



# Children's Ministry in Theory & Practice

## CECH6230

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary  
Christian Education Division

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*The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church.*

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### **Purpose of the Course**

The purpose of this course is to develop Christian leaders who serve churches effectively through the children's ministry of the local church.

### **Core Value Focus**

The seminary's 2011-2012 core value is Character Excellence. What we do, we do to the utmost of our abilities and resources as a testimony to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

### **Curriculum Competencies Addressed**

The student will address the following curriculum competencies:

1. *Biblical exposition*: Students will study the Biblical basis for children's ministry.
2. *Effective servant leadership*: Students will develop a model for effective servant leadership to children.
3. *Disciple making*: Students will study various disciple-making strategies for children.
4. *Spiritual and character formation*: Personal spiritual/character formation strategies for children will be presented.
5. *Worship leadership*: Students will study the unique ways children worship, both at home and at church.

### **Course Description**

Students will survey the Christian education ministry in the local church for children through eleven years of age. Characteristics and needs of children are examined. The aims, programs,

methods and materials, organization and administration, and evaluation of a ministry to children are explored.

### Learning Objectives

CECH 6230 students should:

1. Be able to apply their knowledge and comprehension of the Christian education ministry in the local church for children to provided leadership in the church through various vocational skills in the practice of children's ministry.
2. Value ministry to children.
3. Be able to organize, administer, and evaluate ministry to children in a local church.
4. Be ready to lead small discipleship groups.

### Required Readings

The following texts and resources are required reading for class discussions and are to be read in their entirety unless otherwise specified.

#### **Required Texts**

Alley, Steve. *Growing a Healthy Children's Ministry*. Boston: Standard Publishing, 2002. ISBN: 078-471-3901.

Haywood, Janice. *Enduring Connections*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2007. ISBN: 0827208219.

### Course Teaching Methodology

Methodology will include modified lecture, class discussion, and various media/projects.

### Assignments and Evaluation Criteria

The following are the assignments to be completed for this course. All assignments (excluding the portfolio and the student's personal ministry project) are to be uploaded to the course's Blackboard by 11:59 p.m. of the date due. **Assignments are not to be e-mailed to the professor.**

1. **Interviews:** Talk to 2 (B) or 4 (A) preschool and/or children's ministers. Report each interview as a verbatim. Interview 2 (B) or 4 (A) parents of preschoolers concerning the spiritual development of their children. (15%) **The interviews are to be transcribed verbatim in one composite file uploaded to Blackboard. No other mediums will be accepted (i.e., CDs, DVDs, cassettes, etc.) Due Date: March 5, 2012.**
2. **Read:** *Enduring Connections* and *Growing a Healthy Children's Ministry* and participate in class discussions. Students will submit an annotated bibliographic entry as well as a statement of percentage read. (10%) **Due Date: April 2, 2012.**
3. Compile and organize a **Portfolio** of children's ministry materials. The portfolio is to be submitted in a binder. The information received in class as well as independently will be

categorized into the various headings and sections. Grades will be based on whether the student has included all class handouts and information as well as additional resources accumulated. Remember, this assignment is designed to be a resource for you in current and future ministry opportunities. Create something that will be beneficial to you. **Portfolios will not be accepted electronically or in portions. (20%) Due Date: April 16, 2012.**

The sections of the portfolio are to be labeled as such:

I. Vision, Philosophy/Mission

This section will include a personal philosophy and vision statement related to Preschool and Children's Ministry. The student is to research and include other vision and philosophy statements from churches of their choice.

II. Teaching and Learning/ Learning Styles

This section focuses on the various methodologies of teaching and learning as well as the many ways children learn. Additional research on the various learning styles of students, common teaching methods, and appropriate references could also be included.

III. Programming/Curriculum

This section focuses on the activities and events appropriate for preschool and children's ministries. The student should look for programs from a variety of churches and consider their relevance and importance for preschool and children. Resource information, publishing company contact information, and activities descriptions could be included. This section will also contain information related to curriculum. The student will consider the various curriculum opportunities available and include possible vendors, templates, theories of development, etc.

IV. Policies and Procedures

The policies and procedures of a church or parachurch organization are vital to the health and growth of a ministry. This section is to safety guidelines, children's policy and procedure (from current church if available) and samples of children ministry policies and procedures from other churches (i.e., not the student's own church). Background check forms, volunteer application forms and the like are also to be included in this section.

V. Children and Salvation

This section will include methods and theories relative to children and salvation. What are the various ways local churches/ministers have found to be effective in sharing/teaching the Gospel message?

VI. Miscellaneous

This section can include any additional information the student feels is an important resource for understanding and ministering to preschoolers, children, and their families.

4. Complete a **Personal Children’s Ministry Project** determined with the professor. (35%)  
**Due Date: April 30, 2012.**

5. **Participation:** The student will participate in classroom discussions involving their project and other topics. (20%)

Course Policies

1. Students must **attend a minimum of six class sessions**. Three or more absences will result in a failing grade.
2. Assignments received late will receive a **5 percentage point penalty per day** deduction.
3. The **grading scale** listed in the current NOBTS Graduate Catalog will be utilized.

