

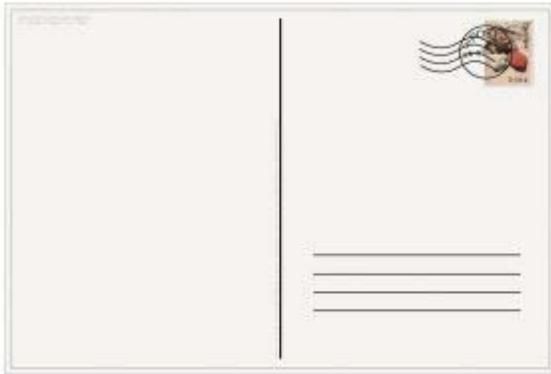


SUNDAY MORNING STRATEGIES: FOLLOWING UP

Page 1 of 2

By Wayne D. Stocks

December 2, 2013



Welcome back as we continue our “Sunday Morning Strategies” series designed to help you to accommodate children of divorce and children from single parent homes in your Sunday morning children’s ministry. The world of a child of divorced or separated parents is marked by chaos. Chances are that your Sunday morning children’s ministry may also include just a touch of controlled chaos. When those two worlds meet, it is easy to lose track of kids.

So, what processes do you have in place to follow up on kids who are no longer coming to your church? Do you know which kids have recently experienced a family transition so you can make sure to follow up on them? Are

you small group leaders equipped and empowered to follow up on the kids in their group who stop coming to church? Statistics show that children from non-intact families are more likely than their counterparts from intact families to stop going to church following the family transition, and you need to have a means of making sure that these kids do not fall through the cracks.

In our culture, it is no longer unusual for a child to miss a week or more of church each month. But, if a child stops coming altogether, it is critical that you follow up with the child and with the family. This is especially important as children transfer between age groups and between small group leaders when it is especially easy for them to get “lost in the shuffle.”

Here are some steps you can take at your church to help make sure kids don’t fall through the cracks and you are following up on missing kids:

1. Have a person/people in your church who are specifically responsible for following up on kids who have missed church. If you are from a smaller church, that may be the children’s pastor. In a larger church, individual small group leaders or Sunday School teachers may be responsible for their kids.
2. Specify exactly what that follow up will look like. Will you use e-mail, handwritten letters, or phone calls? Figure out what is going to work best for your church and make the resources available to whoever will be doing the follow up. If you are going to have small group leaders send handwritten notes then provide them with stationary, addresses for the kids in their groups and stamps.
3. Train your volunteers on your policies for following up and the importance of following up.
4. Put a system in place to track kids as they move up from room to room or from group to group. Perhaps their new small group leader / Sunday school teacher can visit the kids who will be moving up to their group for a couple of weeks before the promotion.



SUNDAY MORNING STRATEGIES: FOLLOWING UP

Page 2 of 2

By Wayne D. Stocks

December 2, 2013

As you consider the need to follow up on the children who used to come to your ministry, consider the following quote from a young woman who grew up in a divorced home and is now 35 when asked what she would suggest to someone working with children of divorce:

"If the church youth group or Sunday school group leader had kept in touch for the months I was split between churches....that would have been great. Letters in the mail. Correspondence. Something to feel like I had a church leader and group that really was family and there for me even though I only came for so many months out of the year. It would have helped the back and forth."