

DIRECTIONS

NEWSLETTER FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS

Volume 8 Summer
1990



Handwritten "thank you" notes from children are always special. Sammy, a delightful seven-year-old boy (pictured above), recently sent us such a note. He is a part of the Good News Bears Club in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He wrote:

"Dear Pastor Rick and Mrs. Patti:
Thank you for the Good News Bears pencils. I super like them. I'm gonna give them to two of my GOOD NEWS BEARS (friends). Have a good day, I love you."

As I read this note I was reminded, by Sammy, that children are givers!

Giving Away the Love of Jesus

Beginning this summer, children in our Foursquare churches will be able to show Jesus' love in a very significant way. With your help, the Christian Education and Missions Departments, in cooperation with Foursquare Missions Press, will print one million evangelistic tracts to help Foursquare Spanish speaking children reach out to unsaved kids in their communities. For every nickel raised, we can print and mail one tract to Latin America. Your kids can learn about the true heart of missions, receive the blessing of giving, and have fun doing it!

"KID'S CHANGE FOR CHANGE" is about children learning life-long principles of caring for others world-wide. Teaching resources are included with this issue of the Directions Newsletter. These resources are: missions facts, activities, and teaching ideas. Our *praying, caring, and giving will bring change to the life of a child in Latin America.*

Preparing Our Heart to Give

Leading and preparing our children to be active world-wide Christians is exactly what Jesus would do. He made it clear that the Gospel should include everyone—especially the children (Matthew 19:14)! What a tremendous opportunity we have! World evangelism is literally the cornerstone of the Foursquare movement. Jesus is calling this generation to show that we care.

Jesus Wants Us to Care Enough for Others to Tell Them About Him

In each generation God is always at work preparing another (Psalms 78:1-7). The opportunity is ours. The enclosed educational material will help make this outreach a reality to the children of your fellowship. The goals of "KIDS CHANGE FOR CHANGE" missions project are:

1. Teach our children biblical, life-long principles of missions.
2. Provide a learning experience of facts and feelings about what it means to be called a missionary.
3. Give opportunity for children at home (North America) to serve children in Latin America in both WORD and DEED!

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As summer approaches, the "Kids Change for Change" emphasis might be good to consider for Vacation Bible School, club ministries, Good NewsBears or summer/fall Sunday school. Remember, **children grasp truth when they experience it!**

Don't forget the adults! They can be creative in praying, caring, and giving towards *change* for a new generation. Children need direction and modeling. "Our love should not be just words and talk, it must be true love which shows itself in action" | John 3:18 (NAS).

Rick Wulfestieg,
National Minister of Christian Education



Gifts You Can Send Children to Say You Care

Kids love mail! If you can't get together with a child between Sundays, let him or her know you care by occasionally sending a note and a small item from the list below.

- Bookmark
- Balloon
- Stickers
- Gum
- Baseball or Bible Character Card
- Fast food gift certificate
- Photo of an event they attended
- Take-Home Papers
- Letters from the children
- Hair ribbons for girls
- Certificate for goodies
- Gospel Tract
- Coins
- Witness bracelet
- Pencil or eraser
- Small magic trick
- Clipped cartoon
- Candy
- Magnet
- Shoestrings
- Crayons with Bible coloring pages

By R. Dean Stone Excerpted from the daily newsletter from the Children's Pastors' Conference.

The ABC's of brainstorming

Children's workers may be among the most creative group of people in the church today. Here's how to harness that creative power.

When beginning to plan your summer program, have a short brainstorming session with your volunteer staff. Write the following ABC's on a chalkboard and appoint someone to write all the ideas as the group mentions. After 10 or 15 minutes, you'll be amazed at the results if you remember the ABC's:

Accept all ideas. Go wild. Free associations make for a fun and productive brainstorming session. The wilder the idea, the greater number of ideas will "hitchhike" on the idea to generate more ideas. As a result of brainstorming, our space summer featured a planetarium with toy telescopes and spacesuits. We made a large Lunar Landing Module for kids to explore.

