

iLIGHT

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Teacher's Mission

When they asked me as a kid what I wanted to be when I grew up, I always had it clear. I would be a teacher in kindergarten like my mom. You see, I thought that children should continue the same profession as their parents. Later I understood things did not work like that, but that did not change my future plans; I graduated from secondary technical school, oriented at teaching, and later also graduated from the university. I have to admit that working with children fulfilled me and I enjoyed it. I was very grateful to be working in a field that I liked. Well, tell me, isn't it great to play all day and get paid for it? But now seriously. As an adult, I got baptized in the Seventh-day Adventist church and I couldn't help myself but work with children there.

However, something was missing there. From my teaching experience, I was used to planning every moment with the children, I knew exactly where I wanted to get them, teach them or develop them. But yikes, when I officially started working in Children's Sabbath School there was not anything like that. Only by chance, I got my hands on a material for work with children, but no support from the leaders, no plan. But God has a plan! So I started to search and ask and create material for work with children. Occasionally there was a training for work with children in the church. Until once at the meeting of teachers, the main lecturer didn't arrive on time for the after-

noon workshop and the organizer asked me if I would help. Since then we started to go together to teacher meetings.

You probably know it, when you get too deep into something, you can't get out. Based on the feedback from these meetings, the same questions popped in my head: what to do when children attended church irregularly? how to make children do their homework from Sabbath school? how to cooperate with parents? where to teach when there is no space in church? where to store our tools and material for children? how to engage children's attention? how to maintain discipline? where to get inspiration?

Since I am a systematic person, I came up with a series of lectures, where teachers would find answers to their questions. A wise man built his house on a rock and we also needed a strong base, so the first topic of the lectures dealt with the anchoring of the children Sabbath school classes in the churches. The topic was about how the members of the church viewed Children's Sabbath School, how the church reacted to children and how the children reacted to the impulses from the church. The topic also discussed how to improve the relationship between the children and the elderly in the church, how to create a pleasant and safe environment for the children in church and the things that the church is willing to do for it. What was also important to elaborate was what kind of support the teachers needed to guide the children

God's Bible Promises for kids

When you put God FIRST, everything else will fall into place!

"The thing you should want most is God's kingdom and doing what God wants. Then all these other things you need will be given to you."

Matthew 6:33

Faith often shines brightest when life seems darkest.

"Faith means knowing that something is real even if we do not see it."

Hebrews 11:1

from: Daly, R., "God's Little Book of Bible Promises for Children", Autumn House, Grantham, Great Britain, 2000

CARING FOR KIDS



What do children truly need to grow up happy? To feel that they fit in and matter? To believe that they are loved? They need you—you and other caring adults to genuinely be there for them as they're growing up. They need to know you care, not just on special occasions, but every day. How do you do that? By accepting, guiding, and loving them in simple, yet meaningful ways. You don't need a lot of time and money; you don't have to be a parent, teacher, or coach. Sincerely Showing children you care can make a difference, helping to bring out the best in them—and in you.

Catch them doing something right.

Encourage win-win solutions.

Give them your undivided attention.

Ask for their opinion.

Have fun together.

Be curious with them.

Introduce them to your friends and family.

Tell them how much you like being with them.

Let them solve most of their own problems.

Meet their friends.

Meet their parents.

Let them tell you how they feel.

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to God, whether the support came from the local church, the pastor, the Conference, Union or General Conference. That is why we shouldn't forget that: *"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."* Romans 8:28.

In the second topic of lectures, I decided to focus directly on the work with children. A lot of teachers from the Sabbath school are called into service and sometimes they don't even know how to work with children. Many of them are discouraged from serving by that. Because of that, we determined in the beginning of the lectures what children are like, what needs they have, how to motivate them, engage them, work with their attention, how to create a program based on their age, what types of activities to offer them, how to work with discipline, reward and punishment. It says *"No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."* Hebrews 12:11. We clarified how the children with disabilities view the world, what affects our children the most and how best to present God to children so that they would understand him. We inspired each other with different ideas for activities, we learned new songs, crafts, working biblical stories into short theatre, sewing simple hand puppets, we shared how to involve children in the church service so that they would not only be consumers of the prepared show but that they would also learn to serve others. Our point, too, was to show children that they are an inseparable part of our church life, that they belong in the church, just like the others, just as we belong to God.

