

# 2012 Children's Ministry Survey

conducted by the

Christen Education and Publications Committee

of the

Evangelical Presbyterian Church

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# A Summary of the Results

## Church Demographics

1. Most churches define their children's ministry as birth through Grade 5 (47%), followed closely by birth through Grade 6 (36%).
2. Three out of four churches (75%) use a traditional, age-segmented ministry model.
3. The size of weekend children's ministry programs are roughly 20% of the weekend attendance. Mid-week attendance is about 10% VBS attendance is usually 50% of weekend attendance.

## Curriculum

1. Of the options provided on the survey, the most popular nursery and pre-school curriculums were Gospel Light( 16% and 15%). However, more churches were likely to use some other curriculum (22% and 24%) or use no curriculum at all (22% and 2%).
2. Of the options provided on the survey, the most popular elementary curriculums were Gospel Light( 11%), Great Commission Publications (13%) and Group Curriculum (11%). More churches were likely to use some other curriculum (21%).
3. More than half (53%) of responding EPC churches use some midweek curriculum other than the options provided on the survey. A quarter (26%) don't use curriculum for mid-week services.
4. Almost half (49%) of churches offer no catechism instruction with a third (32%) offering instruction during the weekend services. Of those that do offer instruction, half (50%) use no curriculum.
5. The majority of churches use Gospel Light (32%), Group Curriculum (33%), or something else (29%) for their VBS program.
6. At all levels of curriculum, children's ministry directors were more likely to select curriculum based on the recommendation of a colleague or their own research instead of basing purchase decisions on an Endorsement or Commendation from the EPC's Christian Education & Publications (CE&P) Committee. Many respondents were unaware that the EPC made such a resource list available to member churches. This is available at <http://www.epc.org/ministries/christian-education-publications/resources/>.

## Children's Ministry Operations

1. The factors most affecting children's ministry were an increase in the number of workers and volunteers (40%), changes in curriculum (49%), and changes in the children's ministry leadership structure (49%). Most respondents attributed these factors to a change in children's ministry leadership (44%) and a change in the desire/attitude of the parents of the children in the ministry (33%).
2. The most frequently used methods of risk management are
  - a. Application process for workers using verbal or written references (55%).
  - b. Written policies communicated to volunteer workers (69%).
  - c. Application process for workers using background checks by police, insurance company or other agency (66%).

3. The most commonly used agencies for background checks were:
  - a. Local police, state police, or state police and FBI (7 responses)
  - b. Protect My Ministry (4 responses)
  - c. ADP (3 responses)
  - d. Intelicorp (3 responses)
4. Children's ministry directors are more likely to make the transition from volunteer or part-time positions to full-time when a congregation averages 300 or more in attendance at weekend services.
5. Children's ministry directors were most likely to continue their training by attending the Children's Pastor's Conference or some other form of training – other conferences, webinars, and so on

# Overview of Children’s Ministry

## Demographic Data

The first survey question asked churches “How do you define Children’s Ministry/Sunday School?” More than 80% of churches indicated their children’s ministry program is designed for birth through Grades 5 or 6. Churches followed this trend whether segmented by presbytery or size.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Birth - Grade 4	2.6%	2
Birth - Grade 5	46.8%	36
Birth - Grade 6	35.1%	27
Other (please specify)	15.6%	12

Of the 12 churches responding “Other”, 5 define their children’s ministry as birth through high school graduation. There were no trends either by presbytery or size, indicating these churches have made a strategic decision to not separate preschool and primary education programs from secondary education programs.

Other responses included:

- birth thru 8th grade
- 6 week-5th grade
- 2 y.o. - grade 5
- Age 3 to Grade 5
- First through Fifth Grade
- Babies & toddlers; 2's & 3's, Prek's, Prek 5 and K Then we combine grades 1-5 in a large program

When asked “On average, how many children are in your Sunday School/Children’s Ministries programs on a typical weekend?”, churches responded their ministries are about 20% the size of the average weekly attendance.

Answer Options	< 100	100 - 199	200 - 299	300 - 499	500 - 999	1,000 or more
• Fewer than 19	12	5	1	0	0	0
• 20 - 49	1	8	4	2	0	0
• 50 - 99	1	0	5	7	3	0
• 100 - 199	0	0	1	0	9	2
• 200 - 499	0	0	0	0	2	5
• 500 or more	0	0	0	0	0	2

When asked, “How many children attend your midweek ministry?”, churches responded their ministries are about 10% the size of their average weekly attendance.

