

# Leader's Guide



## Tough Choices

Four missions experiences on choosing to put God's kingdom first

**Location:** Romania

**Focus verse: Matthew 6:33** "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you."

**Overall message:** The Roma people, found throughout Europe, are considered to be the most poorly treated group of people on the continent. Leading nomadic lives, the Roma must make tough choices every day for family survival. Kids will discover how energetic mission teams and dedicated IMB missionaries have chosen to show and share God's love with the Roma people.

This leader's guide includes plans for four, short missions experiences that can be added to your existing programs or events:



**Cultural experience**



**Prayer experience**



**Giving experience**



**Serving experience**

- Each of these missions experiences is designed to last 10 to 15 minutes.
- Use these as an addition to a weekly meeting or combine for a longer missions focus.
- Customize these resources to fit your needs.
- [Note: If you are using the DVD-ROM, all videos and handouts are included. Please follow the directions on the cover to access all files.]

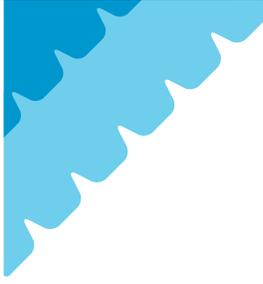
**Here is a simple glossary that may be useful to you as you communicate these ideas to children:**

**Mission(s)** — A job God gives a person He has chosen to tell another group of people the Good News about Jesus. The person God sends is called a missionary.

**Missionary** — A Christian chosen by God who obeys His command to go and tell another group of people the Good News about Jesus. (Preschool version) A Christian chosen by God who obeys and goes to tell another group of people about Jesus.

**People group** — A group of people who share the same language and way of life.

**IMB (International Mission Board)** — A group created by Southern Baptist churches to share Jesus with people around the world who wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity to know and follow Him.



# Tough Choices Cultural Experience



## Prepare

- From the DVD-ROM or [kidsonmission.org](http://kidsonmission.org), prepare to show the **Proclaim the name** video.
- Download and print one **Romania map**, the **Tough Choices focus verse**, **Romania photos**, and one copy of **Tough choices** activity page for each child.
- Provide pencils or markers.
- Bring a numbered game cube or write the numbers 1-6 on separate scraps of paper, fold and drop in a cup.

## Introduction

Arrange chairs in a circle. Lead kids to be seated, then give a series of rapid-fire directions like this: *Move one chair to the left. Move two chairs to the right. Move to the chair directly across from you. Move three chairs to the left, and then move to a chair you have not yet sat on.* Show the **Romania map** and explain that the Roma people are considered nomadic — they have moved from place to place for generations. Identify the countries around Romania where the Roma are also located.

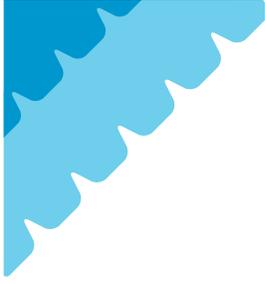
## Roma life

- Show kids the **Proclaim the name** video and the **Romania** photos.
- Comment that the Roma people were once called “gypsies” because people believed they came from Egypt. Traditionally, the Roma made their living as circus performers, fortune tellers or traveling sales people.

## Tough choices

- Explain that poverty and harsh treatment make life difficult for the Roma. As a result, Roma parents must make tough choices in order to care for their often large families. Most Roma families have five to 10 kids.
- Distribute pencils and copies of the **Tough choices** activity page. Lead kids to scan the list. Comment that the basic needs on the list are available to most American families daily.
- Challenge kids to put themselves in the place of a Roma family, who may not have access to everything on the list each day.
- Toss the numbered cube and announce the number on which it landed. The number on the cube determines the number of items kids may choose to provide their imaginary Roma families on that day. Guide them to circle their choices.

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# Tough Choices Cultural Experience



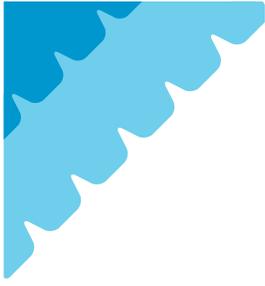
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- Repeat the previous step for each day's list. Mention that some Roma think they have to steal things in order to help their families survive.
- Show the **Tough Choices focus verse** and lead kids to read it aloud. Post it in your room where kids can see it each week.

## Pray

Pray that Roma families learn to love God and choose His ways.