I dedicated the third topic to the teachers. During our lectures, I was trying to give them the courage not to be afraid of the work with children, even though they were not professional teachers. Because everyone can enrich children with what they know best. Wasn't Jesus a carpenter and serving in many other ways too? The most important thing that we can give to children is the love for God, and that cannot be found in handbooks, methodical materials or the Internet. In the end, it doesn't matter what we studied but what our relationship with children and the people around us looks like. That is what children perceive the most. That is what they learn, how to show love to one another. Let's not forget His commandment: *"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."* John 15:12

Maybe you went through something similar as teachers of Children's Sabbath School or maybe you are just preparing to serve children in the future. In any case: "Do not throw away your confidence, it will be richly rewarded." Hebrews 10:35. The results of your work will not show immediately, nor in a week, nor in a month. They are just tiny pieces that you will occasionally pick up when you will see the children's joy, the gratitude in their eyes knowing that you hit the right note. They might confidentially tell you what is making them sad in hope that you won't betray them, that you will understand them and maybe help them heal their wound. Only in the heavenly kingdom, it will be known how many children decided to go on the right path on which you were once leading them. ♦

Monika Medková
Czecho-Slovakian Union
CHSS Director



JESUS

wants all of me

God Can

There is nothing that is too difficult for God. You may not know the result of the most complicated mathematical equations; but God knows. You may not be able to speak many languages; but

God can speak all of them. God can even do the things that are more difficult, and He can even do what's impossible. He can do anything. What a mighty God we have! Rely on Him today.

"What is impossible for humans is possible for God."

Luke 18:27

From: Ferreira de Oliveira, S. *Talking with God*. Editorial Safeliz, Madrid, Spain, 2015

CLARA (3 YEARS)



Ladybugs are just red Dalmatians.

From: www.enfandises.com/en/bibliotheque/cat-3-animals/phrase-22081.html

IN SYNERGY

ADRA and Children Global Citizenship Education

Come and take a look," a young teacher invited me to follow her. I was wondering what was so important that I needed to see immediately. As we walked around the corner of the new "ADRA" school, there was a tiny building with two doors on each side. "Oh, toilets," I commented in a not very enthusiastic tone of voice. "Yes," she said. "Toilets. And we have separate toilets for girls. Look at them. Aren't they nice?" Suddenly I realized that I was looking at the toilets for boys and girls and I became enthusiastic as well. These toilets made all the difference in the lives of children. Oh, yes. They were nice. Very nice.

A child cannot learn without the right environment. Children in many developing countries are often squeezed into overcrowded classrooms, classrooms that are falling apart, or are learning outside. There are no adequate toilets in one in three schools worldwide. Moreover, only one-third of the toilets that do exist are for girls only — a real disincentive and barrier for girls to get education. Many times girls do not attend school anymore once they start with monthly cycles of menstruation. They do not have access to sanitary pads and many times, there are no facilities to handle their hygiene during periods. The result is millions of uneducated girls and women. They get married too early and have chil-

dren while still children. If all women had secondary education, there would be 3 million more children alive each year (49% fewer child deaths).

The teacher closed the door and invited me to follow her. She approached a small faucet outside of the school building. She opened it. Water started to pour down. Fresh, clean water. "Oh, this is so nice. You have fresh water," I almost shouted out of joy. It is not just toilets that make all the difference, it is also access to safe drinking water.

"Clean, accessible water for all is an essential part of the world we want to live in and there is sufficient fresh water on the planet to achieve this. However, due to bad economics or poor infrastructure, millions of people including children die every year from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene. To improve sanitation and access to drinking water, there needs to be increased investment in management of freshwater ecosystems and sanitation facilities on a local level in several developing countries." (SDG No 6, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/water-and-sanitation/>)

When you use the bathroom today and wash your hands after the use, think about almost 2.4 billion people who lack basic sanitation services, such as toilets.

When you drink a glass of fresh water



©Milan Vidakovic (ADRA) — Burundi school girls

today, think about nearly 1,000 children, who die each day due to preventable water and sanitation-related diarrheal disease.

Think and pray about these hard facts. Is there something you and children in your church can do to change this sad statistic?

Maja Ahac
ADRA Eurpoe
Advocacy Coordinator



Educational order for children with disorders

Some kinds of special needs are visible at a glance, while others are not. All the more they can put people at a disadvantage, because their surroundings usually underestimate such difficulties. For example, the "invisible" disorders include developmental learning disorders known as "dys-" (such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, dysortography, etc.). They are most likely caused by genetic dispositions or complications during a childbirth or early childhood development. Although they are not associated with the intellectual disability (on the contrary, one of the basic diagnostic criteria is an average or above-average level of IQ, while it is not exceptional that such disorders occur in people with extraordinary talent and highly above-average intellect), such children (or adults) can often encounter misunderstandings or prejudices about the level of their overall ability.

The most distinctive manifestation of these disorders is the significantly reduced level of some partial skills compared to the level of the child's overall ability. This means that a child who is generally skillful (with regard to his or her age) and who is given sufficient and quality educational care and opportunity (including the use of effective teaching methods and approaches) is still unable to learn some specific skills as well as his or her

peers. Above all, it concerns some (so-called) school skills – such as reading (dyslexia), writing (dysgraphia), spelling (dysortography) or counting (dyscalculia). Such a child can fail at school, lose interest and motivation for learning, and become an object of derision from his or her classmates (and sometimes also misunderstandings from both their teachers and parents). All this is more significant when the learning disorders are associated with ADHD (hyperactivity syndrome) and the child is perceived as inattentive, restless and naughty, first of all.