Answer Options	< 100	100 - 199	200 - 299	300 - 499	500 - 999	1,000 or more
Don't have a midweek ministry	8	9	3	3	5	1
Fewer than 19	4	3	1	0	0	2
20 - 49	2	1	4	4	3	2
50 - 99	0	0	1	1	5	1
100 - 199	0	0	2	0	1	2
200 - 499	0	0	0	0	0	1
500 or more	0	0	0	0	0	0

## Programatic Data

Our churches overwhelmingly use a traditional model for children’s ministry.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Programatic / Traditional / Age-segmented	75.3%	58
Family-based / Family-equipping	6.5%	5
Family-integrated / Integrational	1.3%	1
Don't know	1.3%	1
Other (please specify)	15.6%	12

Other:

- We use a variety of the above, with traditional Sunday school classes, Children's Worship with a curriculum linked to the mid-week program and Family worship once a month.
- Large group/Small Group
- In transition Traditional toward intergenerational
- Age-segmented and Family-integrated
- Children's Church with kids in the sanctuary for first part of worship. Sunday School divided by ages.
- Other responses provided below...

There were no statistically significant variation from denominational trends when churches were segmented by presbytery or size, except for churches with an average weekly attendance of 500 to 999; half of them use some ministry model other than traditional.

- Programatic / Traditional / Age-segmented      7
- Family-based / Family-equipping                      2
- Family-integrated / Integrational                      1
- Other (please specify)                                      4
  - We have Sunday classes at one hour which include use of the Great Commission curriculum for elementary students. Our second service includes a 2nd Sunday classes hour for 2's through Kindergarten. Our Elementary students participate in a Kids Worship using 252 Basics.
  - Family based, still in age groupings for kids though....
  - Preschool- large group/small group Gradeschool- large group
  - Sorry, not sure where it fits in with those labels.

## Risk Management

Our churches use a variety of risk management tools, the most common being background checks and written policies.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Application process for workers using verbal or written references	54.9%	39
Application process for workers using background checks by police, insurance company or other agency	66.2%	47
Written policies communicated to volunteer workers	69.0%	49
Training for workers regarding compliance with state and/or local regulations	26.8%	19
No risk management procedures	8.5%	6
What is the name of the agency you use for background checks?	45.1%	32

The background check agencies our churches use:

- Local police, state police, or state police and FBI (7 responses)
- Protect My Ministry (4 responses)
- ADP (3 responses)
- Intelicorp (3 responses)
- CheckPoint (2 responses)
- Lexus Nexus (2 responses)
- American Checked
- Associated Services
- Kroll. But changing soon
- live scan
- Recommended through group volunteer central
- SafeChurch
- Through Fellowship One
- US Search
- Volunteer Select Plus



These results were consistent when churches were segmented by size. However, there were variations within presbyteries. Variations from denominational trends usually occurred in smaller sample sizes, which could easily account for the variation.

Answer Options	Alleghenies	Central South	East	Florida	Mid-America
Application process for workers using verbal or written references	3	6	2	2	5
Application process for workers using background checks by police, insurance company or other agency	2	7	5	2	7
Written policies communicated to volunteer workers	2	10	7	1	5
Training for workers regarding compliance with state and/or local regulations	0	4	1	2	2
No risk management procedures	0	2	0	0	0
What is the name of the agency you use for background checks?	0	5	3	2	6

Answer Options	Mid-Atlantic	Midwest	Pacific	Rivers and Lakes	Southeast	West
Application process for workers using verbal or written references	3	4	4	2	3	4
Application process for workers using background checks by police, insurance company or other agency	4	6	5	2	1	4
Written policies communicated to volunteer workers	4	8	4	2	1	3
Training for workers regarding compliance with state and/or local regulations	1	3	2	1	1	2
No risk management procedures	2	0	0	0	1	0
What is the name of the agency you use for background checks?	5	2	3	1	2	3

## Training for Ministry

Children’s ministry directors were most likely to continue their training by attending the Children’s Pastor’s Conference or some other form of training – other conferences, webinars, and so on. Children’s ministry directors at larger churches were more likely to take advantage of these opportunities.

