



Why Mid-Size Churches Get Stuck: Not Prioritizing Children's Ministry

BY [DAVE D'ANGELO](#) ON SEPTEMBER 25, 2017 [GROWING STRATEGIES](#) [KIDS MINISTRY](#)

Children's Ministry can easily become an overlooked driver to the overall health and progress of our churches. In all reality, as long as volunteers are still showing up and if we don't hear any major complaints, everything is ok back there, right?

But here is the growing truth of our day and age – **parents often value their kids' experiences more than their own.**

If you want to keep adding young families with kids to your church, your children's ministry cannot be an out-of-sight out-of-mind ministry. Here are three critical elements to a thriving children's ministry (beyond your curriculum) that cannot afford to be ignored:

1. Facilities

How are your facilities? Having a significant drop-off between the "big room" experience (auditorium) to the "small room" experience (children's space) is not something that goes unnoticed. Parents and kids determine the worth you attribute to your children's ministry before they ever come close to actually experiencing your curriculum simply by observing your environment.

Everything communicates. Smell, furniture condition, ease of access, width of hallways, cleanliness of rooms, and paint color/condition all speak value statements about families and kids. This list goes on and on and it is worth regular attention and resources.

Making environment upgrades annually to your children's ministry space is a critical component to preventing that stale, outdated look and feel that results in stuckness. **Developing a plan for continual environment improvement sets up your space to regularly feel fresh (and families appreciate the effort).**

2. Team & Leadership

How would you describe the team culture serving in your children's ministry in a single sentence?

When teams are united, rallied around an exciting vision, and have a healthy serving rhythm, everyone can feel it. The opposite is true as well.

This is a large responsibility for the leader of this ministry. But they are not in this alone. Your [church's overall systems](#) impact the health and vibrancy of children's ministry teams. Consider an honest and close examination of these silent contributors to your children's ministry:

- How often do you cast vision for the children's ministry from your platform? (not just announce a need for volunteers)
- Do you have competing ministries, meetings, groupings, etc. that are happening during children's ministry that draw away some of your best volunteers?
- How visibly present and engaged is your senior leadership to your children's teams? (during children's ministry, at trainings, involved in celebrations)

Fight the drift to make children's ministry something that just your children's team handles by making this a whole church priority.

3. Experience

Would a brand new child to your church describe the children's ministry as engaging?

Engaging does not just mean fun and entertaining, although that cannot be ignored. Children's ministry programming that is engaging means a child finds what they learn as meaningful to their everyday life. Working hard to speak a language that children understand, connect with and appreciate is worth our time and resources. This includes the language we use, the technology we employ in our children's spaces and also how we help our kids translate Sunday content into their everyday living.

One of the best markers for engagement is a return visit. Make no mistake that kids help determine this even if they don't drive. Tracking these results as well as seeking feedback from visitors is a great starting point for targeted improvement.

Every investment in your children's ministry is an investment in the future of your church. Invest wisely.