Developmental learning disorders manifest themselves especially in school education, but certain evidence can be usually recognized already in the child's pre-school age – such as difficulties with right-left orientation, attention, hearing or visual differentiation, etc. In this case, it is possible to support the child adequately and to develop specifically those areas where he or she fails. Above all, we must never stop trusting in his or her potential. Such children need encouragement and opportunity to experience success occasionally. Some good advice even for today's parents and teachers of these children can be found also in E. G. White writings: *"Christ discerned the possibilities in every human being... The same personal interest, the same*



attention to individual development, are needed in educational work today. Many apparently unpromising youth are richly endowed with talents that are put to no use. Their faculties lie hidden because of a lack of discernment on the part of their educators. In many a boy or girl outwardly as unattractive as a rough-hewn stone, may be found precious material that will stand the test of heat and storm and pressure. The true educator, keeping in view what his pupils may become, will recognize the value of the material upon which he is working. He will take a personal interest in each pupil and will seek to develop all his powers. However imperfect, every effort to conform to right principles will be encouraged." (Education, p. 232).

Josef Slowik, PhD
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The Lord is not glorified when the children are neglected and passed by. They are to be educated, disciplined, and patiently instructed. They require more than casual notice, more than a word of encouragement. They need painstaking, prayerful, careful labor. The heart that is filled with love and sympathy will reach the hearts of the youth who are apparently careless and hopeless.

Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 77



Sabbath School Blues

Incredi-Biblical

"For my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations."

Isaiah 56:7

Jake hated Sabbath school. If it weren't for the fact that his parents dragged him there every week, he would never go. It wasn't that he didn't care about God. He just didn't fit in.

"Can't I just wait in the car?" he begged as they pulled into the church parking lot. "I'll come in when it's time for church."

"No," his mom and dad said in unison.

"Give it a chance. Try to get involved and make friends," his mom added.

Jake sighed. His parents didn't understand what it was like to be outside the



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clique. At the public school he attended, Jake was popular and had a lot of friends. But it was different at church. There, most of the kids attended church school together or had been friends for a long time. Often Jake felt like there was no place for him in Sabbath school.

A few minutes later he sat down by one of the boys, lost in his thoughts. At first he didn't notice when the teacher asked him a question. The other kids giggled, and Jake's face burned.

"What an idiot," one of the guys mumbled, and the others erupted in laughter.

While the teacher talked to the boy who'd teased him, Jake folded his arms and prayed that Sabbath school would end as soon as possible.

Info Splat

Sixteen percent of people who don't go to church say they stopped attending because of a bad experience.

React now!

What can you do to help other kids feel welcome at your church? Are you—or others—doing things that could cause someone else to feel uncomfortable?

From: Bockmann, M. et al.: *Elasti-Brain. 365 Devotions to Stretch your Mind and Shape your Faith*. Review and Herald Publishing Ass., Hagerstown, MD, USA, 2008

SECRETS FROM THE TREASURE CHEST



Why do we need to go to school?

– Vanosdale, 11

If you lived on a tiny island where food grew wild, where there were caves in which to set up housekeeping, and watching the waves wash onto the shores was your idea of a good time, you wouldn't have to go to school.

Living any other way takes money. To earn money, you get a job. To get a job that pays a half-decent salary, you need an education. To get an education, you go to—you know where.

School can take you from where you are to where you want to be. If you plan on living at home, sponging off Mom and Pop for the rest of your life, drop out of school. If all you desire to know is what television throws in your face, forget your studies. And don't

even think about owning anything such as a car or clothes.

Christians regard attending school as good stewardship. God gave us brains, talents, and dreams. Learning new things expands our minds, sharpens our skills, and makes realistic dreams come true. Knowledge is a great weapon for fighting Satan, too.

So sit yourself down, pull back your shoulders, sharpen your pencil, turn off the television, and crack open a few books. Choose a subject you're interested in and learn, learn, learn. Surprise your teacher by turning in your homework on time, every time.

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" (2 Timothy 2:15). Hang in there!



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From: Mills, C.: *Secrets from the Treasure Chest. Questions Kids ask about Life*. Review and Herald Publishing Ass., Hagerstown, MD, USA, 1996

Special Needs

Supporting Families and Children in Special Circumstances

The Basics

Children with special needs comprise a large and very diverse group of children. The broad term "special needs" includes learning disabilities, language impairments, mental retardation, emotional disturbances, physical disorders, impairment with movement, and difficulty with hearing or seeing. While each disability is different, there are often similar characteristics.

