







While kids in southern Uganda are receiving Sweet Sleep bunk beds, kids in the north live in mud huts where bunk beds will not fit. Beds for children in northern Uganda consist of a straw mat, a soft foam mattress, a comfy blanket, a mosquito net and a Bible in their language. These children have been through a lot as a result of a 22-year-war in their country. Many of these children were forced to be child soldiers and some even had to kill their parents or be killed by the rebel army. Now, these children, many living in child-headed households, are resettled from their displacement camps after the war. Sweet Sleep beds help keep kids and families safe from crawling, biting insects and disease.

A complete Sweet Sleep bed for one of these children, complete with their Bible and mosquito net, is just \$50. Thousands of children are waiting for these beds. Help us help as many of these children as possible with your offerings.



## DAY 1 /// 10 MINUTES

Say: “Each day we’ll collect an offering as part of our worship time together. This year, our offering will go to help orphaned, abandoned and at-risk kids through Sweet Sleep.

Sweet Sleep helps children who are orphaned or abandoned. What is an orphan?” (Allow children to answer.) “That’s right – an orphan is someone who doesn’t have a mom or a dad. In the US, children who are orphaned are often cared for by their grandparents or move to children’s homes. In many Third World countries, orphans are sent to orphanages where conditions are often very poor.

This week, we’re going to have a Build-A-Bed Project and see how many beds we can build for orphans! (include any specifics about the project you are raising funds for and details of your offering/penny wars/contests, etc.) Let’s watch a video and learn more about Sweet Sleep as we start our week together.”

Show video from Sweet Sleep web site.

Collect offering.

Pray – mentioning the offering and that everyone involved – kids, leaders, volunteers would give so that children orphans can sleep sweetly.





## DAY 2 /// 5 MINUTES

Say: “How many of you slept in a comfortable bed last night?” (Allow children to raise hands. Be sensitive to situations in your area where children might not have slept in a comfortable bed.) “I know I did – I love my bed – it’s so cozy and soft! When I think about the beds kids around the world sleep in, I wish every one of them could have a healthy, comfortable place to sleep like I do. Look at these pictures of what kids sleep on in Uganda. [show picture of child on straw mat from [www.sweetsleep.org/build-a-bed](http://www.sweetsleep.org/build-a-bed)] When I think about kids sleeping in these awful conditions each night it makes me want to give all the money I have to help them have a place to pray, to dream and to sleep sweetly! If you brought money for our offering today, I’m going to pray for our offering and then you can bring it forward. Let’s Pray.”

Pray for the children and for the offering. Pray that God would protect children who are currently sleeping in unhealthy conditions and that people around the world would give generously so Sweet Sleep can bring them a cozy, new bed soon.



## DAY 3 /// 5 MINUTES

Say: “Alright – who out there has a dollar? Hold it up high – first one to hold up a dollar bill - join me here on stage. Now, what can you buy with a dollar.” (Ask the child on stage, and then get more answers from the audience.) “Today, we’re going to have another chance to give to our missions offering for Sweet Sleep to help orphans get new beds. I want each of us to think about how we can give sacrificially this week for these orphans. Who can tell me what it means to sacrifice?” (To give something for the sake of someone else.) “This dollar could buy a coke, a candy bar, (some other things the kids mentioned). What I want to challenge us to do this week is to sacrifice so kids can sleep sweetly. If you were going to get a candy bar or a coke – consider going without those things so that orphans can have a place to sleep tonight. Let’s give our volunteer a round of applause. If you have your offering, you can bring it forward as soon as I pray. Let’s pray together.”

Pray that God would help each of us be sacrificial givers – giving up things we want so that others can have the things they need.

\*\* Note: If you have used this activity before, consider asking a child to share their story of sacrificial giving from a previous year – camp, VBS, etc. This concept of sacrificial giving is so crucial for children to learn, that it should be included in any missions giving project.