What training opportunities in ministry to children have you had? Check all that apply.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
College or seminary degree specializing in education ministries	19.5%	15
College or seminary classes in education ministries	13.0%	10
Children's Pastors' Conference	40.3%	31
Other	36.4%	28
No formal training	27.3%	21
Orange Conference Workshop from curriculum publisher	9.1%	7

Answer Options	< 100	100 - 199	200 - 299	300 - 499	500 - 999	1,000 or more
College or seminary degree specializing in education ministries	3	1	2	2	3	4
College or seminary classes in education ministries	4	1	1	1	0	3
Children's Pastors' Conference	2	3	3	5	10	8
Other	3	4	2	6	9	3
No formal training	5	6	4	1	5	0
Orange Conference Workshop from curriculum publisher	0	1	0	0	5	1

Of the five churches indicating “Orange Conference Workshop form curriculum publisher”, three listed the Orange Conference, one listed Willow Creek Association Leadership Summit, and one indicated continuing education from an accredited college.

## Factors Affecting Ministry

We asked our churches several questions regarding changes in their ministry. The results varied by presbytery and size, so there were no trends.

Q: In the past five years, what has changed in your ministries to children?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Increase in the number of workers and volunteers	40.3%	29
Decrease in the number of workers and volunteers	19.4%	14
Increased turnover of workers and volunteers	6.9%	5
Decreased turnover of workers and volunteers	11.1%	8
Children's ministry leadership structure	48.6%	35
Children's ministry model	25.0%	18
Vision / mission statement	23.6%	17
Curriculum	48.6%	35
No real change has occurred	9.7%	7
Other (please specify)	13.9%	10

Other:

- Increased children, and increase in volunteers. About to propose vision statement.
- Decrease in number of children attending
- addition of mid-week program
- More programs and events for family and service.
- no VBS for 3 yrs.
- No preschool this year for the first time in 15 years
- In the process of revamping Wed night / Adding Sunday Night monthly and Sat. monthly service day
- we are working to fine-tune materials, curricula that we already use
- safety and security policies

## Results by Size

Answer Options	< 100	100 - 199	200 - 299	300 - 499	500 - 999	1,000 or more
Increase in the number of workers and volunteers	5	2	5	5	9	2
Decrease in the number of workers and volunteers	3	4	4	0	1	2
Increased turnover of workers and volunteers	0	2	1	1	0	1
Decreased turnover of workers and volunteers	1	1	1	1	2	2
Children's ministry leadership structure	2	7	6	5	10	4
Children's ministry model	2	4	2	3	4	3
Vision / mission statement	0	4	2	1	6	4
Curriculum	2	8	6	5	9	4
No real change has occurred	3	3	0	0	0	1
Other (please specify)	2	2	2	1	2	1

## Results by Presbytery

Answer Options	Alleghenies	Central South	East	Florida	Mid-America
Increase in the number of workers and volunteers	1	7	1	1	2
Decrease in the number of workers and volunteers	1	3	1	0	2
Increased turnover of workers and volunteers	1	1	1	0	0
Decreased turnover of workers and volunteers	0	2	0	1	1
Children's ministry leadership structure	2	5	3	1	5
Children's ministry model	2	4	0	0	4
Vision / mission statement	2	5	1	0	2
Curriculum	3	9	3	1	5
No real change has occurred	0	1	1	0	0
Other (please specify)	1	1	3	0	0

Answer Options	Mid-Atlantic	Midwest	Pacific	Rivers and Lakes	Southeast	West
Increase in the number of workers and volunteers	6	2	1	2	1	4
Decrease in the number of workers and volunteers	0	5	0	0	1	1
Increased turnover of workers and volunteers	0	1	0	0	0	1
Decreased turnover of workers and volunteers	0	2	1	1	0	0
Children's ministry leadership structure	4	4	2	1	1	5
Children's ministry model	0	4	1	1	1	1
Vision / mission statement	2	2	0	0	0	3
Curriculum	2	3	2	1	1	4
No real change has occurred	2	1	2	0	0	0
Other (please specify)	0	1	1	0	3	0

