



WHAT CHILDREN'S PASTORS ARE SAYING ABOUT CHILDREN OF DIVORCE

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By Linda Ranson Jacobs

01/25/2013

The Children's Pastor's Conference in Orlando was last week. I did a workshop and ran a booth for DC4K. I like these kinds of conferences mainly because everyone there is concerned about the welfare of children. They worry about a child's relationship to the Lord. They all want children in their communities coming to church.

Over the years I've watched the tide turn about the child of divorce. Years ago when I would ask a children's pastor or volunteer if they had children of divorce in their community, many would look at me with a blank expression and eventually they would respond with, "No, I don't think we have any divorced families in our area."

This year when I asked that question I got a different expression. It was a look of exasperation and then most would say, "Well who doesn't have kids of divorce in their church?" I didn't have one person say they didn't have children of divorce in their community.

I would ask these children's pastors and volunteers,

"How are you accommodating these children of divorce?"

Here are some of the answers I heard:

We aren't accommodating them very well.

I'm clueless. I think some people connected to Divorce Care work with them, but I'm embarrassed to say I don't know anything about it.

I wish we were doing a better job of reaching these children!

I really don't know what to do to help them.

****big sigh**** Our church does nothing to help them.

I wish we could impact the single parent. Most just drop off their kids, and it makes it hard to help the child when we can't make a connection to the parent.

How can you work with them when they only come every so often? Most don't attend on a regular schedule.

We have a lot of single parents that bring their kids to our regular children's group, but we don't do much work with families as a whole.

We use DC4K, and we are seeing some incredible healing taking place.

In our church, we have a continuing curriculum so when a child of divorce misses every other Sunday we try to catch them up from what happened the Sunday before.



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When I explained that for a child of divorce that visited the other parent every other weekend and they could only come to church every other Sunday to the child that is a regular schedule. One minister said, "Hmm, I never thought of it that way!"

Why am I reporting all of this to you? Because this says to me that finally after all these years, our efforts to educate children's ministers and volunteers about the child of divorce are beginning to pay off. It has been a slow process.

What can you do to help Wayne Stocks and I continue this education process?

- You can forward articles that are posted on DivorceMinistry4Kids to key leaders in your church.
- Print out Wayne's ["Does the Shape of Families Shape Faith? Words of Advice Regarding Children of Divorce"](#) chart and hand it to every minister in your church. Hand it to some key leaders such as adult Sunday School teachers also. Post it around your church.
- Educate yourself about the effects of divorce on kids, and then make it a point to tell just one person every week. At the end of the year you will have educated 52 people about how divorce impacts children.
- Pray relentlessly for the child of divorce.
- Make it a point to get to know children in your church who are living through the divorce of their parents. Build a relationship with them. Model God's unconditional love to them. Tell them divorce is an adult problem.

What other ideas can you think of to minister to these children? Please share your ideas with us by commenting on this article.

Linda Ranson Jacobs is one of the forefront leaders in the area of children and divorce. She developed and created the DivorceCare for Kids programs. DC4K is an international program for churches to use to help children of divorced parents find healing within the arms of a loving church family. As a speaker, author, trainer, program developer and child care center owner, Linda has assisted countless families by modeling and acting on the healing love she has found in Jesus Christ. Linda offers support, encouragement and suggestions to help those working with the child of divorce. She serves as DC4K Ambassador (<http://www.dc4k.org>) and can be reached via email at ljacobs@dc4k.org.

Free articles and devotions for single parent families in your church can be found at Linda's website Healthy Loving Partnerships for Our Kids (<http://www.hlp4.com>).

