

## **Strategic Planning in the Preschool and Children's Areas**

When I first go into a church that wants to do strategic planning, there are three components of discussion which takes place. Visioning; defining, then planning.

I look at the Preschool and Children's areas of ministry with staff or leadership, which allows them to ask me questions about the areas or teaching situations. Afterward, there is always a meeting that includes other preschool and children's leadership. I moderate this meeting in order to understand the leader's position on these questions:

### **Visioning**

The first set of questions:

1. Where do you see the preschool and children's areas next year?
2. What would you like to change in each of the areas?
3. What is keeping you from completing these changes?

The answers of these questions are listed on tear sheets in order to refer back to them during the discussion.

I then have a PowerPoint presentation that includes this information:

John Westerhoff said:

The church's educational ministry is to be judged by how well it:

1. sustains and transmits the Christian faith tradition
2. nurtures the expansion of faith and the spiritual lives of people
3. equips and motivates the church and it's members to fulfill their Christian vocation in the world.

### **Defining:**

What spiritual goals do you want children and preschoolers to have accomplished by sixth grade? In other words if a child has been a regular attendee of the Preschool and Children's Ministries, what characteristics do you want them to have embraced? This is a very interesting question because teachers should list some of the following:

- Knowing Bible Facts
- Godly characteristics
- Mission minded/giving to others
- Bible skills

If some of these are not listed by the group, I then mention them.

I also use the Levels of Biblical Learning and Levels of Bible Skills that is published by Lifeway. It is a chart that shows what needs to be emphasized in each age group birth through sixth grade. This is a great piece because it is a printed piece on areas of knowledge that needs to be touched on each year.

We then define ministry—what is the difference between ministry and programming or events? We then list the differences.

**Planning:**

What are your weekly ministries? Monthly ministries? Yearly or seasonal ministries? What is accomplished in each of these ministries?

We go back to the Levels of Biblical Learning and Levels of Bible Skills and insert which ministry area each component fits. If there are components that have not fit into any ministry area, I then ask if that ministry area is worthy to be included. This is an eye opening experienced for some churches!

We then brainstorm other ministries events that could be added to the calendar in order for the events and learning situations for preschoolers and children to be complete.