# Tough Choices Prayer Experience



## Prepare

- From the DVD-ROM or [kidsonmission.org](http://kidsonmission.org), prepare to show the **Meet Daniel** video.
- From the DVD-ROM or [kidsonmission.org](http://kidsonmission.org), download and print the **Romania photos**, if you have not done so already. Post the photos in several locations inside and outside your classroom to use for a prayer walk.
- Provide pencils and a few sticky notes for each child.

## Recap

The Roma people live in Romania and other countries throughout Europe. They were once called gypsies, and they are treated badly and looked down on by other Europeans. They are very poor and they move from place to place, looking for work and ways to support their families. Most of them do not know Jesus. One dedicated IMB missionary, Daniel Byrd, walked away from a great job in the United States and comfortable lifestyle to serve the Roma. Daniel helps Roma families discover the joy of choosing to follow Jesus.

## A difficult choice

- If you have already led the cultural experience, prompt kids to describe what a typical day might be like for a Roma family.
- Show the **Meet Daniel** video to introduce kids to the work of Daniel Byrd.
- Explain that Daniel met a young father who was struggling with the choice to accept Jesus as his Savior, but was afraid that his choice to quit stealing would harm his family. Share the rest of this story in your own words:

*“They would say, ‘Daniel, tell me more about this faith and tell me how to use it.’ And I would tell them, and they would laugh at me and say, ‘You know, you don’t understand. You come here saying we need faith, and you have a home. You have a refrigerator with food in it. You have no children, but you have food every day. You have water every day. What about my 10 children who don’t have that?’”*

*And they would ask him if this faith he spoke of would make wood fall from heaven. Wood is something they need to make fire. It’s very important to their survival.*

*That was the question Alex, the 23-year-old Roma man, asked.*

*“I would ask him, ‘Would you like Jesus,’ and he would say no,” Byrd said. “He said, ‘Daniel, if I surrender, I need to surrender all, and I cannot tell you that I’m not going to go in that field and get wood when my family is freezing to death.’”*

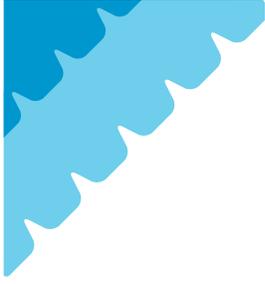
*So Alex wouldn’t pray for Jesus — but he decided he would pray for faith.*

*“When he said that prayer,” Byrd said, “the next time we met, he said, ‘I want Jesus. I believe there’s a way.’ He has never had to steal wood — never had to steal it.”*

*And the young man, whom Byrd considers a son, is now pastor of the little church that meets in his house.*

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# Tough Choices Prayer Experience

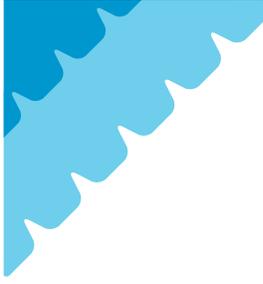


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## Prayer time

- Plan to take the kids on a prayer walk, using the **Romania photos** that you posted.
- Give everyone a pencil and sticky notes.
- Lead kids to the first **Romania** photo. On their sticky notes, encourage kids to write brief sentence prayers prompted by the scene in the picture. Post the notes and move to the next picture. (For young children, lead the group to cooperatively compose a prayer. Transcribe it and post the note yourself.)
- Repeat the process for each photo. On the way back to your classroom, stop at each photo and lead kids to retrieve their own sticky notes. Encourage them to take the notes home and continue to pray for the Roma people.





# Tough Choices Giving Experience



## Prepare

- From the DVD-ROM or [kidsonmission.org](http://kidsonmission.org), prepare to show the **Meet Daniel** video, if you did not show it during the Prayer experience.
- Print and display the **Tough Choices focus verse**, or prepare to draw attention to it displayed in your room.
- Bring 18-inch pieces of colorful yarn. Bring enough for each child to have two or three pieces.

## Recap

The Roma people live in Romania and other countries throughout Europe. They were once called gypsies, and they are treated badly and looked down on by other Europeans. They are very poor and they move from place to place, looking for work and ways to support their families. Most of them do not know Jesus. One dedicated missionary, Daniel Byrd, walked away from a great job and comfortable lifestyle in the United States to serve the Roma. Daniel helps Roma families discover the joy of choosing to follow Jesus.

