

6 MINISTRY VALUES THAT MEET KIDS' NEEDS

Have you ever dreamed of a children's ministry where children beg to come to church? Is such a dream really possible? Absolutely! But such great kid venture that impacts children requires us to plan and execute well-thought-out ministry values. Remember, no matter what program strategy or structure is used, values dictate how we'll deliver ministry to kids.

To reach kids more effectively, we need to develop core, nonnegotiable values that every area would use. Too many children's ministries operate without formal values. We simply run programs from week to week to keep children occupied and busy. If there is such a gap in your ministry, why not use these six ministry core values suggested by Sue Miller, author of the book, *Making Children's Ministry the Best Hour of Every Kid's Week*.



VALUE 1: Our Ministry is Child-Targeted (1 Corinthians 9:22)

We need to look at every aspect of our program through the eyes of children. Are we doing the kinds of things children really enjoy? Are we singing songs that children want to sing? Are we teaching the lessons children will understand? Would children invite their friends here?

VALUE 2: Our Ministry is Safe (Mark 10:14)

The world has become a very scary place for children. They are afraid of school shootings, terrorist bombings, bullies in the hallway or on the bus. It is vital that our children's ministries provide a safe environment for the children who come to learn about Jesus. For some, our church may be the only safe place they have. Hence, we need to screen volunteers who work with children, accept and love every child unconditionally, protect them from harm and abuse, allow them to ask questions, and learn to trust Jesus as they struggle with tough life issues.

VALUE 3: Our Ministry's Teaching is Relevant & Application-Oriented (Psalm 119:11)

Children need to know that God gave us a book filled with wisdom to help them understand life today, and that his message provides unchanging truth they won't find anywhere else. Relevant teaching requires that we use language that is appropriate to the level of the child's understanding. In teaching Bible lesson content, ask yourself 3 questions:

- a) Know what? – the Bible truth
- b) So what? -- the heart of relevancy of the lesson to kids' life
- c) Now what? -- applying the lesson

VALUE 4: Our Ministry Will Teach the Bible Creatively

It is vital that we apply creativity to teaching the Bible so that children "get it" rather than "endure it." Making the Bible come alive for children can be accomplished through drama, interactive storytelling, games, etc. Don't make your lesson boring. Our God is not boring!

VALUE 5: Our Ministry Intentionally Shepherd in Small Groups

Working with children in small groups allows the leaders to know each child better and builds trust so that they can connect the children to the faith community. Leaders need to show up to teach and be ready to listen well. Small group leaders might be the only Christian adult a child personally knows. They can impact children in character development as they model a truly Christ like character.

VALUE 6: Our Ministry is Fun and Interesting!

Children are more motivated to learn in a fun-filled, interesting environment. Let's face it, children won't come back willingly if it is not fun. And they certainly won't invite their friends.