

## Big Sunday School in Small Spaces

*"What's a headache for large churches is a migraine for small churches."*

Space is a huge obstacle in children's programming-in any size church. Unfortunately, that's because most churches are built for adults, not kids. Classrooms are constructed for table discussions, not active-learning experiences. And fellowship areas are made for coffee, not kickball.

Smaller churches are notorious for tight budgets.

The secret is to "THINK BIG! Small thinking will only yield small results.

Be creative, let the kids "own" their room. Allow them to decorate it. Paint it. Clean it. Stock it. If it's theirs, they'll meet anywhere, including the preacher's office!

### **Numbers are relative**

Success is not in numbers as much as it is in ministry. If changed lives are produced, it won't matter whether it's five or 50.

1. Be careful how you react to low attendance. If you ask, "Where's Jill?" or "What happened to Michael?" you're asking the wrong crowd and sending a dangerous message.
2. Instead of investigating who's not there (and why), ***celebrate those who are there!*** After all, continual absentee inquiries will only suggest to children that they matter more when they're absent!
3. Celebrate a kid's presence, make them want to be back.

***Here's the bottom line: Don't count kids; make kids count!***

### **Smaller church dilemma -far more jobs than people.**

So the few tend to wear multiple hats.

- Teaching the fourth-graders.
- Sweeping the sanctuary.
- Mailing the newsletter.
- Driving the church van.

### **Where's the teachers?**

Children's ministry volunteers can be anybody-parents, senior citizens, singles, and even teenagers. **(get pastoral approval if needed)**

### **Preparing People for children's Ministry**

1. creating job descriptions for children's workers.
2. List the responsibilities.
3. Implement short-term, definitive commitments rather than open-ended, "until you die" responsibilities.

***No one specializes in a small church because there's too much to do.***

It's far better to succeed in a few things than ultimately fail in many. Specializing is the answer. Give your program a unique signature. Develop a top-rate children's church, a quality after-school program, or a ministry to children from broken homes.