

## JMA 2010 Home Missions - Crossroads Project Bloomfield, Belfast

This session will introduce the children to the Crossroads Project run in partnership with Bloomfield Methodist church in Belfast. The children will learn about the project background, the issues in the area, the people involved in the project and what goes on in Crossroads for children and young people. Resources: Crossroads information sheet, activity sheets, markers/pencils, paper, craft materials

### Introduction:

**Discussion** - Think about the community you live in and where you belong in the community. This could be your place in the family, the clubs you belong to, your church, where your school is and what you do in your free time. Ask the children how they look after and treat the other people in their “community”. Explain how in our communities we have friends and we can celebrate good times together but sometimes bad things can happen in a community, no matter what size or where it is. You could ask for examples or give some of your own examples like bullying, violence, different parts of the community being picked on, vandalism, older people being attacked, property being damaged, things being stolen. Explain that some of these things were happening in the Bloomfield area of Belfast and the Methodist church and others set up a Community Care project. This was to help people in the area look after their community more. A drop-in centre was set up for children and young people in the area and was called Crossroads. At this point you could read from **Crossroads Project** in the information sheet or pick different aspects from it.

### Main Body of the Session

**Choices** - Explain that we all have choices to make every day. Ask for some examples of small choices, i.e. what you are going to wear, what breakfast cereal to have, and big choices, i.e. what job will I choose to do. You may need to change these to suit younger children, a big decision might be what birthday present to ask for. Explain that the Crossroads project is where some roads meet and we sometimes use the phrase “At a crossroads” to mean making a decision. Read the **At a crossroads** section of the information sheet. Explain that the young people that go there have lots of choices to make. Read the information sheet on **Peer Pressure**. Explain how the Crossroads Drop-in centre helps children and young people have somewhere to go and helps them to choose the right thing to do

**Game** - Explain that we are going to play a game about choices called “Would You Rather”. Depending on your space you can ask children to go to one side of the room for one choice and the other side for the other choice. If you have less space make sure the children have to make some movement to show their answer. Try to have definite answers, no “maybes”. Here are some suggestions, feel free to make up others: WOULD YOU RATHER: play soccer or rugby, watch TV or listen to music, have long hair or no hair, be sunburnt or never be able to have a suntan, be stranded on an island alone or with someone you hate, kiss a jellyfish or step on a crab, forget who you were or who everyone else was, give up your computer or your pet, get free chocolate for one year or free potatoes forever, have half days everyday or no homework forever, be a deep sea diver or an astronaut, have a big group of friends or one very close friend? Another drama style game you can play is a child can pretend to be driving in a car that comes to a pedestrian crossing and the other children act like different people as they cross the road. The “driver” tries to guess what they are doing.

### Conclusion

**Activity** - Crossroads activity sheets included in the pack: Wordsearch, crossword, word crossroad.

Make your own community: This could be drawing a picture or even making a large 3D model. Using cardboard, lollipop sticks, clay and paints you could start with the roads in the locality and then add the buildings including your church.

**Prayer activity** - Print the prayer cards and give one to each child. Pray for the choices that we make, that we would choose God’s way. This could be used for the whole congregation if your church have a JMA service, or in your Sunday morning group.

**Prayer** - God thank you for the communities that we live in. Thank you for our families our schools and our church. We pray that more people in our community would want to know you. We pray that you would help us and the people who use the Crossroads centre in Bloomfield to always make the right choices and choose the things that you would want us to do. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.