Q: What factors have been the main contributors to the changes you noted above?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Growth of church	22.7%	15
Decline of church	15.2%	10
Change in church leadership	19.7%	13
Change in children's ministry leadership	43.9%	29
Change in ministry demographics	10.6%	7
Change in community demographics	10.6%	7
Change in vision/mission of the church	22.7%	15
Change in vision/mission of the children's ministry	27.3%	18
Change in interests/attitudes of children	22.7%	15
Change in desires/attitudes of parents	33.3%	22
Availability of new technology	15.2%	10
Other (please specify)	16.7%	11

Other:

- As we have acquired more kids we have also gotten more volunteers.
- Change in culture
- Change in Pastoral leadership 5 years ago.
- Confusion between volunteers
- Economy and people needing full-time child care
- Hearts catching the vision
- inconsistency of families to worship every Sunday
- previous curriculum going out of print
- results of internal survey of CM parents
- Satan is working hard in our town
- taking time to reflect on what children need to know/learn

## Results by Presbytery

Answer Options	Alleghenies	Central South	East	Florida	Mid-America
Growth of church	1	4	0	1	1
Decline of church	1	1	0	0	1
Change in church leadership	1	4	0	0	2
Change in children's ministry leadership	2	5	3	1	3
Change in ministry demographics	0	2	0	0	0
Change in community demographics	0	3	0	0	0
Change in vision/mission of the church	0	2	1	0	3
Change in vision/mission of the children's ministry	2	2	1	0	4
Change in interests/attitudes of children	0	4	1	0	4
Change in desires/attitudes of parents	0	6	2	0	5
Availability of new technology	0	4	1	0	2
Other (please specify)	1	1	1	1	1

Answer Options	Mid-Atlantic	Midwest	Pacific	Rivers and Lakes	Southeast	West
Growth of church	1	0	1	0	1	4
Decline of church	1	3	1	0	1	1
Change in church leadership	1	0	1	1	0	2
Change in children's ministry leadership	2	4	1	1	2	4
Change in ministry demographics	1	1	0	1	0	2
Change in community demographics	0	1	0	1	2	0
Change in vision/mission of the church	1	3	0	1	1	3
Change in vision/mission of the children's ministry	1	4	0	1	0	2
Change in interests/attitudes of children	0	3	0	1	0	1
Change in desires/attitudes of parents	1	3	1	1	2	1
Availability of new technology	0	1	1	1	0	0
Other (please specify)	1	2	1	0	2	0

## Results by Size

Answer Options	< 100	100 - 199	200 - 299	300 - 499	500 - 999	1,000 or more
Growth of church	2	1	3	3	5	0
Decline of church	2	4	2	0	1	1
Change in church leadership	0	4	4	1	3	1
Change in children's ministry leadership	2	7	6	4	8	1
Change in ministry demographics	2	0	1	3	0	1
Change in community demographics	3	2	1	1	0	0
Change in vision/mission of the church	0	3	3	4	3	2
Change in vision/mission of the children's ministry	0	5	1	3	5	3
Change in interests/attitudes of children	1	1	1	5	2	4
Change in desires/attitudes of parents	3	4	3	5	4	3
Availability of new technology	1	0	1	3	2	3
Other (please specify)	3	2	1	1	2	2

# Results of the Curriculum Survey

## Nursery Curriculum

We asked our churches, “How long have you used your nursery school curriculum?:

Answer Options	< 2 years	2 - 5 years	5+ years	
Bible in Life (David C. Cook)	1	2	5	8.42%
Gospel Light	6	3	6	15.79%
Great Commission Publications (GCP)	2	2	6	10.53%
Group Curriculum	0	1	2	3.16%
LiFE (Faith Alive Publications)	1	2	0	3.16%
Scripture Press	0	0	0	0.00%
Walk with Me (Faith Alive Publications)	0	1	0	1.05%
Curriculum written by your church	2	2	9	13.68%
Other	5	6	10	22.11%
Don't use nursery curriculum	8	5	8	22.11%
	26.32%	25.26%	48.42%	

10% of respondents said an EPC recommendation was a somewhat significant factor in their decision to purchase a particular curriculum. 8% stated the recommendation of a colleague or friend was a more significant factor, while 82% of respondents said they chose their curriculum based on their own research.

