



RCCGNA Children's Ministry
Setting up and organizing a Children's Ministry for
New RCCGNA Church Plants and Beyond
A guide for Pastors and Children's ministry leaders

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Introduction:

This simple guide is meant to assist you the Pastor and Children's minister in the process of setting up a Children's Church in a new Church Plant.

By God's grace, strength and favor RCCGNA has expanded over the years to well over 600 churches since the onset of RCCGNA in 1999. As executives in the RCCGNA Children's Ministry, it has been brought to our attention by other children's workers and volunteers in our various training sessions, that in many circumstances the welfare of the Children Church in the new Church plant has either not been met or is substandard. Unfortunately, the hearts of many of our children are either disillusioned or not enthusiastic about attending Church!

In many instances also, the report has been that the number of Children in the new Church plants either equal or supersede the adult attendance in the Church.

The data that RCCGNA recently received in 2011/2012 has shown that the number of births is well over 1000 in less than one year! Note that this is only of those that have been reported! This statistic has been repeatedly detailed in the Chairman's presentations in his various provincial visits for 2012. Given the information that we have as detailed above, if we are to retain our children in RCCGNA Churches for the future it is imperative that we connect and meet their spiritual needs especially as it pertains to this society here in the United States. It is quite easy for our children to be excited about the American Church down the street that has many activities. Why can't that Church be yours? The issue is not your Church size but how you have planned for children's activities and the growth of your children's church in the future. Why not now?

To keep our children excited about God while we plant new Churches two things must be done:

1. Children's Church in RCCGNA **must be a priority** for all Pastors of new Church plants.
2. Second, it should be designed so that **the children learn the fundamentals of our doctrine and faith in an exciting and enthusiastic environment**. This is the unique way that children learn that differs from the adult and we must be attentive to this to retain them.

Keep in mind that in many ways because of the unique nature of the RCCGNA Church plant it may require thinking a little outside the box when organizing the Children's Church from ground zero. We will provide some in the body of this document.

5 Ways to build the Children's Church as a new Church Plant:

- 1. Make the children's ministry a priority before you look for a venue for the Church Plant**
Note: **the pastor's wife should take the children's ministry under her wing and ensure it runs effectively.** She should be responsible for the adequate materials, funds, activities for the children's needs.
 - Ensure adequate classroom space for at least 4 groups of children. (Toddler, Lower Elementary, upper Elementary and youth)
 - Keep the Children's church in your annual budget
 - Choose a good Curriculum: RCCGNA Children's Ministry (1st publishing is due shortly) Group, Standard, CEF are others.
- 2. Use your Church members as volunteers (including the Pastors' wife, parents and singles)**
Make a weekly rotating schedule involving everyone above until your church is a substantial size.
- 3. Send your Children's teachers (sometimes this will include the Pastor's wife) for our annual RCCGNA Children's Ministry Training in April of each year.**
 - Put this in the annual Church budget so that it is not done at the last minute (see item #1 above)
 - Training will provide your teachers with more insight on an exciting Children's Church.
- 4. Be Creative with Adult services and Children's Church and make it fun. Think outside the box!**
 - Find out what excites your children and implement it in your Children's Church (children's church in the park, an area restaurant for Bible study, movie night, movie clips for teaching, crafts, games, play gospel music, skits, drama etc.)
 - Consider having one Sunday a month where the Sunday school and sermon is about them. The idea is to incorporate the children into Church as much as you can, and as early as you can. You may also consider a dress down Sunday (jeans and t-shirt) for everyone.
- 5. Investigate other Children's churches in your community and get ideas there.**
 - Consider partnering with other Children's Churches in your neighborhood, you will be surprised how much will be made available to you!

These are 5 major points that we find to be the best in helping to retain the children in Church especially Church plants. We hope they are helpful. Please go to www.rccgna/children.org for other resources. For more information please read: **How to organize the Children's church (attached).**

Matthew 18:6 says, "But if anyone shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hung about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea."

God bless you as you reach out to meet the needs of the children in your Church. The Church needs you to help fulfill the growth and faith of our children. Your labor shall not be in vain in Jesus name!

How to Organize a Children's Church

Starting a children's ministry is an excellent way to attract young families to your church, and to keep them coming back for more. Taking the time to begin it properly will ensure a thriving ministry and excellent growth potential for the church.