## DAY 4 /// 5 MINUTES

Say: “You guys have been doing awesome collecting money for beds for orphans! Thank you for being so faithful to God by giving these offerings to Him. Today, I wanted to share with you what else your offerings will provide. When Sweet Sleep goes into an orphanage or village, not only do kids get brand new beds, but they also receive a Bible in their language. Raise your hand and tell me your favorite verse.” (You may want to talk to a few kids before hand to have their verse picked out and ready to read.) “Can you imagine if you had never heard these verses before? What if you didn’t have a Bible to read and no one around you did either? Kids in these orphanages are so excited to get their new Bibles! Look at them reading so intently!” [pictures of kids with Bibles] “One of my favorite verses is James 1:27 – (put verse on screen if possible) Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. God calls us to look after orphans and widows. There are lots of ways we can do that, and helping these orphans get beds is such an important one. Let’s pray together and collect our offering.”

Pray with the kids. Ask God to help us understand our calling to minister to orphans and widows. Thank God for allowing you to be a part of His plan and for blessing each of us so we can be a blessing to those who need our help. Pray for the children who will receive the beds and Bibles you’ll raise the money for – pray that they will read them and understand what they read as they apply God’s Word to their lives.





## DAY 5 /// 10 MINUTES

Say: “We have had a great week together! And it’s been really exciting to learn about the needs of orphaned and abandoned children in Uganda and how we can help them get clean, comfortable new beds!” (If parents are there and haven’t been the rest of the week, fill them in on what Sweet Sleep does; mentioning that you’re sure their sons and daughters have filled them in! Ask them to consider joining their children in giving sacrificially so orphans can sleep sweetly. Mention how much our own beds cost – then ask parents to consider giving that much for orphans to get new beds – think how many beds that would provide – since a new bed for an orphan in southern Uganda is just \$140 and a bed for an orphan in northern Uganda is just \$50!)

Say: “Today is the last day we’ll be collecting our missions offering at VBS. Let’s watch this video and see what the money we’ve given so far and the money we’ll give today/ tonight will do for orphans in Uganda.”

Show the “Thank You” video.

Collect the offering. Pray -- asking God to help each of us continue looking for ways to live out our James 1:27 calling to minister to orphans and widows.





## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Craft plans for pillowcases to decorate to remember to pray for orphans and bookmarks to decorate and send to Sweet Sleep to give to kids getting their Bibles, download our Pajama JAM! project plans.

Since you are providing beds in Uganda, consider using the [magazine bead craft](#) plans provided in the Build-a-Bed resources. This will give kids a tangible item to take home to remember the kids you are helping through Build-A-Bed.

### “PRAY THE NAMES” PRAYER ACTIVITY

Recruit 5 children to read aloud the names of children in the Uganda. Distribute a note card to each one with the name of a child (and pronunciations if needed).

Say: “In Jeremiah 29:11 we read, ‘For I know the plans I have for you... Plans to prosper you not to harm you – to give you a future and a hope!’ This is reassuring to us, for our own lives, but it is also reassuring for us as we think about these children we’re helping this week. I’m going to begin our time of prayer and when I say, ‘For I know the plans God has for...’ some of my friends will read the names of children in Uganda. Then I’ll close praying for the children we are helping this week. Let’s Pray.”

**Names of children in Uganda:** Esther, Prossy, Ezra, Samuel, Isaac



### **CAN YOU BUILD IT?**

For a fun challenge, consider providing materials for your kids to try to build one of the beds you'll be providing! Supplies could include wooden craft sticks, pieces of fabric, glue, poster board, construction paper, etc. You could also use Legos if you have a large supply. Give guidance if you are raising funds for bunk beds in southern Uganda or beds with no frames in northern Uganda.

### **TELL THE STORY**

Guide kids to create a flyer, poster or handout to explain the orphan crisis and the project you are raising funds for during your event. Encourage them to get friends and family involved in raising funds to help even more kids during the week's project or beyond!