Be creative. Thinking is free. Indulge. Splurge. Let one idea foster another. In our western-themed vacation Bible school, the idea of an old-fashioned oil well became a windmill water pump. The windmill eventually became a 13-foot prop in our western town that actually pumped water and was the centerpiece of our children's offering contest.

Cease criticism. During the brainstorming session, the rule is: don't discourage ideas—no matter how weird or impossible. The whole idea of brainstorming is to form enough raindrops of ideas so that puddles of programs can emerge. In our "Daze of the Dinosaurs," someone suggested setting up a creation museum. At first blush, this seemed totally "undoable." Later we put feet to the idea and came up with a first-rate museum—complete with fossils, bones, and dinosaur models. Hundreds of people visited the museum, and it generated enthusiasm for our whole summer program.

Taken from Children's Ministry Magazine, Group©, Loveland, CO. May/June 1993.

Little Members,

Big Dreams

Wouldn't it be wonderful if the little members came to church praying, "Anything You want me to do for You today, Lord? Anyone You want me to hug, or draw a picture for? Anything You want me to say for You?" I encourage children to come to church with an open heart and a desire to minister. This is scriptural! 1 Corinthians 12:31 tells us to "*earnestly desire the best gifts.*" 1 Corinthians 14:26 encourages everyone to come prepared to minister. I never see age mentioned!

This isn't just a nice theory; there are many practical ways I can see where the little members can be incorporated into positions of ministry.

Involve them in the "adult" meetings.

Give children opportunities to give testimonies and to lead in prayer. Use whole families as ushers! New children need to know where Children's Church is held, where the bathrooms are, and where to find the water fountain!

Also encourage children and young people to help minister at the altar. If I'm sick, I appreciate having a child pray for me — they have faith!

If you have people singing at microphones along with the worship leader, put a little member at one mike! Watch the immediate difference in the response of the other children! "Hey, this isn't just for the adults, it's for us, too!"

As in giving responsibility to any person, children must be told that they are to be a good example, and to minister unto the Lord. You will often find them to be more faithful and committed than an adult. In a few years, your church could have a dynamic group of young teenagers — on fire for God, ready to take on responsible positions of leadership.

Adapted from "Soldiers With Little Feet" by Dian Layton, 1992© Destiny Image Publishers, Shippensburg, PA

OUTREACH

Children and the elderly have a wonderful rapport. We take our little members to visit homes for elderly people on a regular basis. We encourage the children to move among the people and talk and pray with them. Sometimes while we sing a worship song, I ask the children to look at the people. If the Lord lays a person on their heart, they are to quietly move out as we sing, and go to that person—hug them and pray quietly. Many times I have watched the Holy Spirit moving on those old hearts through the touch of a child. People who have rejected the gospel their whole lives can be softened when little eyes gaze seriously into theirs and a little voice asks, "Do you have Jesus in your heart?" There is a harvest field—probably within a few blocks of your church building!

G.U.E.S.S.S!


This stands for "God's Undercover Especially Secret Servant's Service." We had cards printed up (like business cards) that simply read, "G.U.E.S.S.S. STRIKES AGAIN!" Children would do good deeds for people—rake leaves, bake cookies, write an encouraging note, deliver a pleasant surprise—and leave one of their cards in the door or mailbox. Kids love mystery and suspense, and have many creative ideas of how to bless a person without getting caught!

CHILDREN'S CHURCH IS REAL CHURCH

Run Children's Church like a "real" church service! Let kids usher, lead worship, give announcements, put on skits, sing special music, pray, prophesy, preach, and follow up new-comers! Get together during the week for a time of planning and prayer, and watch those children arise!

Children Ministering Before the Lord

by Linda Richey



It was Sunday morning in Managua, Nicaragua. Our family was newly appointed as missionaries to Latin America, and Nicaragua was our first assignment. My parents, Bill and Betty Pritchett, were pastors of the recently established congregation... and I was an eager 10 year old, wanting to do what God had called me to do since I was 8 years old.

Mom and Dad sent me out with a 14-year-old named Marlene to gather the children of the neighborhood for Sunday school. We went to an enclosed community that I will never forget. We entered a large courtyard through a small gate that opened to the street. Inside were at least 25 "houses" – really just doorways into single dark rooms that served as residences for entire families.

