

A vision for children's and youth ministry

Principles

- We equip and partner with parents for discipling their children.
- We disciple children from their earliest days and never stop.
- Discipleship of children employs the same biblical principles as for adults.
- We must not ignore the high ratio's of leaders needed. How can this army be recruited, trained and encouraged?
- We can use the many opportunities for evangelism
- A children's/youth/families worker can't *fix* the ministry but they can lead it. Eph 4:11-13.

The preschool years

- **At home:** Worldviews are being built. Rich opportunities for building Christian foundations
 - Learning focus: Authority and Love
- **At church:** Parents are often in need of support. High ratio in creche
- **In the community:** A rich opportunity for evangelism as friendship networks and routines are being built
 - Toddler groups
 - Ministry training for exhausted parents

The primary school years

- **At home:** Parents are tempted to take a spiritual step back. Can we encourage them to step forward?
 - Learning focus: Gospel-based godliness. [By 9yrs old, the moral framework is built]
- **At church:** An army of leaders is needed. Can we find team leaders? Can we train leaders to teach the Bible?
- **In the community:** At the school gate. Children in partnership with parents
 - Holiday Clubs
 - Sustainable models of integrating families into church life

The secondary school years

- **At home:** Parents often feel lost. Can we get alongside them?
 - Learning focus: Living out independent faith [By 13yrs old, the spiritual framework is built]
- **At church:**
 - Plausible support structures
 - A network of support. 'It takes a church to raise a child'. 1:6
 - What does it look like for our teenagers to be full members of the church family?
 - 1:1's with stable partners. Don't be limited by age.
- **In the community:** The young people are the evangelists
 - How could we support them?
 - How can they be encouraged to show leadership? With support as they take risks.

Questions for discussion

- **What is the one opportunity you have to develop, in line with your church's vision?**
- **Who do you have who can lead this development, with your help?**