



The 21st Century Church, part 3 of 4—

Investing in Children's Ministries

by David Boyd, National Coordinator, Children's Ministries Agency / BGMC

Let's look at the need for churches to invest in children's ministries. Dan Betzer says, "In my travels I have observed that many times the children's ministry was near the bottom of the totem pole in importance and finances."

Many times children's ministries is at the bottom of the churches' financial totem pole. When that happens, churches will find they are not attracting new young families. Or worse yet, they may be losing young families to the church that does invest in the children.

Young adults are the vibrant young blood that enter our churches, get involved, and become our leaders. Without them, many churches stagnate. God told us to "teach the children." God knew that investing in the children was the best way to perpetuate, grow, and expand the church. Children's ministry takes an investment.

Dan Betzer continues: "Put this ministry firmly in your budget. Our children's ministries is subsidized in our annual budget. Pastors truly tie their children's leaders' hands when they don't give them the funds they need."

He continues: "A growing congregation urgently needs a strong, Spirit-led children's pas-

tor (or well-trained laity). This is no place to scrimp. I urge pastors to find the very finest leadership available."

Leith Anderson writes: "In the 1950's, the fastest growing staff position was youth pastor. Today the fastest growing new staff position is the children's pastor, as more and more churches respond to this their biggest outreach and growth opportunity."



Not every church can afford a children's pastor, but every church can afford to train up and invest in children's leadership within the church. Some of our best children's pastors were laity whose senior pastor sent them to multiple training opportunities all around the country to create the best leaders they

could. Send your children's leadership to every training conference you possibly can. Fly them to conferences if necessary. Every dollar you spend to train your children's leaders will build the quality with which your church ministers to children.

The Senior Pastor and Children's Ministry

What is the importance of the senior pastor when it comes to children's ministry? A tremendous children's ministry begins with a senior pastor who truly wants to reach children and young families. The senior pastor dictates the value the people and the board place upon children's ministry. His vision for reaching children spreads to the whole congregation.

The senior pastor's vision should include investing in children outside the walls of the church. Deuteronomy 31:12,13 says, "Assemble the people—men, women, and children, and the aliens living in your towns so they can listen and learn to fear the Lord your God and follow carefully all the words of this law. Their children who do not know this law must hear it!"

God is talking about reaching the children of the unsaved people in your community. He is

saying that it is the church's responsibility to reach these kids. We *must* reach them!

The senior pastor is the key to the way the congregation responds and supports the children's ministry. Like no other ministry in the church, children's ministry is totally dependent upon a significant number of

volunteers to minister in classrooms every time the doors of the church are open.

It is not unique to have more volunteers involved in children's ministry than all other ministries of the church combined. In one church where I was the children's pastor, there were 480 adult volunteers in the whole church. Of these, 320 worked in

children's ministry. The senior pastor is the key to successfully encouraging every member of the adult congregation to get involved in ministry, especially children's ministry, since it requires such a vast number of people.

Questions For Further Study—

1. Brainstorm ways that you and your children's workers can raise the awareness of children's ministry in the eyes of your senior pastor and adult lay workers.
2. What lay personnel does your church have that can be trained as effective children's workers?
3. What training resources can you use to prepare workers for children's ministry in your church?