupboard

Introducing The Resources Cupboard model



theresourcescupboard.co.uk

www.facebook.com/theresourcescupboard

Developing the Making Young Disciples Framework

John Mark Comer summarises Christian discipleship as threefold: "be with Jesus, become like him, do as he did." This should be the same message we pass on to the children, young people and families with whom we work; "be with Jesus, become like him, do as he did" and it is hoped that this framework provides a basic guide, shape or 'how' for us to use to do this.

For many years, we have tried to understand and quantify faith development in terms of scales, ages and stages. You have probably come across the Engel Scale and the work of Fowler and Westerhoff. These all offer some helpful thought in this arena, but of course, people are messy and a discipleship journey was never intended to be a straight, linear journey.

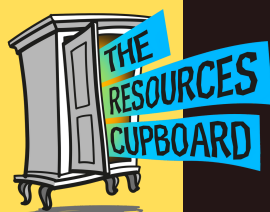
In setting out our Making Young Disciples Framework, we acknowledge this fact. This framework is not a course, a tick-box exercise or a clearly defined and prescribed document, but rather it is intended to do two things: To raise the profile and understanding of the task that we are given: passing on the Christian faith by making young disciples, and to develop our understanding of what is involved in the process of making disciples so that we are intentional in the work we do and discipleship does not become a meaningless after thought. We look forward to seeing how our understanding of disciple making will continue to grow and evolve over time.

This framework has been developed drawing on two key perspectives:

Firstly, the Revealing Jesus Framework, from Scripture Union which has been developed from the perspective of equipping the church to share Jesus with the vast majority of children and young people who are not actively engaged in the life of the church.



scriptureunion.org.uk/revealingjesus



theresourcecupboard.co.uk

www.facebook.com/theresourcecupboard

The second is the work of Making Disciples, where tools have been developed to help churches better understand and develop discipleship pathways.

From this work, we have drawn the idea that discipleship is developed in three areas; head, hands and heart.



HEAD

Know, Think & Understand



HANDS

Contribute, Create & Lead



HEART

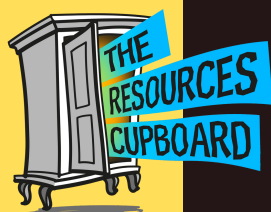
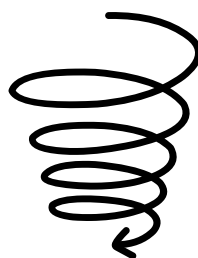
Love, Appreciate & Belong

wearemakingdisciples.com

It is a combination of these two resources which has formed the basis for this Making Young Disciples Framework. We do want to reiterate, however, the following points:

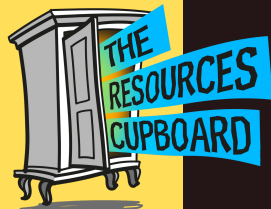
- A discipleship journey is not linear or simple, there may well be seasons of standing still and moving away from God, as well as times of growth.
- Disciple-making is always contextual and this framework should be held together with our other 'routemaps.'
- We are formed in community, but our discipleship is our own, it cannot be done to us or for us and the same is true for children and young people.
- Our understanding of what it is to be a disciple continues to grow and deepen as we ourselves are disciples and this framework hopes to summarise our understanding at this point in time.

With all of this in mind, we believe that a framework for making young disciples can begin to look something like the diagram on the following page onto which we can imagine the drawing of a discipleship journey, which could look something like a wibbly spiral, not neatly drawn, but understanding that there will be bumps along the road, but one which will expect disciples to grow and deepen in faith..

