

You Say That You Care... Prove It by Loving City Kids

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Great, you're back. Are you ready to go "inside"? Good, let's go. No, wait. Before we take your game inside let's get a few things straight. First, this is not going to be a sightseeing tour of what ministry is like in the inner city. Second, ministering to city kids is real and risky -- but it places you right where God is at work. Ships are safe in harbors, but they were never built to stay. Read *Psalm 107:23-24 or Luke 5:4*. Third, we are going to school, a type of urban ministry boot camp, actually.

Lesson #1

God is good - All the time! Right? God is also good in *the hood* (inner city neighborhoods). You need to know that many of the kids and their families who live in *the hood* are aware that they have extreme problems. They wish things were different. Many of these families still respect the Word of God, and believe in prayer. They respond to Christians who bring them help and hope. Often their response is temporary, but yours must never be.

Lesson #2

If you care enough to take the Love of Christ inside then you will have to prove it by loving city kids and their families. In the book, *Grace Matters*, Lem Tucker is quoted, "He who has the greatest truth must have the greatest love, which is the greatest proof." You must prove it over and over again for others to know that you really care. It has been said, "They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." Many well-meaning Christians have done great harm in the city by making promises to kids and never returning. If you love city kids these things can never be.

Lesson #3

Your primary focus will be to build personal and ministry relationships, which are developed slowly and are biblically based upon equality, grace, trust, and longevity. They will be established by visiting children in their own neighborhood. In a short time your consistent presence on the porches and in the hallways of kids to whom you minister will prove to their families that you really do care.

Metro Ministries in Brooklyn, NY, with the largest Sunday School in America, Extra Good News[™] (an urban CEF ministry in Durham, NC), and many churches with bus ministries know that in order to impact large or small numbers of children you must be visiting them. If you are not visiting the children, the question must be asked: do you honestly love them? Do you really care?

Lesson #4 - Why visit?

- It connects you with the real world where kids live – “You’re not afraid”
- 80% of the children attend your events because you visited – “You let me know”
- It expands your personal ministry time with each child – “You care about me”
- It projects an image/testimony in the community – “Thank you for helping my kids”

Spencer was a boy who was visited each week. Soon he and his sister started attending Extra Good News. The faithfulness of his bus commander to visit, encourage, and pray with the family led to Spencer becoming a teen helper, an active church member, and later a CEF summer missionary. Today, Spencer desires a life in full-time Christian ministry.

Lesson #5 - How to visit?

- Set a time every week to visit
- Everything revolves around weekly visitation
- Use a roster: info on each child and family
- Visit every kid and spend extended time with select individuals
- Be prepared to share the Gospel, listen, or lend a helping hand
- Pray for children, parents, and family needs
- Use a *block-by-block* approach for reaching more kids

Because a children's worker followed this plan for weekly visitation, Nikki received help when she said, "My mom is always angry... I don't know what to do?" Jade, a ten year old, had a heavy burden after watching *Left Behind*. She told her teacher, "I don't want my mom to be left behind. Will you come tell her what you told me about Jesus?"

Floodgates for ministry burst wide open when you visit. Will you visit the children in your ministry? If so, you'll take your game to another level. I'll meet you again on "the inside."

For a complete visitation packet and *Guidelines for the Street* contact CEF of Durham Area at cefcenteroflight@aol.com or 919-682-7317.