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Effective Ministry with Children

By Liz Perraud

One of the most important challenges facing our society today is the moral and spiritual development of our children. The questions for the church are *What are we doing about it?* and *How well are we doing it?* A truly effective children's ministry sets up the conditions to nurture young people into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. What does this look like in practice? An effective children's ministry is *purposeful, practical, and impactful.*

Important characteristics of such a ministry include:

- A commitment to children through adequate funding, personnel, child-friendly worship, planning and policies that protect and empower children
- An approach to Christian education that nurtures the mind, body, and soul of children with appropriate cognitive and practical learning opportunities
- Support for parents in their primary role as spiritual guides for their children
- A deliberate approach to identifying, calling, and developing strong adult leaders through training and adequate preparation
- Careful selection of curriculum and study materials
- Openness to the community, particularly the unchurched, so that children's ministry becomes a tool of outreach
- Fruitfulness in terms of programmatic vitality, the observable spiritual growth of children, and the nurturance of healthy intergenerational relationships

These characteristics are drawn from the Children's Ministry Effectiveness Model developed by The LOGOS Ministry (www.thelogosministry.org). The model, based on nearly 50 years of experience working directly with churches, lists factors that can help children's ministry leaders assess and improve their congregation's approach to the spiritual nurture of children.

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