Because of the way the survey was constructed, it was not possible to break down curriculum usage or purchase decision by presbytery or church size.



## Pre-school Curriculum

We asked our churches, “How long have you used your pre-school curriculum?”

Answer Options	< 2 years	2 - 5 years	5+ years	
Bible in Life (David C. Cook)	3	2	2	7.53%
Discipleland	1	3	2	6.45%
Faithweaver (Group Curriculum)	1	1	2	4.30%
First Look (Orange-Rethink Group)	0	1	0	1.08%
Gospel Light	0	6	8	15.05%
Great Commission Publications (GCP)	1	6	6	13.98%
Hands On Bible	5	1	0	6.45%
LiFE (FaithAlive Publications)	2	1	0	3.23%
Scripture Press	0	0	1	1.08%
Tru Wonder (David C. Cook)	2	1	0	3.23%
Walk with Me (FaithAlive Publications)	0	2	0	2.15%
Curriculum written by your church	1	1	7	9.68%
Other	4	11	7	23.66%
Don't use preschool curriculum.	1	1	0	2.15%
	22.58%	39.78%	37.63%	

2% of respondents said an EPC recommendation was a significant factor when selecting their children’s ministry curriculum. 10% of respondents said an EPC recommendation was a somewhat significant factor in their decision to purchase a particular curriculum. 8% stated the recommendation of a colleague or friend was a more significant factor, while 82% of respondents said chose their curriculum based on their own research.

Because of the way the survey was constructed, it was not possible to break down curriculum usage or purchase decision by presbytery or church size.

## Elementary Curriculum

We asked our churches, “How long have you used your elementary school curriculum?”

Answer Options	< 2 years	2 - 5 years	5+ years	
252 Basics (Orange - Rethink Group)	0	1	1	2.00%
Bible in Life (David C. Cook)	1	2	5	8.00%
Children Desiring God	2	0	4	6.00%
Core Bible (Discipleland)	0	2	1	3.00%
Gospel Light	3	1	7	11.00%
Great Commission Publications (GCP)	0	6	7	13.00%
Group Curriculum	2	3	6	11.00%
LiFE (FaithAlive Publications)	2	1	2	5.00%
Scripture Press	0	0	0	0.00%
Tru Story (David C. Cook)	6	1	1	8.00%
Walk with Me (FaithAlive Publications)	1	2	0	3.00%
Curriculum written by your church	4	0	5	9.00%
Other	7	3	11	21.00%
Don't use elementary curriculum	0	0	0	0.00%
	28.00%	22.00%	50.00%	

3% of respondents said an EPC recommendation was a significant factor when selecting their children’s ministry curriculum. 3% of respondents said an EPC recommendation was a somewhat significant factor in their decision to purchase a particular curriculum. 8% stated the recommendation of a colleague or friend was a more significant factor, while 83% of respondents said chose their curriculum based on their own research. 2% selected their curriculum strictly based on price.

Because of the way the survey was constructed, it was not possible to break down curriculum usage or purchase decision by presbytery or church size.

## Mid-week Programs

When asked, “How many children attend your midweek ministry?”, churches responded their ministries are about 10% the size of their average weekly attendance.

Answer Options	< 100	100 - 199	200 - 299	300 - 499	500 - 999	1,000 or more
Don't have a midweek ministry	8	9	3	3	5	1
Fewer than 19	4	3	1	0	0	2
20 - 49	2	1	4	4	3	2
50 - 99	0	0	1	1	5	1
100 - 199	0	0	2	0	1	2
200 - 499	0	0	0	0	0	1
500 or more	0	0	0	0	0	0

There was no consensus from respondents regarding mid-week curriculum.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Awana	1.8%	1
Group Curriculum	5.5%	3
Pioneer Clubs	7.3%	4
Curriculum written by our church	18.2%	10
Don't use curriculum for midweek program	25.5%	14
Other (please specify)	52.7%	29

Other:

- Gospel Light (3 responses)
- Activities directed and planned by the director (3 responses)
- 4th/5th grade only -- generate own curriculum
- Bible study/word dvd small group study
- Catechism material
- Catechism Club curriculum by GCP
- Children Desiring God
- choir only
- Christian Service Brigade - Stockade
- CMI
- Desiring God
- DPI - Kingdom Kids
- Elevate
- Faithcase
- Gems and Cadets
- Grapple
- Great Commission
- Hands On Bible; Jubilation Station
- Junior/ Senior highs meet on Sunday night, but don't use curriculum. 4th and 5th graders meet midweek and don't use curriculum. 5th and 6th graders meet midweek and use David C. Cook curriculum.
- Kidsana Mission
- Lifeway - Flyte
- Orange 252 and First Look
- Rethink/ 252 basics family experience
- RIO - David Cook
- Varies. Kidmo to Catechism and Researching new ones

## Catechism Instruction

The majority of our churches do not provide catechism instruction. Those that do, choose to provide instruction during the weekend services.

Which of your ministries to children include instruction in the Westminster or similar catechism? Check all that apply.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Weekend services	32.4%	22
Midweek services	11.8%	8
Vacation Bible School	0.0%	0
None	48.5%	33
Other (please specify)	16.2%	11

These results were consistent when segmenting churches by size, but there was some variation when they were segmented by presbytery. This could possibly be a result of the small sample size for some presbyteries.

Answer Options	Alleghenies	Central South	East	Florida	Mid-America	Mid-Atlantic
Weekend services	0	7	3	1	1	1
Midweek services	0	1	1	0	1	0
Vacation Bible School	0	0	0	0	0	0
None	3	3	2	0	5	5
Other (please specify)	1	3	0	1	1	0

Answer Options	Midwest	Pacific	Rivers and Lakes	Southeast	West
Weekend services	4	0	0	1	2
Midweek services	3	0	0	1	0
Vacation Bible School	0	0	0	0	0
None	3	5	1	2	3
Other (please specify)	2	0	1	1	1

When asked, “What curriculum do you use?”, churches responded:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Children’s Ministries International (CMI)	4.7%	3
Great Commission Publications Sunday School Curriculum	12.5%	8
Faith Church Children’s Catechism	3.1%	2
Kid’s Quest (Great Commission Publications)	14.1%	9
Curriculum written by your church	17.2%	11
Don’t use catechism curriculum	50.0%	32
Other (please specify)	7.8%	5

This was consistent across presbyteries. Results varied by church size.

Answer Options	< 100	100 - 199	200 - 299	300 - 499	500 - 999	1,000 or more
Children's Ministries International (CMI)	1	0	0	0	1	1
Great Commission Publications Sunday School Curriculum	1	0	4	1	2	0
Faith Church Children's Catechism	1	0	0	1	0	0
Kid's Quest (Great Commission Publications)	1	1	0	3	1	2
Curriculum written by your church	1	2	2	1	2	3
Don't use catechism curriculum	5	6	4	3	9	5
Other (please specify)	1	3	0	1	0	0

## Vacation Bible School

When asked, “On average, how many children are involved in your Vacation Bible School or similar ministry?”, churches responded their programs are about 50% the size of their average weekly attendance.

Answer Options	< 100	100 - 199	200 - 299	300 - 499	500 - 999	1,000 or more
Don't have Vacation Bible School	5	4	2	0	1	0
Fewer than 19	1	0	0	0	0	0
20 - 49	4	2	0	0	0	0
50 - 99	3	5	3	0	1	0
100 - 199	0	2	6	8	5	1
200 - 499	0	0	0	1	5	5
500 or more	0	0	0	0	2	3

The majority of churches use Gospel Light, Group Curriculum, or something else for their VBS program. This was consistent across presbyteries and church sizes with the greatest variation of curriculum in smaller churches and the least variation in larger churches.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Cook	0.0%	0
Gospel Light	31.7%	20
Group Curriculum	33.3%	21
Scripture Press	0.0%	0
Curriculum written by your church	11.1%	7
Don't use Vacation Bible School or similar curriculum	3.2%	2
Other (please specify)	28.6%	18

### Other

- Churches smaller than 100
  - Answers in Genesis
  - Augsburg
  - Lifeway
- Churches 100-199
  - Cokesbury
  - Rethink Group
  - Truthquest
  - Varies from year to year
  - Our church combines with an inner city group for VBS and they dictate the curriculum
- Churches 200-299
  - Cokesbury
  - Lifeway

- Churches 300-499
  - LifeWay
  - Standard Publishing
- Churches 500-999
  - Cokesbury or Lifeway
  - GO FISH
  - Go Fish Guys
  - Walk Thru the Bible - Kids in the Book OT
  - Do not use the same publisher every summer



# What Can the EPC Do for You?

When asked, "What help/assistance/resource would you like from the EPC?", 34 of the 77 churches responding to the survey provided these answers.