## Choosing to do without

- Review or replay the **Meet Daniel** video.
- Explain that before he moved to Romania to work with the Roma people, Daniel Byrd was vice president of a company owned by Nike®. A limousine picked him up for work. But after a mission trip to Romania, Daniel felt God was telling him to give up his job, his house and his plans to be married to serve the Roma people. Daniel says, “The house I have would be considered very, very poor, very lower class in America. But to me, I’m very upper class. Where I lived before was a big city. I had a beautiful, beautiful home. I had a double car garage. I had what I thought was everything I needed ... but I was never as happy as I am here.”

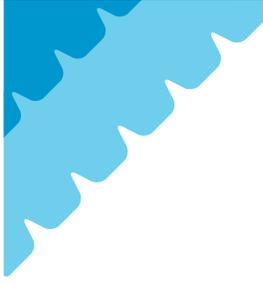
## My do-withouts

- Comment that one way kids and families can support missionaries like Daniel is choosing to do without small optional or luxury items and contributing instead to a missions offering.
- Show the **Tough Choices focus verse** and lead kids to read it with you. Explain that giving to missions is one way to put God’s kingdom first.
- Give everyone two or three pieces of yarn. Challenge kids to arrange the yarn in the shape of an item they could do without in order to support mission work. Encourage kids to describe what they created.

## Pray

Ask God to help kids conquer the desire for material things to put God’s kingdom first.





# Tough Choices Serving Experience



## Prepare

- From the DVD-ROM or [kidsonmission.org](http://kidsonmission.org), prepare to show or replay the **Proclaim the name** video.
- Bring a laundry basket or bag filled with an assortment of clothing for both warm and cold weather conditions. Include some items of stained or ripped clothing, impractical items (sequined high heels) and mismatched pairs (one glove, an odd number of socks).

## Recap

The Roma people live in Romania and other countries throughout Europe. They were once called gypsies, and they are treated badly and looked down on by other Europeans. They are very poor and they move from place to place, looking for work and ways to support their families. Most of them do not know Jesus. One dedicated missionary, Daniel Byrd, walked away from a great job and comfortable lifestyle in the United States to serve the Roma. Daniel helps Roma families discover the joy of choosing to follow Jesus.

## Needs met

- Provide kid-friendly definitions of physical needs and spiritual needs: *things your body needs to survive* and *things your spirit needs to be right with God*.
- If you have not done so, show the **Proclaim the name** video. Challenge kids to identify how the International World Changers met the spiritual needs of the Roma people.
- Ask: *If you were a Roma child and your family was poor and always hungry, would it be hard for you to believe God cared about you? Why or why not?*
- Help kids understand that God demonstrates His care for others through Christians who meet others' physical needs.

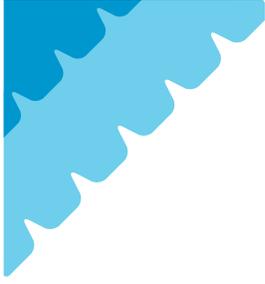
## Clothes sort

- Explain that Romania has hot summers and very cold winters, especially in mountain areas. Lead kids to pretend they are gathering clothing to prepare a Roma community for extreme weather.
- Allow kids to take turns selecting items of clothing from the laundry bag. Lead them to determine whether the item would be an appropriate or inappropriate contribution. Use questions like these as you debrief: *Would you want to receive a shirt that was torn and stained? What would make you feel valued — a new pair of gloves or a pair that has already been worn thin?*
- Comment that the same common-sense selections should be made when kids and their families gather items for local clothing donation centers.

## Pray

Invite volunteers to pray that God richly provides for the physical and spiritual needs of the Roma people.





# Tough Choices Going Further



## More ideas using this theme

- Download and print the **Tough Choices parent letter**. Give to parents so they can continue investigating this theme as a family.
- Serve Romani tea: hot tea with orange slices and a dollop of jam. Lead kids to brainstorm meals that could be made in the same conditions available to many Roma families: over a fire or wood stove, with no electricity.
- For your own background (some information may not be appropriate for younger children), read up on discrimination against the Roma people. For example, did you know that nearly 1 million Roma were victims of the Nazi holocaust? Read more at <http://stories.imb.org/romamissions> and [romaministries.com](http://romaministries.com).
- Don't forget to visit [kidsonmission.org](http://kidsonmission.org) for more activities and KOM experiences you might have missed. Also, like us on Facebook and see how other churches are using KOM.

