

Ministry Planning Tool Introduction

A recent study by George Barna noted:

“Less than one out of every ten church teenagers has a biblical worldview. In other words, the result of their involvement at a church is that they can recite some religious facts, they made some friends, and they had fun. That’s wonderful, but we also find that most of them have neither accepted Christ as their savior nor altered the basis on which they make their moral and ethical decisions in life. For most teenagers who have spent years attending church activities their faith is not integrated into who they are and how they live. Most of the young people who claim they developed an understanding of the Bible that enables them to make decisions based on biblical principles show no evidence of using that understanding in relation to the core beliefs and lifestyle choices that we studied.”

(Teens Evaluate the Church Based Ministry they Received as Children, July 8, 2003, Barna Research Online, www.barna.org)

This study has significant implications for children’s ministry. It emphasizes the importance of a children’s ministry based on several sound biblical principles.

1. Children’s ministry is a partnership between church and home where children are most significantly influenced.
2. Faith development includes more than head knowledge.
3. Children must be integrated into the whole ministry of the church.
4. The purpose of children’s ministry is personal spiritual transformation.

The Department of Christian Formation of The Evangelical Covenant Church is committed to the task of assisting you as a ministry leader in this mission of making authentic disciples of adults, youth and children. We affirm that the Christian formation journey is a continuous and lifelong process of being transformed by the Holy Spirit into the likeness of Christ, experiencing and expressing love for God and others. However, this journey requires intentionality on the part of the disciple *and* an active partnership with the Holy Spirit to allow His transforming work to emerge.

This resource has been designed with the hope that it will help you assist children in their own spiritual pilgrimage.

For further consultation, call The Covenant Resource Center at 1-800-338-IDEA (or e-mail: resource.center@covchurch.org).

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