

Top 10 Tips for Starting a Kid's Ministry

By Pastor Al Gaither

- 1) Pray: first, for direction. Second for workers. Third, for the kids.
- 2) Recruit people who BELIEVE it's ministry, and are excited about being a part. They need to see the vision, that it's not babysitting by discipling the future church!
- 3) Make your Kid's Church room exciting – even if you have to set up and tear down every time. Go to the party stores, dollar stores, big chains (the W), get props! And make sure everything you use to decorate is useful. Unused props can get to be boring! BUT, you can always surprise them with something they THINK is a prop only is used during a game or a devotion.
- 4) Keep your service HOPPING! Kids attention span is short – usually 1 minute for their age. So a 9 year old has a 9 minute attention span. So, keep it hopping! Do you do praise and worship with the kids, (I hope you do), then don't put them all together! Do a fast song, then run a puppet routine, or an object lesson. Run another fast song, and mix in something else like announcements, then run a slow song, and go into prayer time and memory verse. MIX IT UP!
- 5) Get good curriculum, and teach Bible fundamentals. Sometimes you can get bogged down in small things like trivia, when your kids need Bible TRUTH! Yes, there was a small boy involved in the feeding of the 5000, but here's the BIG PICTURE: Jesus has the power to meet your kids' needs.
- 6) Show your kids your love for them. Sometimes as a kid's pastor, I have to do the extra thing: go visit a kid who has had their tonsils out and take them some ice cream. Go watch one of my girl students as she dances in a recital. Attend a graduation – even if it's from kindergarten . Love is not just expressed during Sunday AM service.
- 7) Get your parents involved.. and do it by being involved with them. Set up a monthly email to all parents letting them know what the kids will be learning that month. Ask a parent to come into your service 1 Sunday and talk about their job, then relate it to jobs in the Bible. Have a parent cook a snack for a Sunday.
- 8) Security. Have a check in and check out procedure. You are showing your parents you are concerned about their kids safety. Screen anyone wanting to work in kids ministry. This protects your kids and your ministry. Bathroom trips: have a female take the girls and a male to take the boys, and have that leader wait outside while the kids are using the facilities. Trips: have a permission slip on every child with medical insurance info, and parent phone numbers and any medication the child needs.

- 9) Finances. The truth is: kid's ministry, like any other, must have money to run. Don't try to pay for ALL of it yourself. Here's a few ideas: 1) have an offering contest for the kids. Make it into a game. i.e. clothespins into a milk bottle, and get a prize (dollar store prizes). 2)Have the parents bake a few desserts and setup in front of the big W and have a bake sale. 3)Have the parents participate in a car wash. 4)Fall time, "rent" out your staff, including yourself, to do yard work.
- 10) Did I mention PRAY: Continually bathe your ministry, your teaching, your team, and your kids in prayer.