- Churches smaller than 100
  1. grants for equipment, power point, etc.
  2. Guidance and increase of curriculum from EPC. Availability of curriculum.
  3. I'm enjoying the EPC youth minister course. It's giving me a lot of practical advice. [Ed: This course was offered free of charge and facilitated on EPC Community (<http://EPC.SocialGo.com>).]
  4. knowledge of training events
- Churches 100-199
  1. We have volunteers take our children - ages 2-5 - out of worship service each Sunday after the Children's Sermon. We are always looking for some type of Bible-based activity/lesson that requires minimal preparation but that is age appropriate for this group.
  2. Recommendations, advise, articles
  3. information on how to grow children's ministry
  4. Recommendations based on research of curriculum, training for leadership within Children's Ministry, local volunteer training, prayer/mentoring support
  5. Training; newsletters specific to CM.
  6. Would love to see online sessions like Dana had for Vision and are about to have for Youth; nice to have a CM EPC Network to exchange ideas, share events, join in projects. [Ed: This refers to the monthly church communications webinars Dana Cadman, Director of Communications & Information Services, offers free to all EPC churches. In the fall, 2011, Dana led a four-part series about creating a strategic communications plan built on the church's vision and the ministry's mission.]
  7. Volunteer training, curriculum suggestions for gospel-centered curriculum that goes beyond moralism
- Churches 200-299
  1. Conferences on Children's Ministry in the church of today.
  2. Do you know of anyone who could speak to adults during our " Family Bible Adventure" ( formerly V.B.S.) about parenting children in a God honoring manner or some related topic ? It would be nice if this could be done from a Reformed theological basis. Family Bible Adventure is scheduled for Sunday evening July 15 through Thur. evening July 19, 2012. We have some risk management policies, but if you have some forms we could look at it would be nice to receive those.
  3. Information on curriculum
  4. It always nice to hear network and hear what others are doing. Perhaps at the presbytery level, there could be get togethers for CM leaders.
  5. Recommendations on curriculum & conferences, risk management ideas, training

- Churches 300-499
  1. Samples of curriculum for children using W.S.C.
  2. Nothing comes to mind. I go to smaller conferences often and feel equipped by those. I also regularly get together with other Children's Ministers in my area from a variety of evangelical denominations.
- Churches 500-999
  1. Evaluations of different curricula, programs would be nice. I received a recommendation from the denomination, a letter that went to all churches about 10 -12 years ago that recommended a curriculum I wouldn't recommend to anyone and I've never received anything else.
  2. Hmmmm....good question - I didn't ever think about it - reviews of curriculums, trends and volunteer training would be great –
  3. Reviews of curriculum and VBS programs available. Suggestions on how to include the catechism in programs.
  4. Inexpensive conference opportunity discussing children's ministry that includes pastors and senior leadership
  5. Opportunities for leaders in Children's Ministry to gather and share what they are doing; workshops and seminars.
  6. Training Opportunities
  7. Training or Conference for Children's Ministry Workers to get together in person to pray and share resources.
  8. Resource Materials
- Churches 1000+
  1. curriculum review process or rubric, EPC networking opportunities, book recommendations, conference opportunities
  2. Networking availability
  3. It would be great if EPC children's and family ministry workers could connect and share ideas. eg. online communities, General Assembly track, Children's and Family Live Conversation retreat, etc.

## Next Steps

For a list of Endorsed and Commended resources, visit the Christian Education & Publications Committee web pages on the EPC web site at <http://www.EPC.org/Ministries/Christian-Education-Publications/>.

We would like to hear from you. We would like to know what is and what is not working in your ministry and what you are expecting from the Christian Education & Publications Committee. If your church did not participate in the 2012 Children's Ministry Curriculum Survey, please send your contact information to Dana Cadman, Director of Communications & Information Services at [Dana.Cadman@EPC.org](mailto:Dana.Cadman@EPC.org). We will conduct another survey in the next 2 to 3 years and want to ensure your opinions are counted.

