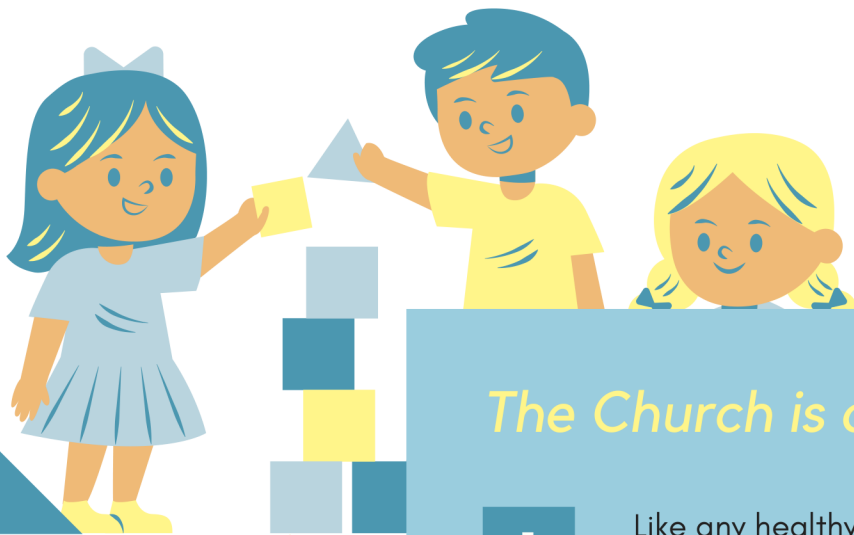


microchurch life with kids

Jesus loves the little ones but where in microchurch life do you make room for them and still have adult time?

This brief resource is an attempt to articulate some principles of how we've seen kids integrated into the life of various diversely shaped microchurches.



The Church is a family

1

Like any healthy functioning family, our microchurches need space for kids and space for adults.

2

The boundaries between kids space and adult space intersect and are not always sharply defined.

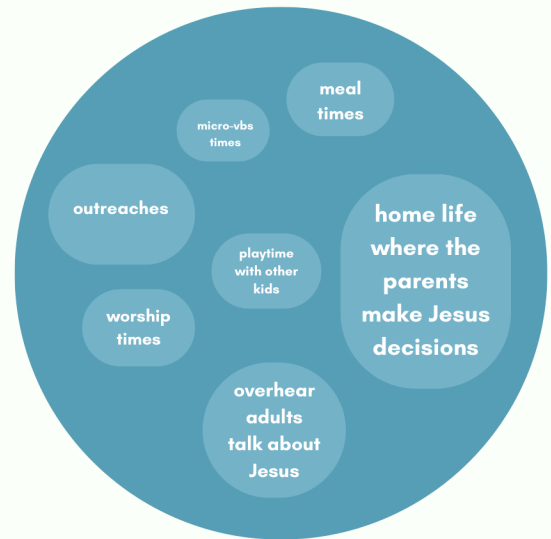
3

We should say “yes” to kids being involved AND “no” to kids being involved. Then, have grace when those boundaries are adjusted.

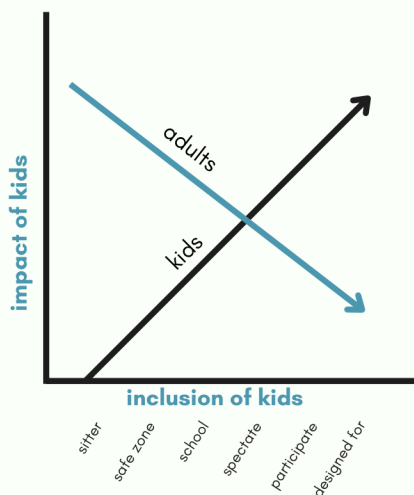
The discipleship of kids happens in the whole life of a microchurch

- 1 Microchurch life is more than just events and all of it shapes our kids
- 2 Discipleship time is more than bible study or a micro-VBS you host for kids
- 3 When we evaluate the discipleship of our kids we need to account for the entire life of the microchurch and the proportional impact in discipleship each part plays (see diagram →)
- 4 5 Ways to raise missional kids (see appendix)

THE WHOLE LIFE OF THE MICROCHURCH



Inclusion and involvement of the kids has an inverse impact on adults



- 1 We've seen six ways to increasingly include kids. The more you include them, the more they are involved in the life of the microchurch.
- 2 The greater the inclusion of kids the more you decrease adult participation and impact.
- 3 Determine what the focus is as you plan microchurch activities and then include kids proportionately to that purpose.

