



Children and Their Gifts, part 2 of 2—

# Four Tips to Help You Help Them

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## **1** Children need adult role models as they learn how to serve in the church.

Children will pattern themselves after people they admire. It may come as a surprise, but children still look up to their parents, despite the influence of the media in their lives. In a recent survey of kids ages 6 to 14 from 25 different cities across the United States, 79 percent of the kids said they admired their parents the most, and an additional 19 percent named their grandparents. And, according to Jean Bailey of the Lutheran Medical Center in Brooklyn, "Parents remain the most significant people in children's lives until age 14 or 15."

Involving parents—and grandparents—who are committed Christians in your Sunday School will help provide examples for the children to follow. Parents who love kids and reach out to others can provide the role models the children in your church need. Many children who don't have Christian parents look to the adults in their church as examples.

## **2** Begin to look for ways to involve children regularly as helpers or assistants in your class.

You can rotate responsibilities, giving all children an opportunity to assist in some way. Keep in mind that some children prefer to assist in quiet, supportive ways, while others enjoy leadership roles. The more you know your students, the more effective you'll be in guiding them.



## **3** Express confidence in the children as you notice their individual talents and abilities.

Teach them that God has given everyone gifts and abilities that need to be developed. Show them the scriptural basis for using their abilities for the

glory of God (Colossians 3:23) and for the benefit of others. Challenge the children to invest time and energy in developing these gifts.

## **4** Teach your students to appreciate the abilities of their peers.

Avoid showing favoritism or making negative comparisons with your students that can stir up feelings of jealousy and envy. Help your students learn to congratulate one another's achievements and enjoy their successes. Romans 12:10 is a good Scripture verse to apply here: "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love: in honor preferring one another."

Build a team spirit in your class. Show the children what it means to work together to achieve a goal. Demonstrate how the parts of the

church body can all work together in harmony. Provide meaningful projects for children to work on together that will utilize their various abilities. You will be laying a foundation of peace and harmony in your church as you build the younger members of the body of Christ.

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### Questions For Further Study—

1. How can you provide good role models for the children in your children's church?
2. Brainstorm ways that you can build team ministry among the children in your Children's Church.
3. Make a list of the children in your children's church. Work with your staff to determine how each child might be able to contribute to ministry. Keep in mind each child's characteristics and abilities.