# Appendix A - The Method of Survey

Members of the Christian Education & Publications (CE&P) Committee used Survey Monkey ([www.SurveyMonkey.com](http://www.SurveyMonkey.com)) to create the survey of 24 questions, distribute it to EPC churches, and collect the responses.

The survey was first distributed on February 28, 2012 to a list of e-mail addresses collected by volunteers at Cornerstone EPC (Brighton, MI) under the direction of CE&P member Bonny Linder. Follow-up e-mails were sent on March 8th, March 14th, and March 19th.

	<b>Total Number</b>	<b>% of EPC</b>	<b>% of Survey</b>
Number of EPC Churches (Feb 2012)	325	100%	
E-mail addresses for churches or children’s ministry directors	165	51%	100%
Number of surveys begun	77	24%	47%
Number of surveys completed	68	21%	41%

Of the surveys not completed, most were nearly completed. The information most often not provided on incomplete surveys related to the children’s ministry director (questions 16-20) and church demographics (questions 21 – 25).

The sample, while small (90% confidence level with a margin of error +/- 10%), is a typical representation of the EPC. All presbyteries were represented, the smallest sample coming from Presbytery of Florida (2) and Presbytery of the Rivers and Lakes (3) and the largest coming from the Presbytery of the Central South (13), with a mean and median of 6 responses per presbytery.

<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Alleghenies	4
Central South	13
East	7
Florida	2
Mid-America	7
Mid-Atlantic	9
Midwest	10
Pacific	5
Rivers and Lakes	2
Southeast	5
West	6

The sample was almost equally distributed when classifying churches by their average weekly attendance. However, the results were skewed toward larger churches when the responses were compared to the distribution of churches within the EPC. The responses included churches in the following population brackets

<b>Population Bracket</b>	<b>EPC Distribution</b>	<b>Survey Distribution</b>
< 100	46.7%	20.0%
100 – 199	20.2%	18.6%
200 – 299	11.3%	15.6%
300 – 499	8.3%	12.9%
500 – 999	7.0%	20.0%
1000+	6.5%	12.9%

This is the sample of responding churches, cross-tabulated by size and presbytery.

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>&lt; 100</b>	<b>100 - 199</b>	<b>200 - 299</b>	<b>300 - 499</b>	<b>500 - 999</b>	<b>1,000 or more</b>
Alleghenies	0	1	1	0	1	1
Central South	1	5	4	1	1	1
East	0	1	3	2	0	1
Florida	0	0	0	1	1	0
Mid-America	0	0	1	1	3	2
Mid-Atlantic	5	0	1	0	2	0
Midwest	4	3	0	0	1	2
Pacific	0	1	0	0	2	2
Rivers and Lakes	0	0	0	2	0	0
South Central	0	0	0	0	0	0
Southeast	4	1	0	0	0	0
West	0	0	1	2	3	0

## About the Churches

While some results showed variations when segmented by presbytery, more results showed variation when segmented by church size. Therefore, a description of the churches by church size is provided for reference.

For many churches, reaching an average weekly attendance of 300 is a tipping point. Churches of 300 or more are more likely to have a full-time children’s ministry director instead of a part-time or volunteer director. The title of people working in this position is usually some variation of Children’s Ministry Director or Family Ministries Director.

What is the status of your position?						
Answer Options	< 100	100 - 199	200 - 299	300 - 499	500 - 999	1,000 or more
Full-time paid	2	5	4	5	12	8
Part-time paid	3	4	5	3	1	1
Full-time volunteer	3	0	0	0	1	0
Part-time volunteer	6	4	2	1	0	0

People responsible for children’s ministry at churches of 200 or fewer often have some other leadership responsibility within the church, either as a ruling elder, pastor, deacon, or staff member.

A church with an average weekly attendance of 300 or more is also more likely to have multiple services during the weekend.

How many main worship services does your church normally hold each weekend?						
Answer Options	< 100	100 - 199	200 - 299	300 - 499	500 - 999	1,000 or more
1	12	9	7	4	0	0
2	2	4	3	5	10	0
3	0	0	1	0	2	2
4	0	0	0	0	1	3
5 or more	0	0	0	0	1	2