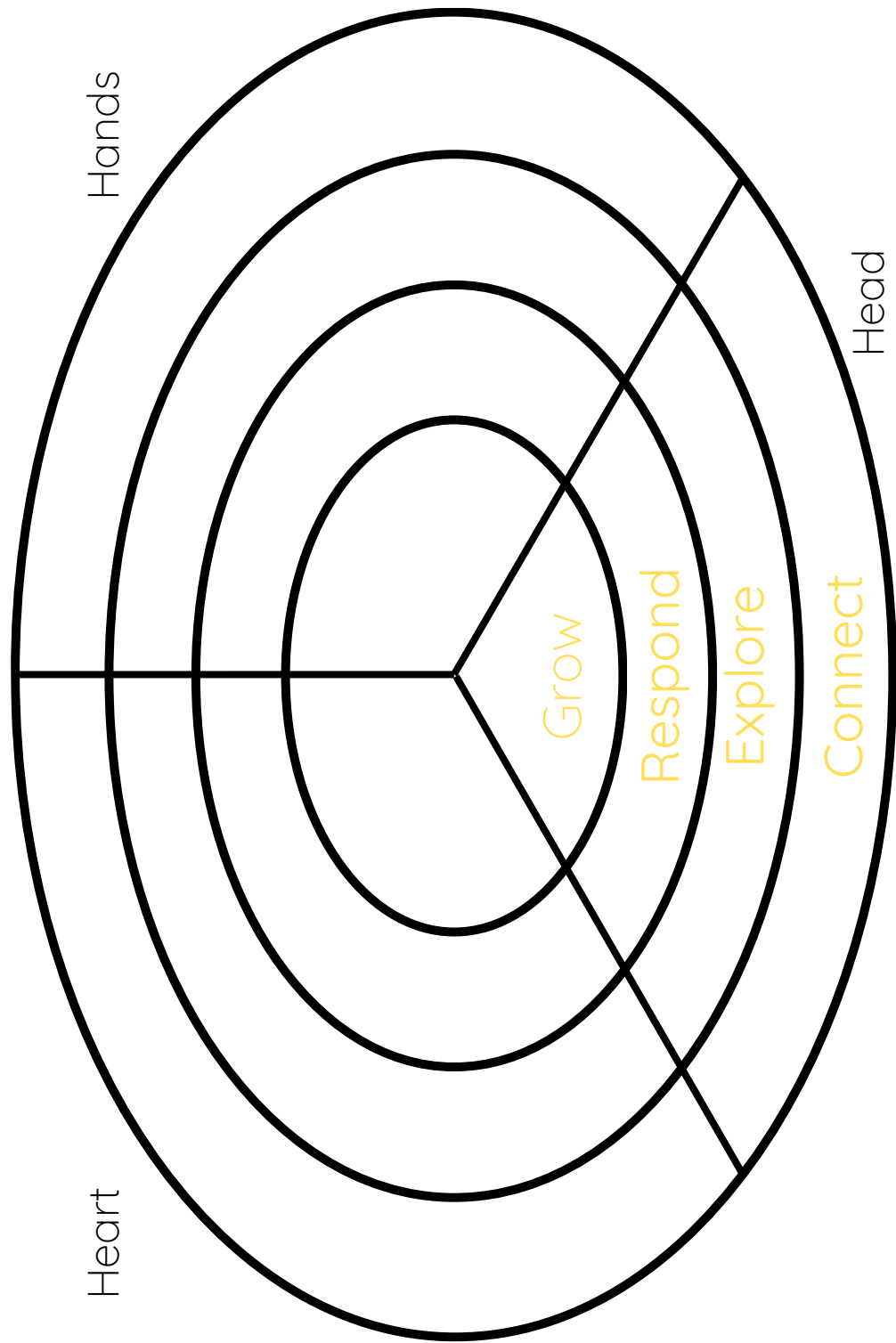


theresourcescupboard.co.uk

www.facebook.com/theresourcescupboard



The Making Young Disciples Framework



theresourcecupboard.co.uk

www.facebook.com/theresourcecupboard

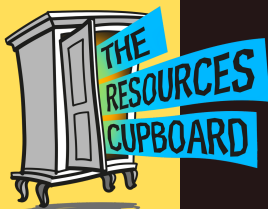
Developing the Making Young Disciples Framework

The challenge therefore, for us, in making young disciples is twofold:

- 1) To talk about what it is to be a disciple, to develop a language of discipleship which incorporates being with Jesus, becoming like him and doing as he did, involving the whole of our being; head, heart and hand.
- 2) To be expectant that our children and young people will be on a faith journey and that their discipleship will grow, develop, deepen and change as they do.

To this end, we need to intentionally provide opportunities for our children and young people to engage in each stage of their faith journey in a way which is appropriate to their age and personal understanding which will nurture this spiritual growth. Our activities therefore need to be developed with this discipleship framework at the front and centre of our minds, and an expectation that disciples will grow.

On the following page, you will find some initial thoughts about the types of opportunities children and young people may need in each of these stages. You may like to try some of these out, but alternatively, you could take a blank copy of the diagram from the previous page and create your own suggested activities and opportunities.



The Making Young Disciples Framework

	Head	Hands	Heart
Connect	• Hear a testimony, story or thought. • Reflect on own experiences and story and begin to make connections to God's story. • Engage in discussions which consider God's presence in the world.	• Practically support service activities together with other Christians. • Serve others.	• Reflect on own experiences and story and begin to make connections to God's story. • Participate in or observe a collective act of worship.
Explore	• A short exploring Christianity course. • Play through a story: 'Godly play' style. • Try a daily devotional thought.	• Get involved with service activities and talk about where God is in that.	• Play through a story: 'Godly play' style. • Engage in a prayer space. • Explore own spiritual style preferences (Csinos).
Respond	• Contribute to a Bible study (informal or more formal). • Articulate own stories of where they have experienced God.	• Identify ways they can begin to serve God as well as others with the gifts they have.	• Pray alone or with others. • Engage in worship, alone or with others.
Grow	• Contribute to a Bible study or teaching session and begin to take a lead. • Share own faith story with others.	• Seek out opportunities to serve God and others and explore where God is calling them to be. • Lead others.	• Reflect on own faith journey and share testimony. • Demonstrate walk with God in their daily life.



Discussion Questions

- What strikes you most about this?
How does this help to develop an understanding of making disciples?
- Can you relate your own discipleship journey to this framework?
What might be next for you?
- Which aspects of discipleship do you feel are strong for your church?
Where might you need a greater focus?
- How do you articulate discipleship and faith journeys with your children and young people?
How can you develop this?
- Thinking about a particular child, young person or group; where do you think they are at on their faith journey?
What might be next for them?
- Are there any activities we are doing that need to change?
Do we feel confident to make those changes?
- What next steps feel natural for us to take?
What support will we need to take those?
- Where do we have gaps that take us out of our comfort zone?
What support will we need to address some of these?
- What would help us to further develop our understanding of discipleship?
What one next step will we take?