Children can and need to become involved in world evangelism as well as evangelism at home.

The sewer water ran freely in pathways of its own making. A mother was bathing her infant in the public washing sink—the only place where there was running water. A line of children waited for the bath to be finished in order to fill their buckets with water for their families. The stench was overwhelming. The children ran from place to place, many of them already at games of marbles or chase or just sitting and staring.

Marlene and I had the task of inviting the families to send their children with us to attend our Sunday school. We "herded" the group of 20 to 25 children toward the church building located a few blocks away. After Sunday school, we accompanied them back home to make sure they arrived safely.

Children can and need to become involved in world evangelism as well as evangelism at home. Children can learn to pray and intercede for the nations of the world to come to Jesus. Included in the prayer guide packet for the "Kid's Change for Change" Project are some ideas for teaching children how to pray for the nations of the world.

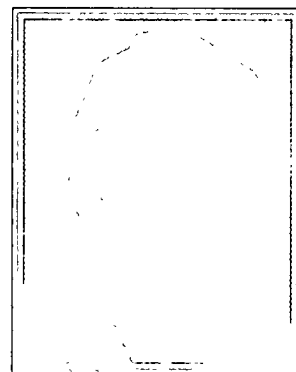
Boys and girls can make a difference in our world as

they pray specifically. They can become world changers as they hear and read the news to know better how to pray for the people of the world. Talking to God about others and learning to serve in this way can pave the way for them to serve personally as they mature.

Children can become involved in missions projects that serve others. That's one of the goals of the "Kid's Change for

Change Project." A nickel donated (either out of the piggy bank or through fund raising efforts) provides a tract that can be a tool to a boy or girl in another nation to share their faith with one of their friends. We want to teach children from the beginning that ministry is a team effort, not a solo project. We work together, each of us using our gifts to serve the Lord and giving Him all the credit and thanks.

I believe the Holy Spirit led my parents as they gave me opportunities to give away my faith at a young age. They trained me, gave me oversight, helped me, asked me to give an account of my ministry and challenged me with high expectations of what God could do in and through me. Their wisdom and instruction—plus their releasing and direction—set the course for my lifetime of ministry to children all over the world.



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7 Principles for Building Trust

Here are some questions and thoughts children posed to God:

Dear God,
In Sunday school they told us what you do.
Who does it when you are on vacation?
Jane

Dear God,
I would like to know why all the things you
said are in red?
Joanne

Dear God,
Is Reverend Coe a friend of yours, or do
you just know him through business?
Donny

Dear God,
I went to this wedding and they kissed right
in church... is that O.K.?
Niel

The issue of trust is crucial for individuals and organizations to sustain themselves in the new millennium. We must first learn to trust ourselves, our experiences, emotions, intuition, and intellect. In order for organizations to sustain themselves, they must work regularly to build trust among workers, constituents, donors, volunteers, and other stakeholders.

Outlined below are seven principles for building trust. They work not only in the new business organization, but in the nonprofit organization and church as well.

- 1. Trust is not blind**—we need to know the people with whom we're working.
- 2. Trust needs boundaries**—we need a careful definition of goals and a clear evaluation of those goals.
- 3. Trust requires constant learning**—every individual must be capable of self-renewal.
- 4. Trust is tough**—we must learn to deal firmly with those who break trust.
- 5. Trust needs bonding**—the goals of the part must gel with those of the whole.
- 6. Trust needs touch**—there must be ways to connect with one another.
- 7. Trust has to be earned**—there must be consistency in action.

Excerpted from: Children's Letters to God. Workman Publishers © 1991

Excerpts from: Charles Handy. In Search of Your Organization's Future. Christian Management Report, May/June 1998

