



villages raise children,
faith communities make disciples

Phil Day
midst



Hey everyone! I'd like to share some ministry stories with you.

Please feel free to share these ideas with your church leadership and ask them to give me a call.

We need to **CONNECT** with children

[Activities we are involved in (celebrating worship, learning, socialising, mission) will model and teach appropriate and loving relationships with one another, cementing participants into the structure of the community. Healing and teaching will often be needed to enable this, especially in the areas of encouraging, healthy communication.]



Announcing the launch of Big Buds!!

Recently Tracey Davies held a conference here in Victoria for key children's workers in The Salvation Army Southern Division (Vic, Tas, SA, WA, NT). This was the first event to see Big Buds as a finished product ready for use. It was presented in the midst of the market place that Tracey and I set up as a learning and discovery experience for delegates. More about that later. Big Buds attracted a lot of attention and was very well received. Look forward to hearing and seeing more about this now it has had its official launch. It is VERY exciting to see all the work on this project come to this point. Thank you for your interest and prayers over the months. This program will be significant in helping churches connect to the children in their midst.

How can you access Big Buds? It is all online. All you need to do is go to www.midst.suvic.org.au/bigbuds

Children need to **PARTICIPATE**

[Activities and relationships will mean involving a wide variety of people together in skill and gift areas; calling forth cooperative contributions; learning to deal with unmet expectations and conflict.]

Kids Church as a Market Place

My most recent exploit in this area was in my own church. I was able to take part in a team exploring an elective approach to learning ... a bit like a market place where children choose the learning activity they attend. Even so, I will always try to make what is happening in Kids' Church link with something that happens in church. That is where we would like to see them as adults and at every age in between. If we aren't helping them to participate in appropriate ways now then it more unlikely we will see them later on. This is something you will have noticed over the years I am very passionate about. Essential if we are to be a faith community making disciples of those who are already in our midst!!!!

My activity helped children to participate and engage in the communion time in church. We helped present a drama in the communion time. On another day we contributed prayers and we also illustrated a booklet to be used in the quiet parts of church. Ask me for more details if this approach interests you.

The only thing I think was missing with this approach was the small group connection with a small group leader and a more-or-less consistent group of peers: but for the few weeks of this method of learning I reckon it was OK. I certainly enjoyed connecting with the children interested in visual and performing arts. They responded well and were engaged by this non word-based approach to learning.



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As a reminder to pray, please cut off the top third of this letter for your fridge or notice board. Thanks!!

If you receive this as an active pdf, try clicking on some of the links to web sites that may be of interest.

We need to ENGAGE children

[Our activities and message will be delivered through a kaleidoscope of appropriate, creative, colourful, multi-sensory, multi-learning - but not gimmicky - approaches that result in thoughtful and/or heart-felt responses to the Word of God.]

BACK to the above mentioned idea of 'market-place' learning, if you have seen anything like this, I would be interested to hear about it. My observation is that people are more engaged in the activities if they are allowed to choose an activity based on the learning style they are most interested in.

At the Salvos conference, delegates had lots to choose from. They could be praying for children as they made plasticine models of children or they could explore issues to do with 'change'. There were resources to peruse and ideas to discuss in small groups or as a personal reflection. I have called these 'Mini Moments of Reflection and Learning' and am collecting them. If you would like to see some of these sorts of activities used in this market approach to learning, go online to www.midst.suvic.org.au/mini

Mission Training

Recently I attended 'Torque'. This is SU's missions training event. I led three training workshops for the day. I noticed two things and I celebrate them with you here in this newsletter. I noticed there were several grown up offspring of my friends and peers present. My friends and peers were mission leaders and team members once and now their children are part of the current crop mission teams and some are team directors. I love it. One even 'blamed' me for her being on mission.

The other thing I noticed was the willingness of my peers to come along as volunteer trainers to this event. They were recruited to sow into the next generation of mission workers and it was great to catch up with a couple of them as a nice by-product of my time there.

Children need to experience that they BELONG

[If children are to feel they belong, ownership and shared vision is fostered; members' rights and responsibilities are encouraged; inter-dependent relationships emerge and are celebrated; growing leadership is cultivated.]

A little 'preach' on the topic of 'belonging'.

Participation doesn't always lead to belonging. Fostering a sense of belonging in children will often mean finding appropriate ways to consult them about their participation or to give them a say in issues that affect outcomes for everyone. This also works for adults in almost any situation I can think of.

We need to ask children to RESPOND

[We need an environment where every response towards God is affirmed and celebrated in appropriate ways; children and adults trained to see the range of possible responses and to prepare for and invite such responses in the course of all of the above processes; to invite and help children to follow and be like Jesus. This is at the heart of our mission.]

Your response is requested.

The following two images represent two websites I would love you to investigate, provide feedback about or make any responses you would like. They have meant a fair bit of energy and work over the last couple of months AND there's still more to do as development continues ...



midst.suvic.org.au

This website is where I will be concentrating information and downloads regarding all my SU activities. If you are viewing this as an active pdf, click on or go to: www.midst.suvic.org.au This is a new 'child' in the SU website family just like the *Soar* or *Coolamatong* sites.



Leaders to Go Conference ... May 17th - 20th 2011

A children's and families ministry leadership conference for leaders of leaders of church and school based ministry with pre-school & primary children and families.

Our 6th conference since 1999 ... **Featuring:** Four keynotes (Leadership, Advocacy, Evangelism, Discipleship - LEAD); market place & expo, live-in community, individual retreat, small groups, reflection, prayer & networking.

Venue: Alexandra Park Conference Centre, Sunshine Coast, QLD **Cost:** \$295 **Details:** www.leaderstogo.org.au

Thank you once again for your prayerful and/or financial support that makes ministry in my specialist area with SUVictoria possible.

Shalom and Happy Spring, Phillip