



# Kids in Ministry!

by Brian Dollar

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I'll never forget the moment an individual stopped me in the hall and said, "Pastor Brian, you sure do a great job of taking care of our kids." As I dissected that statement, I reflected on how often I have heard well-meaning people refer to children's ministry as "child care." Is that what we are doing? Are children's ministries nothing short of glorified babysitting services? Or could it be that children truly are capable of using their spiritual gifts to impact the kingdom of God? Can a child fully know and understand what ministry is really all about?

Jesus himself answered these questions when He said, "The kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matthew 19:14).

Anything God has made available to adults through the power of the Holy Spirit, He has also made available to children. Children can and should be functioning members of a body of believers. Whether it is on a worship team, puppet team, drama team, greeters team, or even an ushers team, children's ministry is the primary place where kids can begin to find their places in ministry.

## Upfront Ministry

"When I am worshiping God in

front of others, it helps them to see someone [up front] so they can start to worship Him," says a fifth grader who is on the worship team in children's church. "It helps me, too, because I can use my singing to praise God, and at the same time teach others to worship."



After seeing just how effective children can be in ministry to their peers at First Assembly, we were moved to begin C.I.A. (Christians In Action). This team of fourth and fifth graders spends much of the summer ministering to others. One C.I.A. member explains, "We learn human videos, dramas, songs,

and skits. Then we use [these tools] to help other kids learn about Jesus. We do them in church and in the neighborhoods so that kids can see that it is really cool to serve God."

"I love being here," says a ten-year-old who serves on a team that ministers at the Mentoring Center, reaching out to the inner-city kids of downtown Little Rock, helping them focus on developing godly character. "God lets me help other kids. It makes me feel important."

## Ministry Behind the Scenes

Upfront ministry is not the only way that kids can use their ministry gifts. Many have been blessed with the gift of generosity and demonstrate this by sacrificial giving to BGMC. One nine-year-old gave over \$2,500 to help children all over the world hear about Jesus. He says, "My goal is to one day meet just one kid who came to Jesus because of my money."

As children's ministers, we all have a biblical mandate to train up children to be leaders in the church and in the world. Don't wait until they are adults to get them "plugged in" and fulfilling the call of God in their lives.

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## Questions for Further Study—

1. Can children be functioning members of a body of believers? How?
2. How can a child worship leader affect others?
3. What are some “upfront” ways your children can use their ministry gifts?
4. What are some “behind the scenes” ways your children can use their ministry gifts?

This article is reprinted from the Summer 2003 issue of *Fanning the Flame*, a quarterly newsletter for children’s workers produced by the National Children’s Ministries Agency. *Fanning the Flame* is mailed free to children’s pastors and directors in the local church. For additional copies and back issues contact GPH at 1-800-641-4310.