- **Learning disabilities.** Children with learning disabilities fall within the normal range of intelligence; in other words, they are not mentally retarded. They do have difficulties in school-related areas, especially reading, writing, or math. Children with learning disabilities do not have a problem controlling their emotions, nor do they have trouble seeing or hearing.
- **Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder.** Children with ADHD have trouble focusing on any one thing and are easily bored. They show extremely high levels of physical activity, find it hard to suppress their emotions, and don't spend a lot of time thinking before they act.
- **Autism spectrum disorder.** Children who are diagnosed with these disorders have symptoms that range from a severe form, called autistic disorder, to a milder form, called Asperger syndrome. However, all children with autism spectrum disorders demonstrate deficits in three areas: social interaction, verbal and non-verbal communication, and repetitive behaviors or interests. Children with ASD do not follow the typical patterns of child development. Some children show differences at birth. In most cases, however, the problems in communication and social skills become more noticeable as the child lags farther behind other children the same age. Some children start off developing normally, but some time between the first and third years, the deficit behaviors become apparent.
- **Mental retardation.** Children who are mentally or intellectually retarded function at an intellectual level that is

below average. They have difficulties with learning and daily living skills, such as basic communication, self-care (for example, toilet training), and social skills. Diagnoses range from mild, which is the most common type, to profound, which occurs rarely. Mildly mentally handicapped children develop social and communication skills during their first five years but begin to have difficulties when they enter school. They usually can attain a level of sixth grade in formal schooling. Moderately retarded children learn to talk and communicate, but usually have poor social skills. With training, they can learn some skills and take care of their personal needs. Severely and profoundly mentally retarded children, who make up about 5 percent of the mentally retarded population, have poor muscle coordination and limited communication and self-care skills during early childhood. Profoundly retarded children do not reach such normal physical milestones as walking and talking. Typically, these children require constant supervision.

- **Physical disabilities.** The most common type of physical disabilities are hearing or seeing deficiencies, and disabilities that confine the child to a wheelchair.

Care Tips

- **Understand that grief is normal.** Families of children who have been recently diagnosed with a disability will likely be grieving the loss of having a "normal" child. As the child grows and develops, each new phase of life will bring new challenges, so the family may experience the grief process many times along the journey of raising their child. Remember that grieving is a normal and healthy response to any family change or difficulty.
- **Reach out to the family.** Families of children with special needs may feel isolated and lonely. Support them through phone calls, cards, and visits to their home. Reassure the parents and children that the church commu-

nity cares about them. Be a constant and reliable ally—parents need to know that the church will support them now as well as in the future.

- **Believe that all children are important.** Remind the family often, through your words and actions, that all children are valuable and precious. Look for the child's unique qualities, and focus on what he or she adds to the family or your ministry.

What not to say

- **"Are your other children normal?"** Having a child with special needs affects every member of the family, often splintering them apart just when they need each other the most. Make sure your comments are directed to building up the family as a whole, rather than creating more distance with uninformed and hurtful comments.
- **"I'm so sorry for you."** Children with special needs have a lot to offer to their families, churches, and communities. Choose encouraging words to help parents find the strengths in their children.

What to say

- **"Please know that you're not alone in this."** When faced with rearing a child with special needs, parents often feel isolated. Gently reminding them that the church is there is a good first step in supporting them.
- **"I'll pray for you."** Knowing that others are petitioning God on their behalf, and are asking God to guide them, can be an immense help to a struggling family.
- **"How can I help?"** Help comes in many forms. Maybe it's a dinner after an exhausting day of testing. Maybe it's an offer to take siblings to a special outing. Maybe it's offering to take notes at doctor visits, or compile research. The simplest way to find out how best to help is to ask.
- **"I trust God has a plan."** Affirmation that God is in control can be a real form of support to a special-needs family.





Redeeming the time (4)

You might be already familiarized with the leading idea of this series of short articles, since we have been dealing with it for a while. For those who have not received this newsletter so far, let us sum up: the most efficient education method the parents / educators should use is time with their children / pupils. In a society that values spending money and not saving it, personal pleasure to the prejudice of personal development and entertainment no matter what, we hardly get to the understanding and implementation of this good old principle of education: time with our little ones. As the public pressure on the family is dramatically increasing, the Evangelical Christians have reacted. Alas, the Christian approach focuses on work rather than on leisure, on activity rather than on rest and on lifelong commitments rather than on lifestyle. Where in world might a parent find consistent time for his children?

Family is the perfect environment for nurturing children. It is the primary arena of spiritual raising. Time is a trea-

sured good. We must invest time in our children. How? That is our next step in exploring Deuteronomy 6. This time verse 7 b: "Talk about them all the time, whether you're at home..." (Contemporary English Version).

At the time when this passage was written, the written copies of the law were only a few. The only possibility to have it heard and read was at the Feast of the Tabernacles. For the rest of the year, the parents were requested to live and act like models, embodying the Law on a daily basis.

God's words should be the subject of our dialogue at home, becoming our words in use, a visible proof of our closeness and involvement with Divine truths. In this way, we demonstrate to our children that the words of God are the leading force of our household. With few exceptions here and there, our children tend to become what we, as parents, are. Teach them through example a reverent attitude towards sacred things. Be an example for a right worshiping attitude. When it comes to family devotion, do not perform it in a

great haste, marked by lack of attention or consideration, causing mental weariness. Train them to give careful consideration to the Christian virtues – good, discernment, compassion, temperance, justice, truth, holiness. Do it from your heart! Unless we are in love with the truth, our lessons will be taught in a shallow manner, too cold to get the attention of the children.

