

Why it's an important thing to be a children's ministry leader?

Some Sunday mornings it feels like we didn't make a dent in the faith development of those kids in our classrooms. But what we do is vitally important and statistics and studies bear this out. If our goal is to help the children come into a life-long relationship with God through Christ, children's ministry is the most effective tool a church has.

According to a Barna Institute Study of over 1000 adults, the percentage of children who maintain a life-long relationship with Christ is

- 32% for children who participated between 5 and 13 years of age
- 4% for children who participated between 14 and 16 years and
- 6% for people who participated 19 years and older

In other words, "attracting younger children to a church to learn about the love of God will have 5 to 8 times the impact of attracting the same number of older children or adults. Barna's research on faith development and discipleship also found that the moral development of children is completed by age 9" (White Hutchinson Learning and Leisure Group)

George Barna says *"The research is very clear; if Jesus is not already part of their lives by the time they leave junior high school, the chances of them accepting Him as the Lord and Savior is very slim (6% to be exact)."* The Barna Research adds "Church attendance by children also has a lifelong impact. The majority (61%) of adults who attended church as children still attend regularly, while only 22% of those who were not church goers as children attend church today. For parents who were church members as children, 63% take their own children to church. That's double the proportion among adults who were not church members and now have children of their own." Barna Research Online. Adults Who Attended Church as Children Show Lifelong Effects.

R.S. Lee, the author of *Your Growing Child*, puts it another way, "The first seven years [of life] constitute the period for laying the foundations of religion. This is the most important period in the whole of a person's life in determining his later religious attitudes."

So never doubt that what you do matters, not just now, but for the rest of the lives of our children.