

The 8 Characteristics of a Healthy Children's Ministries in the Local Church

The 8 Characteristics of a Healthy Children's Ministries

1. Empowering leadership
2. Gift-oriented ministry
3. Passionate spirituality
4. Functional structures
5. Inspiring worship services
6. Holistic small groups
7. Need-oriented evangelism
8. Loving relationships

1. Empowering Leadership

"Effective leaders concentrate on empowering other Christians for ministry" ..so they become all that God wants them to be.

- Equip
- Support
- Motivate
- Mentor

2. Gift-oriented Ministry

God has given to each of us different gifts and talents

- Identify gifts of staff and utilize them
- Some people may not have the gift of working with children but have passion for them.
The Church should channel them to CHM

A. Recruiting Volunteers

Characteristics:

- Love & commitment to God / Church
- Uphold high moral & ethical excellence
- Have leadership abilities and experience
- Have a passion for children

B. Screening Volunteers

WHY ?

Find out whom God has called to ministry

1. Match a person's gift to ministry
2. Gauge their interest
3. Protect children
4. Protect the church from liability
5. Establish agenda harmony

B. Screening Volunteers

Who does the screening?

1. CHM coordinator
2. Leader of the ministry
3. Church screening committee

B. Screening Volunteers

The 7 C's to consider

1. Calling to ministry
2. Character- God's screening
3. Chemistry- attitude, willingness
4. Competency- training, experience
5. Consistency/congruence
6. Condition- mental, physical, spiritual

B Screening Volunteers

Committed volunteers say:

"I will not sacrifice to the Lord, my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing."

2 Samuel 24:24

3. Passionate Spirituality

Ultimate Goal of all children's programs: To nurture children in their spiritual growth as they develop a loving, serving relationship with Jesus

SPIRITUALITY- Invest in the Bible & Bible Study Guide

Family and church

A. GraceLink Curriculum

- Mission
- Goals
- Philosophy
- Division Cycle

A. GraceLink Curriculum

- Philosophy
- Sabbath School format
- Total Hour Learning
- The Natural Learning sequence

B. Spiritual mentoring of children leader

- Why be a mentor?
Because young and inexperienced leaders need mentor

Reasons to mentor

- Instills values in mentees
- Develops their leadership skills
- Creates opportunities to share faith
- Improves mentees' confidence
- Provides a model for service & stewardship
- Decreases self-centeredness for mentors
- Opens minds to wider possibilities
- Inspires mentees to develop a personal spiritual life

4. Functional Structures

A healthy church works within the structure of the world church
Children's Ministries works within the framework of the structure

Church Structure

- Local church
- Mission/conference
- Union
- Division
- General Conference

5. Inspiring Worship Services

There should be inspiring worship services for all ages

A Special Children's Worship Programs

- Child-friendly church
- Children's Sabbath
- Children's Church
- Children's story in Church/ Homily

B What Pastors & Elders do to Inspire Worship

1. See the Church through a child's eye
2. Learn to know children by names
3. Prepare sermons that involve children in response and participation
4. Make efforts to introduce new ministries for children
5. Incorporate 1-2 children's songs in the worship service
6. Involve children in worship, such as prayer, scripture reading or collection of offering

6. Holistic Small Groups

Children's small group is another way of nurturing the spiritual development of children . Like adult small group, children's small group also meet once a week,

Types of Small Groups for Children

- KID Kids In Discipleship
- Children's Prayer Group
- Rainbows- Support group for children who are grieving– Meet with Rainbow facilitator and they do activities therapeutic to them

What Pastors/Elders Can Do for Small Groups

- 1 Provide budget for running any activity for the children.
- 2 Send individuals for training
- 3 Support the children leaders who are running the program
- 4 Participate occasionally in children's small group

7. Need-oriented Evangelism

Jesus' commission for the disciples to bring the Gospel "to every kindred, tongue and people undoubtedly includes bringing the Gospel to children , as well.

Ellen White reminds us that: (Evangelism, 580)

"When Jesus told the disciples not to forbid the children to come to Him, He was speaking to His followers in all ages– to officers of the church, ministers, helpers, and all Christians. Jesus is drawing the children and He bids us, "Suffer them to come;" as if He would say, They would come if you do not hinder them."

Christ saw the importance in reaching out to children (Evangelism, 579)

"In the children who were brought in contact with Him, Jesus saw the men and women who should be heirs of His grace and subjects for His kingdom, and some of whom would become martyrs for His sake. He knew that these children would listen to Him and accept Him as their Redeemer far more readily than would grown up people, many of whom were the worldly-wise and hard-hearted..."

Christ saw the importance in reaching out to children (Evangelism p 579)

"In teaching, He came down to their level. He the majesty of heaven answered their questions and simplified His important lessons to meet their childish understanding. He planted in their minds the seeds of truth , which in after years would spring up and bear fruit unto eternal life."

Types of Evangelism

1. Child Preacher's Evangelism

2. Friendship Evangelism

Friendship skills to Develop

--How to greet someone

-- How to keep someone company

-- How to introduce a friend

--How to make friends

3. GraceLink Daily Study & Sharing time-

Encourage children to practice their GraceLink Bible study section "**Sharing the Message.**" Each week they are to share the message with someone through a specific project or service.

How can Pastors & elders help with child Evangelism?

1 Feature reports of evangelistic activities

2 Schedule the week of evangelism in the church calendar

3. Allow children who got involved in evangelism give testimonies upfront

4. Support the children and their leaders by attending some of the meetings

5. Provide a budget for child evangelism

8. Loving Relationships

LOVE must pervade all our ministries to children

Demonstrating Loving Relationships

1. Affirm children and their parents publicly

2. Children's leaders and teachers are loving and kind to one another

We must be passionate for children! We must love children!

3 Correct children patiently and be willing to give them a second chance

4 Remember their birthdays

5 Give special time for children for sharing their gifts and talents

What Pastors and Elders do to Demonstrate Love for Children

1 Schedule children's story during worship service

2 Collect special offering for children's projects

3 Have special children's features in church program & sermons

4 Allow children to participate in church, such as serving as junior deacons, greeters and ushers, collecting offering and giving special music.

Love children and care for their spiritual growth and you will grow a healthy church.