So, get connected with your children! Even if the first language of our youngsters today is social media, digital presence should never be a substitute for physical presence. Relate to your children in a genuine and caring way! 'Your instructions must be enforced by a suitable example. Piety appears most venerable in a father's devotion, and love to Christ most delightful in a mother's praise. Nowhere does integrity seem so noble as in a father's abhorrence of all that is base and deceitful; nor charity so lovely as in a mother's sympathy with the mourner.' (H. Belfrage)

Our next halt? "Talk about them when you are ... away."

CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS FOR BUSY FAMILIES

The Best Party Ever!

Bible Connection

The parable of the great banquet:
Luke 14:15-24

Things you need:

- Paper and pens
- (Optional) Party invitations written from God to each person in your family: Venue—heaven; Date and time—when Jesus comes again; Add "Come as you are because I love you! Your Father God."

Worship activities

1. Read the parable of the great banquet.
2. Imagine your family if helping a king to plan the best party ever!
3. What would you include in the menu? What would you drink? What entertainment and games would there be? What theme would you choose? What would you like people to wear?

How would you decorate the room or garden, etc.? Be as creative as you like because kings have lots of money, and they like to have very special parties.

4. Write down all your ideas and encourage your children to be excited about them.
5. Then imagine that everything is ready for the wonderful party, but everyone who has been invited has sent their excuses. Read the excuses in the story again and suggest what kinds of excuses people might make today. (I've just bought a new car and I need to take it for a drive; I'm trying to complete my latest computer game; I'm too busy shopping during sales, etc.)
6. Ask how you and your family can make sure that you're ready for the best party ever. How can you be like the servants and invite other people to God's party?



7. Give everyone an invitation from God to the best party ever, in heaven. It's the party that will never end! What answer will each person give to God?

Prayer

Hold hands around your invitations. Thank God that He is planning the best party ever. Pray that you'll be ready for the party when Jesus comes again. Pray about the people you want to bring to Jesus. Pray that they will stop making excuses and choose to follow Him.

Experiment #2: The Living Mixture

In the Bible we find much advice on how to treat people who are not nice to us (Matthew 5:44, Proverbs 25:21-22, Romans 12:17-21, Proverbs 15:1), but returning good for evil and loving those who wrong us is difficult for both children and adults. This experiment can help us to powerfully illustrate that the way the Bible recommends us to deal with our “enemies” is the most efficient way to turn them into friends.

Materials: Corn-starch (400-800 g), water, a transparent plastic container (diameter of 20-25 cm), latex gloves (optional), airtight container (optional)

Time: 10 minutes (preparation), 3 minutes (experiment)

Safety gear: This experiment does not use any toxic substance or dangerous procedure.

Values: God’s unconditional love, love for enemies, violence begets violence.

Procedure:

1. The mixture for this illustration has to be prepared in advance: Pour the corn-starch in the container and add water in small amounts, stirring it VERY SLOWLY. Keep adding water and stirring until it gets the consistency of paint. Be careful that the mixture is homogeneous with no lumps.
2. If you are not going to do the experiment immediately, keep the mixture in an airtight container, moving it slowly until use, to prevent the corn-starch to settle to the bottom.
3. Introduce the experiment telling the audience: *I am going to show you a special substance that, despite being a chemical, behaves like a living being. For this reason, I call it “the living mixture”.*



4. Pour the mixture in the transparent wide container. Make the audience note that, despite the thickness, the mixture is a liquid that flows like paint or honey.
5. Put on a latex glove (optional) and introduce your hand, VERY SLOWLY, in the mixture. Tell the audience: *Can you see my hand entering the mixture? I can go inside, move around and even touch the bottom of the container because I am doing it carefully, with gentleness and kindness. For this reason, the living mixture allows me to enter and reach its “heart”. But, what would happen if I approached it aggressively instead?*
6. Place the container on a stable table. Using your fist, punch the mixture hard and fast. Repeat it several times. The surface of the mixture will harden, producing a sharp knock. Tell the audience: *When approached with violence, the living mixture hardens its surface, becoming a solid and not allowing me to enter. The same thing happens with*

people. When people are treated with violence, they harden to protect themselves and react also with violence. This is the reason why Jesus asked us to treat our enemies with love, because that is the only way to break the circle of violence.

NOTES:

- 400 g of corn-starch gives you enough mixture for the experiment but it is more spectacular if you use a larger amount.
- Because this substance hardens with pressure and speed, it is very important to use slow, gentle movements when mixing the ingredients to prepare it.
- When punching the mixture, lift the fist away fast immediately after the hit. If you stay still in contact with the surface, your hand will start sinking.
- To make the experience more powerful, you can allow children to try by themselves. Even if it ends up messy, any residuals of the mixture on furniture, clothes, or floor can be easily cleaned with water.