Basic Requirements and Equipment needed to start a Children's Ministry

<u>Requirements</u>	<u>Equipments</u>	<u>Suggested Sunday School Schedule</u>	<u>Organization</u>
<p>1. Classrooms: Should be based on the number of Children in your church.</p> <p>2. Teachers. Minimum of 2 teachers in a classroom. The suggested ratio is 1 teacher to 4-children depending on age group.</p> <p>Helpers- This Would include Parent volunteers</p>	<p>1. Play mats (infant/toddlers)</p> <p>2. Age appropriate tables and chairs</p> <p>3. Sleeping mats/cots for the young children.</p> <p>4. Television with DVD player and CD player</p> <p>5. Flannel board, dry-erase board (with dry-erasable markers)</p> <p>6. Pencils, crayons, papers, pens, construction paper and stickers.</p> <p>7. Children's Bibles and books</p> <p>8. Attendance register</p> <p>9. Musical instruments</p> <p>10. Puppets</p> <p>11. Toys (avoid stuffed animals. As they harbor dust mites and are hard to keep clean. Also avoid toys with small pieces or parts. These can be choking hazards for children ages 3 and under)</p> <p>12. Disposable cups, plates, bowls and cutlery.</p> <p>13. First Aid kit</p> <p>14. Storage unit</p>	<p>1. Opening prayer</p> <p>2. Praise/worship</p> <p>3. Bible lesson instruction</p> <p>4. Memory verse</p> <p>5. Games, skits, crafts (Bible lesson related)</p> <p>6. Offering</p> <p>7. Counseling</p>	<p>1. Develop your goals and vision for the ministry.</p> <p>2. Divide the ministry into groups based upon the children's different ages.</p> <p>4. Choose leaders or Coordinators to oversee each age group.</p> <p>5. Meet regularly with the coordinators</p> <p>6. Develop special yearly programs</p> <p>7. Set up a yearly budget</p> <p>8. Set up goals on a yearly basis</p> <p>9. Set up training programs for your department</p> <p>10. Choose a curriculum</p> <p>11. Design a team handbook/Policy and procedure manual that can be used in training new teachers</p>

Note: your teachers and volunteers may initially be parents from the congregation.

It will be necessary to identify those who want to be teachers by making it mandatory that they go for further training (i.e. RCCGNA Children's Ministry Conference, Child Evangelism Fellowship training)

The following is a suggested list of items that you can implement in your church for teachers

1. Ensure that all your teachers are born again Christians and have become Workers in Church. An application process and a background check should also be implemented on all teachers.
2. Ensure that all your teachers can attend worker's meetings regularly.
3. Have all teachers undergo the approved C.E.F. (Child Evangelism Fellowship) training by taking the level 1 class called Teaching Children Effectively or T.C.E. They should also attend the Annual RCCGNA Children's Ministry Conference in April of each year at the RCCGNA Camp in Dallas, Texas.
4. All teachers should have an orientation showing them the guidelines and rules for the flow of teaching in Sunday school. You can post this in each classroom if needed.
5. Have all your teachers on a schedule at least once or twice a month. An assistant is beneficial if you have enough people. If you have only one teacher, be sure that the teacher gets at least one Sunday off when they are not teaching-this is to avoid Burnout!
6. Ensure that all your teachers get a copy of the Sunday message on CD so that they have not missed out on the activities in the main service.
7. Make sure that you meet with your teachers on a monthly basis (at least).
8. Always, always encourage your teachers! (The tendency to burnout is high!).
9. Have all teachers keep the room cleaned and picked up after service each Sunday.

A word about Parental Involvement

If you are a new church just starting out you are at an advantage here in that you can get your parents involved from the very beginning.

Here are some ways to involve your parents:

1. Parents can act as helpers in the children's classroom during service.
2. They can assist in meeting the needs of the department as the Holy Spirit leads.
3. Parents can intercede in prayer for teachers and children. A group of parents may decide to meet regularly to do this or it may be done on an individual basis.
4. A quarterly parent/teacher forum can be organized to inform parents on how their child is doing. It also can serve as a means of teaching parents how to interact and evangelize their own children.
5. A yearly parent/teacher/child forum can be organized for better understanding of each other.

Teacher to Student Ratios

The Children's departments in your Church should have the proper student to teacher ratio

- Babies should have one teacher for every two students.
- Ones and twos should have a ratio of one teacher for every three students.
- Three's through pre-kindergarten need one teacher for every four students.
- Kindergarten classes need one teacher for every five students.

Note: These ratios are ideal but not always possible in a new church plant, but please strive towards this as the Church grows.