

Let Them Come

How to grow a kids ministry
that lives out these
words of Jesus

Notes for the person facilitating this training are written in blue. It's important to read through all exercises and all blue text instructions when preparing to facilitate this training.

All videos can be previewed prior to the training session but be aware that this course has a two-month limited access. So the training needs to be completed within two months from the date of purchase.

The timing of each exercise is a guide only. For example, a larger group may need more time in sharing ideas from multiple small groups after a brainstorming exercise.

Allocate two hours for this training, with a twenty minute break after Exercise #4.

Set Up:

- Set up chairs around tables (ideally 6-7 per table)
- Cover tables with paper
- Place coloured markers on each table
- Place wrapped lollies on tables as treats (optional)

Need:

- Data projector
- Sound system

Introduction:

- Welcome people.
- Indicate timing of breaks and essential information for all in attendance (toilet locations, emergency exits...).
- Begin by committing the time to God in prayer.
- Encourage everyone to introduce themselves to those in their group.

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Welcome people and open in prayer.

LET'S BEGIN

Read the text in the blue box and the text below the blue box.

Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.

~Matthew 19:13-15

Large crowds followed Jesus everywhere (Matthew 19:2), hanging off his every word. Clambering to be healed. Even the rich and famous were seeking him (Matthew 19:16).

So when parents brought their little children to Jesus the disciples rebuked them. 'Do not waste the Master's time with little children.' But then Jesus rebukes them. 'God's kingdom belongs to these little ones. Let them come!'

EXERCISE #1 (10 minutes, group exercise)

1. How might a church hinder a child in coming to Jesus?
2. When might a church need to apologise to children for hindering them in coming to Jesus?

Monitor responses so that participants do not lay blame, or share specific, sensitive information about abuse children may have experienced. Encourage them to speak generally about things that may hinder children in coming to Jesus.

No need for groups to share with each other. This aims to get people thinking about what Jesus' warning might look like.

Video #1: LET THE CHILDREN COME

Come to Jesus

Through the Word

Word taught at

- Church
- Home

Transformational vs Informational

- Call to respond
- What's God got for you today? (everyday 'God talk' by parents/significant adults)
- What do you like about this story?

God matters most

EXERCISE #2 (10 minutes, group exercise)

1. Parents are God's chosen primary disciplers. God chooses to use parents as a key way to bring children to himself. In one colour, brainstorm all the ways you already support and encourage parents to actively disciple their kids.
2. In a second colour, brainstorm other things you could do as a church.

Encourage groups to capture their ideas of the things they already do (words and pictures) on the paper on their tables using one colour.

Use different colours to add things they don't currently do, but could do in the future.

Collect these brainstorming sheets for future exploration post the training.

After 10 minutes ask each group to share their top three suggestions on how to support and encourage parents in discipling their children.

EXERCISE #3 (20 minutes, individual/group exercise)

1. Read the Effective Ministries article, Partnering With Parents - Some Ideas, by Sarie King (pages 14-16). This article provides practical suggestions on how to encourage and support parents in their role as primary disciplers.

It may be helpful to read this article and the list below out loud to ensure everyone begins the third activity at the same time.

2. Read the list of suggestions below on ways to encourage, resource and equip parents in your church to disciple their children.

Daily

- Pray for parents
- Pray for children
- Provide daily Bible reading plans (available free on Kidswise)

Weekly

- Kids spot in church
- What will my child learn? (given out at the beginning of each term)
- Question of the week (sent home for families to discuss)
- Provide weekly Bible plans or bookmarks (available free on Kidswise)
- Intentionally equip parents via small group Bible studies applications

Monthly

- Intentionally equip parents in services - interviews, application in sermon
- Parent Newsletter
- Ten Tips (available free on Kidswise)
- Parenting Tools (available free on Kidswise)
- Post recommended resources on parents Facebook page
- Recommend age appropriate Bibles
- Recommend devotional resources