The Science Behind The Experiment:

The mixture of corn-starch and water is called a suspension because the grains of starch are not dissolved but suspended and spread out in the water. When pressure is applied, the large corn-starch molecules are forced closer together forming a semi-rigid structure. Scientists call this mixture a “non-newtonian” liquid.

Noemi Duran
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TURBOCHARGE

your Children's Ministry

Don't Worry, Be Happy

Remember that song? I love that melody: "Don't worry... Be happy..." How are you doing with that? Seriously, where your ministry is concerned, how's the worry thing going for you?

Worry often comes when we've taken control rather than relying on God to meet our needs and make our way. We may worry when we haven't adequately prepared and we're unsure where we stand. We may worry when we overextend. But worry doesn't come from God! Paul wrote to the church at Philippi:

"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).

I love this New Living Translation version of this passage. I've taught it to kids

several times over the years. It's like a recipe, a plan for success. If you do this, this will be the result. Simple, huh? It should be. Let's break down this verse:

Don't worry. Stop right there! Don't worry. That's about as clear as it gets, isn't it? Don't worry.

About anything. *But Lord! You don't know these volunteers. But Lord, I don't know how to do this. I don't know where to start!* No, those count as "things." He says, "Don't worry about anything."

Instead... Not along with. Not as a last resort. Not when you've done everything you can do on your own. *Instead* means "to take the place of." Instead of worrying—do this...

Pray. Take advantage of the opportunity you have to talk to the Father of the universe, your creator, the one true God. Speak to him, and listen to him. His network never misses a call. Just pray.

About everything. Not just the

big things. Not just the little things. *Everything!*

Tell God what you need. Your loving Father—who loves to pour out good gifts to his children—is listening. Your Father—who has plans to prosper you—is waiting for you to ask. He's waiting for you to acknowledge that you have a need. He already knows...

Thank him for all he's done. Praise him. Is the situation you're in bigger than one he's carried you through before? Give him praise. He is able. He is worthy. He's done it before. Be encouraged. He'll do it again.

Then you will experience God's peace. *But Lord, you don't understand what I'm going through!* Take heart—he does understand. *God is peace.*

It's a recipe. A game plan. A promise from the King of all kings, the Lord of all lords. So why are you worried? God's on the throne. He's faithful.

Don't worry, be happy.

From: Hudson, D. & Werner, S.: *100 Best Ideas to Turbocharge your Children's Ministry*. Group Publishing, Loveland, Colorado, USA, 2013

52 WAYS TO PARENT HAPPY CHILDREN

Managing conflicts peacefully - Soothing anger (part 1)

Conflicts happen. They're a very normal part of any healthy relationship. They happen because we're unique human beings with different hopes, desires, tastes, needs, perspectives, experiences, ideas and beliefs. We're naturally different, and that's good—because we can make better plans and choices when we listen to other people's ideas and thoughts.

Helping children learn how to manage their conflicts peacefully will give them skills they can use at home, with their friends, and in the future workplaces and families. Managing conflicts properly can save their marriages, help them do better at work, and protect them from violence.

Conflict-calmers

- Notice when arguments are most likely to happen, and see if some

simple changes will help, like doing something fun with your children for a few minutes when they come home from school, instead of letting them get into a fight because they're tired and irritable.

- Comfort their distress first. If children or adults are angry and emotionally upset they need time to calm down before they can discuss the actual problem. Explain that you want to understand their concerns and troubles, and you want to do whatever it takes to help them feel settled and safe again.
- Identify the emotion under the anger. Anger usually follows hot on the heels of another emotion. The two often come so close together that all we can feel or see is the anger.



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But under the anger there's usually another feeling like fear, disappointment, discouragement, frustration, tiredness, sadness, vulnerability, feeling disrespect, and so on. It's much easier, and more effective, to respond to the emotion that triggered the anger, rather than to the anger itself.

- Give your child some 'time in' with you rather than 'time out' away from you. They may just need a quiet hug with you, knowing they are loved, accepted and safe, even when their emotions feel out of control.

From: Holford K.: *52 Ways to Parent Happy Children*. Autumn House Publications, Grantham, Lincolnshire, UK, 2016



ACTIVITY REPORT



News of the Czecho-Slovakian Union

The PTD Project

PTD (Pošli to dál), in English “Pass it on”, is an educational project in the realm of personal, social and mostly spiritual growth for children over the age of 13. Taking into consideration the crucial period of many of the decisions of their lifetime - such as choosing their profession, confrontation with evolutionism and other philosophies, decision for God, first sexual experience, encounters with cigarettes, alcohol and such - we have been trying to create an environment, where they can ask questions, debate and let themselves be formed by God’s word.