ways to include kids in microchurch

possibilities

examples

<p>SITTER</p> <p>MC hires sitter at separate location or room</p>	<p>Everyone shares the cost and drops kids off at a separate site where they are cared for and safe. Adults are fully focused at the MC event.</p>
<p>SAFE ZONE</p> <p>MC creates a safe but separate space for kids onsite. Adults of MC can rotate to oversee this space</p>	<p>Kids can be included for some elements of MC events but then leave to a separate room so adults can have "adult time". Requires forethought and planning but little maintenance.</p>
<p>SCHOOL</p> <p>MC creates a separate kids' experience to learn. Adults of MC can rotate to oversee this space</p>	<p>Kids can be included for some elements of MC gathering but then leave for a lesson or experience designed for them. Requires planning and scheduling adults to teach the kids.</p>
<p>SPECTATE</p> <p>MC allows kids to watch while adults participate in MC life</p>	<p>Kids can eavesdrop through the entire event and just be around while adults engage fully in the MC life. Requires events that are more fluid like outreaches, community nights and hang outs.</p>
<p>PARTICIPATE</p> <p>MC allows kids to participate</p>	<p>Kids are fully allowed to be involved. They sit with, walk alongside the adults even if some things go over their heads. Requires kids whose needs don't require them to be the center of attention.</p>
<p>DESIGNED FOR</p> <p>MC designs for a kids' experience with the adults</p>	<p>The event is designed for kids and the adults adjust their engagement to maximize the kids' experience.</p>

planning for kids

Microchurch Event Flow

Most microchurch events (weekly, monthly, periodically) will follow a basic pattern. When thinking about the patterns of our microchurch events we can anticipate and plan for the kids. (There are always exceptions to this pattern; special outreaches, conferences, hangout times, etc...)

- Welcome Catch up, snacks
- Call to Jesus Prayer, worship, preaching, bible study
- Share Lives Conversation, confession, meal
- Mission Impulse Outreaches, peer coaching, training

Make a Plan for the Kids

How will you include and exclude the kids in a microchurch event?
 What common agreement do the parents need to have in the microchurch?
(ex. When it's adult time we agree to help our kids not interrupt. When they do, we agree to have grace.)

INCLUSION PLANNER

shape your microchurch life events with kids

EVENT FLOW	sitter	safe	school	spectate	participate	design for
WELCOME						
CALL TO JESUS						
SHARE LIVES						
MISSION IMPULSE						



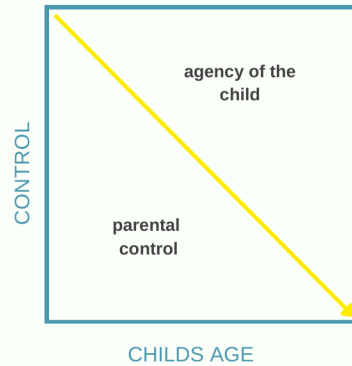
to sum it all up

- Jesus loves kids.
- Jesus is in charge of his church.
- Kids are not in charge of the church.
- We say “yes” and “no” to our kids in life and in our microchurches.
- Discipleship of kids happens in the entire life of the microchurch, including exclusive adult time.
- We design our microchurch with our kids in mind but not for our kids.
- Make agreements as a microchurch so that all parents understand when the kids are involved and when they are not. This can change as seasons and kids age.
- It’s okay to help families move on to other churches if they continue to demand consumeristic kid’s ministry.



appendix

5 ways to raise missional kids



1

MAKE JESUS THE CENTER, NOT THEM

- Theirs is the kingdom, but they are not the kingdom.
- Safest place for them is you following Jesus (individually and as a collective family), even if it involves risk for them.
- ie, Late nights, microchurch meetings interrupting family activities and calendars

2

TAKE ENOUGH RISK WHERE YOU HAVE TO LIVE YOUR FAITH OUT LOUD

- Is there a Jesus first decision that forces you to explain it to your kids, "I think Jesus wants us to do this." (ie, fostering, moving jobs or neighborhoods, reduction of materialism)
- Hold onto humility in saying, "we are seeking the kingdom, but we could be wrong. What we are not wrong about is our love for Jesus and his love for us."

3

EXPOSURE THERAPY AND ENVIRONMENTAL OSMOSIS

- The good, bad and ugly. Allow them to be exposed to even the ugly parts of christians.
- Not being forced to pretend or participate as if they are fully a believer (ie, attend outreaches, conferences, stay for the meal to only leave for the bible study)

4

GIVE THE GIFT OF REASONABLE FAITH

- Jesus not religion, but religion as a world-view that makes sense.
- Interested in dialogue but I still call the shots. (ie, giving reasons for why we believe, and not just repeating dogma. not into a church denomination or christian patriotism, capitalism or socialism but interested in the kingdom of Jesus)

5

AGE APPROPRIATE CHOICE

- Many paths, but eventually they have to choose one.
- Become an age-appropriate coach (don't have them swim too soon, but don't keep the floaties on when they are competing in highschool competitions)
- Baptisms can be delayed in order to mitigate religious social pressures to accelerate nominal confessions of faith.