

SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

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FEATURING ARTICLE

Ten Building Blocks for a Children's Ministry Strategy

Dr. Lawson Murray - Jan 25, 2022

Is your ministry to children world-class? Regardless of whether you're a parent, pastor, teacher or sports coach, are you excelling at helping children enjoy Jesus and live for Him? If you answered no, then you probably need a children's ministry strategy.

When I was a parent, my plan of action to effectively and consistently help my children engage with the King and co-labour in His kingdom developed along the way. At times it was a hit-or-miss affair. While I was intentional, I didn't plan as well as I could have done.

When I was a pastor, I prepared sermons, facilitated ministry activities, counselled, visited congregants, attended



meetings, prayed, officiated at weddings and funerals, made hospital visits, and the list goes on. Juggling competing responsibilities, I didn't prioritize children's and family ministry adequately.

What's your reality?

Many Christians have a heart for children yet lack a carefully considered biblically informed strategy for connecting children with Jesus and His Story.

Benjamin Franklin supposedly said, "If we fail to plan, we plan to fail." So a strategy (a clear and direct process that specifies how we will reach, rescue, root and release children to live for Jesus) is essential for the spiritual health and growth of our children.

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Children's ministry strategy.

There are ten building blocks for a children's ministry strategy:

1. Start with Jesus. A strategy is needed to figure out how we'll help children see His beauty, revel in His love, and walk in His ways. Children must come to know the real Jesus and His supernatural power. Don't center the strategy on the child's needs. That's putting the cart before the horse. Children's ministry specialist Becky Fischer says, "Kids ... want to really feel His presence ... hear His voice ... experience His power." If we're going to draw children to Jesus, we must lift Him up ([John 12:32](#)).

2. Be biblically informed. God's Word should be the foundation on which every strategy is built. Every value, principle, practice and expected outcome in your strategy should be scripturally sound. If there's no biblical support or precedence for an activity or approach, it shouldn't be part of your strategy.

3. Incorporate the Great Commission. Every strategy should include a clear understanding of what's involved in reaching and rescuing (evangelism) and rooting and releasing (disciple-making) children to be irrevocably devoted to Jesus ([4/14 Movement](#)). At its core, a good strategy aims to help children live for Jesus in a way in which nothing will get in the way of them running the race marked out for them ([Hebrews 12:1](#)).

4. Be family-focused. Family relationships are the most important relationships in the life of a child. Children usually believe what their parent/s believe, value what their parent/s value, and do what their parent/s do. About 50 percent of children are led to faith in Christ by parents or relatives. Biblically speaking, parents should be the primary teachers,

mentors, and spiritual equippers of their children. So parent/s should be empowered to share Jesus, participate with the Spirit, and fulfill their God-given roles as disciple-makers and nurturers.

5. Connect into the life of a local church. It takes a community of faith to raise a child! We should never do children's ministry in isolation or to the beat of its own drum. Children should fully participate in the mission of God ([Missio Dei](#)) and everyone in the faith community should be connected. A good strategy incorporates Christians of all ages (don't ignore or underrate grandparents) to teach children how we love and live for Jesus. A good strategy also requires all the stakeholders (children, parents, teachers, ministry professionals) actively involved in its formation and implementation.

6. Consult with the child. Children don't care what you know until they know you care. A strategy, while it's a process, is about relationships. The process may be useful and may even produce good results, but if there's no relationship with the child, or the child doesn't have some ownership of the process, it won't bear much fruit. There are five strategic questions you should ask children:

- What can I/we do to include you? (helping children belong to Jesus, the family and the local church)
- What can I/we do to instruct you? (helping children pray, attend church, read the Bible, tell others about Jesus)
- What should I/we do to involve you? (helping children serve King Jesus as citizens in His kingdom)
- What should I/we do to invest in you? (helping children fulfill Jesus' purpose for their lives)



•What should I/we do to inspire you? (helping children see the beauty of Jesus and grow in a vibrant relationship with Him)

7. Use primary and secondary resources. The primary sources (what inspires, informs and empowers the process of bringing children to Jesus so they can be entirely His) are the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. The secondary resources are curricula, study notes, programs, films, teaching guides, sermons, experiential games/activities, object lessons, songs, or other tools. The resources we use, games we play, things we say, or courses we run, should never draw attention away from Jesus or His Word.

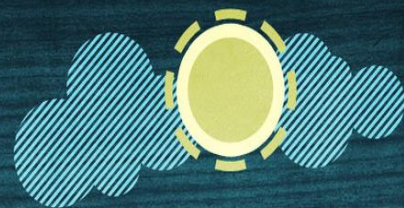
8. Involve others. Children's ministry should never be exclusively done by the parent(s), the local church, or the Christian school. It's both desirable and beneficial for the parents, the church and the school to collaborate closely in the faith formation of children. Get as many people as possible involved, i.e. relatives, friends, pastors, and other adults and children.

9. Think long-term. If you're a parent, your goal should be to help your child know the King, worship and serve in His kingdom. Ministry professionals should make it their goal to equip parents to be the primary disciple-makers. If you're a school teacher, your goal should be to help reinforce the biblical worldview taught in the home. Parents, ministry professionals and school teachers must make sure that everything they do points children to Jesus.

10. Write it down. A written strategy is better than an unwritten strategy. When you create a document it helps you focus on what's practical and attainable. It also becomes a point of reference to measure progress, set the pace for the child's spiritual growth, establish a baseline for his/her spiritual health, and enable you to capture a sense of God's plans and purposes for the child ([Proverbs 22:6](#)).

That sounds like a lot, and it is. Don't be intimidated. A good children's ministry strategy usually takes a few years to develop. Aim to start, rather than trying to complete it. See it as a work in progress, rather than a fait accompli. Work on it together with others. "Commit to the Lord whatever you do" [Proverbs 16:3](#). And be open to modifying and tweaking it as you gain insight and understanding.

www.childrensministrybasics.com



“Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18:2-3

GENERAL NOTICES

**Holy Week & Easter
Idea Share**

You're invited to:
CONNECT with other CFM leaders
COLLECT & SHARE ideas for Holy Week/Easter

WHOM
Children & Families ministry leaders

WHEN
16 March 7:30-9:00pm

WHERE
on Zoom! Register through this link:
[Idea Share Registration](#)

Presbyterian
**Children
& Families**
Ministry

RESOURCE LIBRARY

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY @ HOME 2022



[Welcome to Douglas Talks - DouglasTalks.com](http://DouglasTalks.com)



[HOME | Together at Home \(tath.co.uk\)](http://tath.co.uk)

IMPORTANT DATES

6 March
Children's Day
(childrensday.org.nz)

18 - 27 March
[Neighbours Day](http://Neighbours Day Aotearoa)
Aotearoa

10 April
Palm Sunday

14 April
Maundy Thursday

15 April
Good Friday

17 April
Easter Sunday

18 April
Easter Monday

Lent & Easter Resources

[EASTER RESOURCES | Together at Home \(tath.co.uk\)](http://EASTER RESOURCES | Together at Home (tath.co.uk))

[Season of lent resource \(pcfm.org.nz\)](http://Season of lent resource (pcfm.org.nz))

[Easter and Eastertide Family Devotions \(pcfm.org.nz\)](http://Easter and Eastertide Family Devotions (pcfm.org.nz))

More EASTER resources:

Strandz Easter Bubbles - STRANDZ

Mainly Ministries: New – mainly Ministries New Zealand

FOR MORE RESOURCES, VISIT:

[Resources – PCFM](#)

OR

[Resources - Southern Presbyterian](#)

Do you have resources to share?

Please email Mandi @ mandi@southernpresbyterians.nz