The project is outlined into 6 week-ends in the span of a year and a half (see the table). Key spiritual topics are appropriately intertwined with interactive elements, such as thematic games, quizzes or activities that support the building of the fellowship and relaxation - gym, night games, out-of-box morning exercises, etc. At the moment we are just finishing the second cycle of the project and we are incredibly grateful to God for being able to see His work in children’s hearts and minds , as testified in this message sent to the leader of the current cycle:

Hi Kamil, I would like to thank you for the whole weekend of PTD, especially for

Friday. I feel sorry that I did not go the last weekend because this time, it was really great, not only the program and the people but also the reason why I am texting you; I have a completely different mindset now. I usually play on my phone before going to bed. But on Friday night after the lights-out, I opened the Bible instead and read. That is something I don't normally do. Because I hadn't done a lot of Bible reading before, I had no idea what to read, so I opened the Bible on a random page and read until some passage caught my attention. On Saturday, I did the same thing. I really liked the lectures. It made me think about my behaviour a lot, so I didn't pay full attention to all of them. Mostly when I take a decision, I don't stick to it but when someone motivates me to do it, I won't

stop. Thanks a lot, I mean it, I believe I will look at things in life differently now.



	Topic	Symbol	Supporting Topic
1	God Faith	Peg	Temperaments
2	Bible	Compass	Mind Maps Change of habits
3	Human Evil Sin	Ashes	Addictions (alcohol, smoking, Internet, games, pornography...)
4	Jesus Christ Character Values	Light	Courtship
5	Mercy Forgiveness Hope	Ladder	Ethic course
6	Mission Service	Axe	First Aid

We are not here for ourselves

During summer holidays, I had the privilege the work with a group of young people who decided to become advisors and I am glad that we directed our focus in particular on motivation during the course.

In preparations and realization of the Advisory course of the Czech Conference of the Pathfinder club, we laid emphasis on the fact that the participants would clearly see the connection between what we were trying to present to them and where, how and for what they would use such skills. We applied this approach to everything in the course and the final two-day trip wasn't an exception.

The entire two-day future advisor trip was inspired by the story of Desmond Doss, who served in the US army as a medic. The advisors uncovered his story step by step and with the help of small tasks prepared for them, they may have even experienced it themselves. The crucial part of the story for us was the

part where Desmond decided to go to the battlefield at his own risk and save the lives of the injured. He did this for the whole night and saved over 70 people despite everyone around talking him out of it. He always decided to go back and get another.

This plot was very convenient for us because we named the whole course as “#plus1” – one more.

In the end, we presented the situation of the story to the future advisors in the shape of a voluntary task. The participants were exposed to the possibility of opening envelopes with encrypted messages during the two-day trip. Each encrypted envelope was more difficult than the last one and each group could have only one envelope open at a time. The next one could be opened only after solving the previous envelope. This represented the parallel with the trips that Desmond did to get the injured soldiers.

The practical part of this experience was that we were able to find a donor,

who gave a certain amount of money for every solved envelope to a non-profit organization taking care of the elderly. So the task received brand new importance and the participants got busy very fast.

I am very glad that, with collective effort, we could connect what we do with a tangible result. Besides the fresh advisors getting a practical message from the course, we could help those in need. To be specific, the amount of money going for the elderly care was 8,500CZK (ca. 300€). And that is worth it.

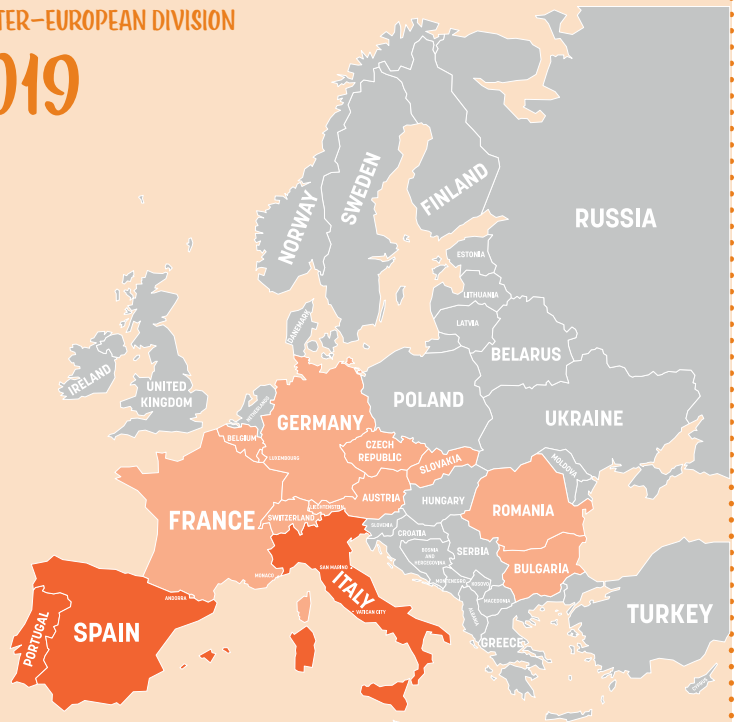
Jakub Fraj
Pathfinder Director, Czech Conference



