



## Revitalize existing structures for family ministry

**Reframe**—Family ministry orientation needs to permeate every ministry in the church.

Each needs to recognize the importance of not only instilling vision into families but the necessity to make their work “family friendly” to benefit from their involvement.

**Re-tool**—Each ministry within the church needs to be examined for its ability to involve families in outreach to the community and promote a *Mission as Life* emphasis. Some existing offices or ministries need to be returned to their roots.

- ✦ **Deacons**—the Biblical role of deacons rose from the need to care for widows in the church and to handle “serving” issues. Too many of our churches have strayed from this model and too often deacons serve more as trustees and managers of property. **We need to bring this office back to its roots. They can become the scouts, finding out who in the congregation needs help, whether single moms, widows, the elderly, or the disadvantaged, and then helping organize families to help those in need.**
- ✦ **Women’s mission society**—God’s mission is local as well as global. **Women’s mission societies can become involved in the lives of single mothers, new mothers, families with special needs as well as global mission work.** They can help discover new areas to serve locally in places such as crisis pregnancy centers, homeless shelters, transitional housing, and organize families who will volunteer there.
- ✦ **Community groups or neighborhood Bible studies**—These are pre-organized groups that can put family service in action with little advance planning or organization. They can promote local agencies and designate specific weeks in the year for family outreach. Why not designate one week a month as outreach week and have each group adopt a particular ministry in the area or focus on a particular group in the church such as widows, single moms, physically challenged etc.
- ✦ **Missions committee**—*Think global-act local* should be the mantra of the **missions committee.** Support of missionaries is crucial and should be considered hallowed...nearly untouchable. The committee should also work to **promote family based short term trips** which are designed to prepare families for local ministry upon return. These same committees can research agencies in the local

area that can be shared with short term teams as a part of their debriefing. **The light that shines farthest shines brightest at home.**

- ✦ **Christian Education**—Christian Ed is about more than imparting Biblical facts or topically based studies focused on self improvement. When working at its best it instills vision, a sense of purpose, a deep walk with Christ and mobilizes people to put what is learned into practice in their daily lives. **Curriculum should be chosen with service, missions and outreach in mind.** Every level of focus within the church should reinforce *Mission as Life* principles.
- ✦ **Children's ministry**—what goes on in your church through the week? Daycare is a vital need for many who are on welfare. I can't think of any reason why each local church should not have a daycare for the community with an emphasis on the poor. Think of how this will open doors of ministry to families. Think of how this allows you to have crucial input into the development of children within your community.

**Re-connect**—Your church exists within a community. **How connected are you to that community?**

- ✦ **Become familiar with other agencies**, non-profits serving the poor, the elderly, orphans, etc **in your community.**
- ✦ **Become familiar with your community's neighborhoods.** Where are the affluent areas? Where are the more distressed areas? What is going on in terms of outreach in those distressed areas?
- ✦ **What are the felt needs of youth in your area?** Is there sufficient recreation? Do they need tutoring? Summer jobs?