Course Schedule

Session	Date	Special Topic / Assignment due
1	1/23	Introduction & Overview
2	2/6	Vision, Philosophy/Mission Why Minister to Children? and What is Children’s Ministry?
3	2/20	Organization/Structure Age-Group Characteristics and Needs Spiritual Disciplines for Children
4	3/5	Learning Centers/Methods and Materials Levels of Learning/Learning Styles <b>Interviews assignment due</b>

5	3/19	Curriculum Working with Volunteers Discipline, Guidance, Missions, Outreach and Ministry
6	4/2	Parent Education Policies and Procedures/Abuse and Advocacy <b>Annotated Bibliography due</b>
7	4/16	Evangelism and Worship Environment and Facilities <b>Portfolio due</b>

### Selected Bibliography

- Allen, Holly Catteron, ed. *Nurturing Children's Spirituality: Christian Perspectives and Best Practices*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2008.
- Alley, Steve. *Growing a Healthy Children's Ministry: Step-by-Step Handbook to Cultivating Christian Kids in Any Environment*. Boston: Standard Publishing Company, 2002.
- Arthur, Kay and Cyndy Shearer. *Discover 4 Yourself, Children's Bible Study Series: Jesus in the Spotlight (John, Chapters 1-10)*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1999.
- Barna, George. *Revolutionary Parenting: What the Research Shows Really Works*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions: Why Children Should be Your Church's #1 Priority*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2003.
- Baucham, Voddie. *Family Driven Faith: Doing What it Takes to Raise Sons and Daughters Who Walk with God*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2007.
- Beckwith, Ivy. *Formational Children's Ministry: Shaping Children Using Story, Ritual, and Relationship*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Postmodern Children's Ministry: Ministry to Children in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Church*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Ultimate Survival Guide for Children's Ministry Workers*. Ventura, CA: Gospel Light, 2007.
- Big Book of Bible Crafts*. Ventura, CA: Gospel Light, 2000.
- Bowman, Crystal. *The One Year Devotions for Preschoolers*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale Kids, 2004.
- Bunge, Marcia, ed. *The Child in Christian Thought*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001.
- Campbell, Pam, and Stan Campbell. *Christian Family Guide to Family Devotions*. Edited by James Stuart Bell. Holiday, FL: Alpha, 2003.
- Chapman, Gary, and Ross Campbell. *The Five Love Languages of Children*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1997.
- Chapman, Kathleen. *Teaching Kids Authentic Worship: How to Keep Them Close to God for Life*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003.
- Choun, Robert J. and Michael S. Lawson. *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Children's Ministry*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993.

- Clark, Sybil. *A Christian Family Guide to Parenting a Toddler*. Holiday, FL: Alpha, 2004.
- Davis, Cos H. *Children and the Christian Faith*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1990.
- Dickow, Cheryl. *Raising Christian Children in a Secular World: Christian Parenting*. Waterford, MI: Bezalel Books, 2007.
- Elliot, Betsy Rossen. *The One Year Book of Fun and Active Devotions for Kids*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale Kids, 2000.
- Group Publishing. *Children's Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Encyclopedia of Practical Ideas*. Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sunday School Attendance Boosters: 165 Fresh and New Ideas*. Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Humongous Book of Games for Children's Ministry*. Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2001.
- Haywood, Janice. *Enduring Connections*. St Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2007.
- Hess, Valerie E., and Marti Watson Garlett. *Habits of a Child's Heart: Raising Your Kids with the Spiritual Disciplines*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2004.
- Holmen, Mark. *Building Faith at Home: Why Faith at Home Must be Your Church's #1 Priority*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2007.
- Houser, Tina. *Building Children's Ministry: A Practical Guide*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008.
- Jones, Stan, Beth Posterski, and Catherine Stonehouse. *Children Matter*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2005.
- Keeley, Robert J. *Helping Our Children Grow in Faith: How the Church Can Nurture the Spiritual Development of Kids*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008.
- Miller, Sue with David Staal. *Making Your Children's Ministry the Best Hour of Every Kid's Week*. Forewords by Bill Hybels and George Barna. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.
- Murphy, Art. *The Faith of a Child: A Guide to Salvation for Your Child*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2000.
- Perkins, Mitali. *Ambassador Families: Equipping Your Kids to Engage Popular Culture*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2005.

- Piper, Noel, and John Piper. *Treasuring God in Our Traditions*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2007.
- Priolo, Louis Paul. *Teach Them Diligently: How to Use the Scriptures in Child Training*. Stanley, NC: Timeless Texts, 2000.
- Roehlkepartain, Jolene L. *Fidget Busters: 101 Quick Attention-Getters for Children's Ministry*. Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 1991.
- Stonehouse, Catherine. *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey: Nurturing a Life of Faith*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.
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- Vanderwell, Howard, ed. *The Church of All Ages: Generations Worshiping Together*. Foreword by Jane Rogers Vann. Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2008.
- Water, Mark. *What the Bible Has to Say About Children*. Nashville: Dimensions for Living, 2003.
- Yust, Karen Marie. *Real Kids, Real Faith: Practices for Nurturing Children's Spiritual Lives*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2004.