Keep in Mind

EVENTS FROM THE INTER-EUROPEAN DIVISION

2019



June 12-15

CHM Program and Training Course
Barcelona, **Spain**

July 27-August 4

EUD Camporee
Sesimbra, **Portugal**

September 18-22

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Interministries Summit
Organized by
Children's / Family / Women's Ministries
Lignano Sabbiadoro (Venice), **Italy**

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BELLA ITALIA VILLAGE



The Powerful Influence of Moms in Christian Households

Acknowledging the influence of moms isn't just the stuff of Mother's Day cards; it also became a major finding and theme in a recent Barna study of practicing Christians' homes in the U.S. The Households of Faith report, (...) finds that mothers—more often than fathers, or any other category of frequent participants in households—are seen as the confidants, providers of support and drivers of faith formation. We observe this dynamic in the responses of adults, who esteem and rely on their moms as sources of strength, companionship and wisdom. In turn, mothers still meet a range of needs and provide support for their grown children or, when applicable, grandchildren. But some of the clearest examples of the broad impact of mothers surface in the responses of Gen Z, who offer a portrait of mothers who are present, passionate and faithful.

Moms Are Primary Activity & Conversation Partners for Teens

For all the stereotypes of teens rolling their eyes at their parents, Gen Z are actually very open with and dependent on their mothers. Consider their descriptions of one-on-one time with other housemates. Today's Christian teen consistently identifies their mother as the principal housemate for almost all activities. (...)

Teens Go to Moms for Tough Conversations & Personal Support

According to practicing Christian teens, mothers are the go-to person for all kinds of support: advice (78%), encouragement (75%)

and sympathy (72%). Meanwhile, fathers play a somewhat key role in meeting teens' tangible needs for money (74%) and logistical help (63%), though even on these two issues, they are somewhat on par with mothers.

As mothers are seen as advisors and encouragers, teens report approaching them with tougher topics. In the impressionable middle and high school years, even conversations about sex (41%) aren't off limits between teens and moms. (Understandably, when discussing sex, there is a bit of a difference depending on the teens' gender, with 30 percent of boys and 48 percent of girls talking about this with their mother, and 50 percent of boys and 10 percent of girls covering this topic with their father). Christian teens also primarily seek out mothers' opinions on questions of faith (72%) or the Bible (71%), as well as things that might be troubling them (78%). No wonder 68 percent of Gen Z in this survey say their mom was the one who was there for them in their last personal crisis.

Mothers Are the Main Spiritual Coaches for Teens

Practicing Christians in their teen years consistently identify mothers as the ones who provide spiritual guidance and instruction and instill the values and disciplines of their faith in the household. Moms are their foremost partners in prayer (63%) and conversations about God (70%), the Bible (71%) or other faith questions (72%). This is consistent with Barna data through the years that show mothers to be the managers of faith formation (among other

household routines and structures). Mothers are also the ones encouraging church attendance (79%) or teaching kids about the Bible (66%), God's forgiveness (66%) and religious traditions (72%).

What the Research Means

"Over and over, this study speaks to the enduring impact of mothers—in conversation, companionship, discipline and, importantly, spiritual development," Alyce Youngblood, Barna's managing editor for this report, says.

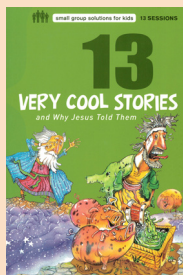
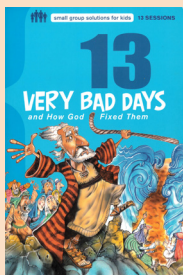
(...)

"Churches should ask pointed questions about how they've set up their ministries and how they can best support moms as they help support their families," Youngblood suggests. "Outside of women's ministries or a certain Sunday in May, how often do sermons speak to the experiences of moms—whether single or married, working full-time or staying at home? Are programs for families and children based on realistic assumptions about the schedules of working parents? Sometimes the demands of church involvement (for themselves, or for their children) might contribute to moms' busyness or stress—are moms also being encouraged to observe Sabbath, prioritize rest and rely on community? Additionally, would participation in some areas of ministry feel like a help or hindrance for single parents who are already carrying a heavy load?"

"These are just a few considerations that can help churches become even more valuable partners in the sacred work mothers are already doing at home."

From: www.barna.com/research/moms-christians-households?mc_cid=1ad0b6b3e6&mc_eid=57e9523fc3

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



13 VERY BAD DAYS / 13 VERY COOL STORIES / 13 VERY BIG MISTAKES Small Group Solutions for Kids

The adults are here for small group. But what do we do with the kids? Relax—we've got you covered. Just add one adult or teenage leader to these easy-to-lead sessions to keep kids engaged, entertained, and growing in their faith! While parents are meeting, gather elementary-age kids together and dive in. Each session is:

- Flexible—adaptable for 2 to 12 children
- Multi-aged—because you're never sure who'll show up
- Low-prep—using supplies from your kitchen, office, or garage
- 45 minutes of fun—with time-stretchers to fill an hour



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