Calling

All

Single

Parents

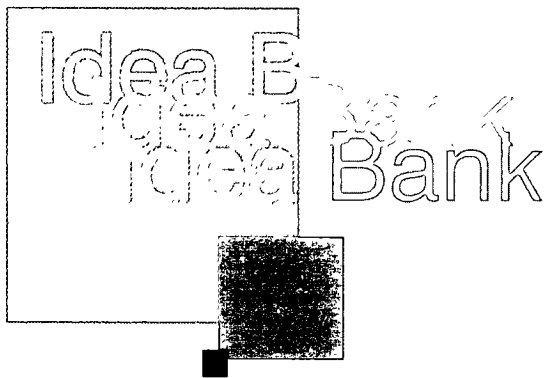
Six months ago, as the new director of the single-parent family ministry at my church, I had lots of ideas but no one to serve. When I shined my flashlight in the nooks and crannies, the single parents scurried about but none appeared in the open. Our mailing list of 15 was not going to yield much of a response. Here's how we pursued the hidden single parents in our midst:

- We went through the rolls of the Sunday school department and flagged all single parents.
- We checked the lists of newcomers to the church and contacted singles with children.
- We sent letters to the single parents of kids in our day care center.
- We checked the rolls of our divorce recovery program for single parents.
- We advertised in the local paper and on the radio.

At our first potluck, we had 10 parents. That 10 grew to 100 as they learned the basics of evangelism and invited their friends. Now they do clothing drives, pool parties, and car-care clinics. They are excited to be empowered to represent God and the church.

Now we're pretty much down to one marketing scheme: word of mouth. We figure happy single parents will attract other single parents, and it's working. They have a place to fit in church without having to find their place in a couples or singles' group.

This article was written by Doug Mead, Neighborhood Church, Castro Valley, CA. e-mail: dmead@sfgate.com. It appeared in SAM Journal, Issue 129, Sept/Oct 1998.



from storytelling to telling the story

An effective pastor today must be a teller of the story, not just a good storyteller.

This means that all communication must be done in light of the whole story of what God has promised to do, has done, and is doing.

stories invite participation

A story almost always involves exploring life from the perspective of a person in a predicament. And that becomes a mirror for all of us who spend the majority of our lives in one predicament or another—that we often call the human predicament.

stories are sneaky

A story doesn't grab you by the lapels and bring you close so that you can smell the coffee and Altoids on its breath. What a story does is sneak up behind you and whisper something in your ear. And in so doing, a story does something that no abstract proposition can ever do. A story is just sneaky. It doesn't teach by induction or deduction. It teaches by abduction. It abducts your attention and it won't let you go until you have done some thinking for yourself.

the story is the point

Who is incarnating the Word in stories today? When preaching narrative passages from the Bible, they are not doing it to illustrate a point. The story is the point. They believe in the story's magic. They don't want to drain it of its blood, skin it, stuff it, mount it and present it as an outline of abstractions and limp moralisms the way I so often have done. C. S. Lewis understood this, which is why so many of us love him. Narnia can teach you more about hope and Heaven and Jesus than a boxed set of my best sermons, including the fill-in-the-blank outlines.

The challenge for those communicating in the emerging culture is to use the wonderful benefits of storytelling to tell the story to a culture that is looking for a context of when and where for the many questions of what and why.

Brian McLaren, senior pastor of Cedar Ridge Community Church. Originally appeared in NEXT Newsletter, February 1999. Reprinted with permission. Leadership Network. Phone: 800.765.5323 in the U.S., or 214.969.5950 outside the U.S.

Children's Letters to God

Have the children in your classes write letters or questions to God. Try to keep the children as anonymous as possible. If you wish, share the ages of the authors. Place the letters in a booklet form and hand them out to the congregation. This is wonderful promotion for your Children's Ministry Program.

Kids Praying For Kids by Franklin Graham

Published by Tommy Nelson, Nashville, TN
This monthly prayer journal is a brightly colored wire-bound booklet that guides children to pray for other children. This journal will help a child keep a prayer list, track God's answers, record thanks to answered prayer, and memorize a Bible verse each month.

Kids Praying for Kids will introduce a child to interesting facts about kids from around the world and help him or her pray for them. The journal introduces Samaritan's Purse, an organization that aids the poor and hurting throughout the world. \$4.99

Principles of a Purpose-Centered Children's Ministry by Darrell Fraley

This book provides a perfect blend of practical wisdom and insightful principles. In each chapter you will find time-tested principles of ministry, find yourself thinking that's a great idea, and come away with clear understanding of how to put what you've learned into action. \$15.00

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