

# hands on

Stories, ideas, & news  
You can use  
from Kids Friendly



## Kids Friendly Plans

ISSUE 10: Jan 08

Happy new year! I hope you've had a good break and are rearing to plan your Kids Friendly year. My favourite word at the moment is "intentional" (you'll hear more of that later) and that's exactly what we need to be if we are to ensure that our churches are Kids Friendly. So as you gather your team together at the start of this new year consider what children's ministry means to your church. Is it a whole-church approach to ministering to children? Does it seek to minister to the un-churched as well as those who come on Sunday? Who is your community of children and families and what are their needs? How do you plan to provide for some of those needs? Can you intentionally plan to reconnect with some of those children and families who have an association with your church but aren't regular worshippers? Do you have a written plan that includes your children's

ministry goals for the year? The Kids Friendly Ideals and Self-review resource is a helpful guide for brainstorming and writing your annual plan. And what about leaders training? Will you have an inspirational event to share your vision, mission, values and goals for 2008? Do you plan to offer leaders opportunities to upskill? Organisations like Scripture Union and Kidsreach offer valuable training events (see dates in this newsletter) and the Kids Friendly website ([www.presbyterian.org.nz](http://www.presbyterian.org.nz)) details training opportunities with me. For a sample leaders' planning meeting PowerPoint or children's ministry strategic plan, email Kids Friendly. And if you're not a Kids Friendly network member yet, join now so you can access the Kids Friendly resources to help you plan a great year of children's ministry.

Blessings. Jill

## Thank you PSDS



Presbyterian Savings & Development Society has given Kids Friendly \$100,000 over the last two years and has just announced a further contribution of \$25,000. Kids Friendly is made possible by the generous funding of PSDS and Presbyterian Foundation and donations from Auckland, Dunedin and Wellington Presbyteries.

## Families in Mission



My good friend and colleague Sean Pawson, National Children's Ministry Consultant for the Baptist Church of NZ, and his family are certainly being intentional about raising awareness of and support for children at risk. Their family of 7 and close friends are cycling 1500km across rugged South Island terrain to raise awareness of and money for children at risk.

"Cycling with the Poor" is a great Kiwi initiative worthy of our support. Why not launch your 2008 children's ministry by following the adventures of these intrepid missionaries and offer them (and World Vision) your support and encouragement.

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Presbyterian Church  
of Aotearoa New Zealand

# Intentionally Including Children

An ongoing challenge for Kids Friendly churches is to consider children and young people in every decision made. Sounds simple, but in reality children's needs are often overlooked even by churches that consider themselves "Kids Friendly". How are children included or involved in your church's AGM or mission trip or anniversary celebrations? My Kids Friendly colleague Emily Wotton, was asked by an Auckland church to help run a programme for children during the church's celebrations to open their new auditorium. "Why are the children not involved in the opening celebrations?" asked Emily, "after all this will be their church for longer than it will be yours?" Churches continue to segregate their members by having events limited to one group within the church or by believing that some events just aren't appropriate for children. There is nothing more powerful than participating in a communion service that embraces the whole body of Christ. I subscribed to the widely held belief that Good Friday is not a service for children, so was challenged when I saw my church was advertising a Kids Friendly ecumenical Good Friday service. It was the most powerful and meaningful Good Friday service I have ever attended. 30 children were fully engaged and involved and I don't think my 9 year old son will ever forget the rose thorn he held tightly in his palm as the crucifixion story was told. We do our children a disservice when we edit the gospel. St John's in

the City, Wellington ensured that children were fully involved in the farewell of their much loved minister Helen Martin and were moved by their contributions to this event. So advocate for children's involvement in all your planning. The body of Christ is so much healthier when all its parts are functioning together.



Eve Davis reads the children's tribute to Helen Martin

## Waving the Kids Friendly flag

People sometimes ask: "what's the benefit of branding our church Kids Friendly? Some suggest: "Our community knows we're Kids Friendly so we don't need to advertise it." Research shows that most people don't even know where their neighbourhood church is yet alone its characteristics. More and more Kids Friendly churches are finding that newcomers choose their church because they saw the Kids Friendly sign outside its building. To brand your church you need to complete the Kids Friendly self-review and show you are committed to meeting the Kids Friendly standards. Many churches do not effectively welcome, engage and involve children, so it is important to differentiate the ones that are Kids Friendly. Kids Friendly churches are known for the way they celebrate, value and provide for children of their church and communities. Kids Friendly churches are encouraged to display the logo and posters liberally to let the public know of their commitment and intent to minister to children. If you have been assessed Kids Friendly, be proud of your achievements and be open to ongoing challenge by stating it publicly. St John's Papatoetoe not only has the Kids Friendly logo on its website but when you click onto it you are taken to the Kids Friendly website. St Andrew's Howick promotes their Kids Friendly status in their community's Santa Parade and many other churches fly the banner or have a permanent Kids Friendly sign on their properties. If you would like to work to become Kids Friendly contact Jill, the Kids Friendly Coach. And if you are a "branded" Kids Friendly church, send me a photo of your sign so I can use yours next time.



Howick Presbyterian is proud to be Kids Friendly



# Grand Sundays



As I travel the country I am often faced with a largely elderly congregation asking sadly: "Where are the children?" One of my responses to this is: "how many of you have grandchildren?" and "where are they?"

One way to bring children back into our churches is to bring our own. Name me a parent who will turn

down the offer to have the kids stay Saturday night at Nan and Pop's to be returned at 12 the next day? Why not consider making one Sunday each month or term grandparents' and grandchildren's day? (Grand Sunday). We are never too old to teach children to worship God and grandparents are well placed to pass on the mantle of faith. And if you advertise this special service outside your church you probably will attract grandparents in your community too. It's a perfect opportunity to introduce some new and creative ideas into your worship service too as grandparents will want the service to be appealing to their grandchildren. You don't need to drop your normal rituals because children love sacred drama, but be intentional about involving children in every element of the service. Invite a child to be the minister's worship assistant and lead a Kids Friendly call to worship and another to light the candle. Sing well known songs like "He's got the whole world in His hands." If you have an organ introduce the organist and invite him to tell the children why he plays the organ, how long it took him and let them watch him in action. Consider changing your normal seating by placing chairs in the round or if you have pews introducing rugs and brightly coloured cushions

up front. Invite the children and their grandparents up front early in the service to ensure good interaction. Have a puppet friend to introduce to the children. Keri the Keruru the CCANZ peace dove (available from the Kids Friendly office) is a favourite, but any fluffy toy or puppet can help welcome children and contribute to the story. Explain what is happening throughout the service. For example: "we are going to pray now which is how we talk to God," or "We are going to thank God for all the wonderful things he gives us". Consider creative ways to include children in the prayers.

Form a children's choir that leads music on "Grand Sunday" you might attract some new recruits. Invite children to play an instrument. Involve children in collecting the offering. End the service with a Kids Friendly shared morning tea.

Other Kids Friendly ideas for celebrating and including children:

Have a welcome table set up "manned" by enthusiastic greeters.

Have teens help kids make a name badge as they arrive.

Have a welcome pack for new children including a little gift, newsletter about what happens at your church for children and families, activity sheets to take home, stickers etc.

Use simple language.

Sing well known songs or teach new songs with well known tunes or easy to learn tunes and include actions.

Share the Jesus story from the children's bible and then reiterate it using PowerPoint, props, puppets or drama.

Include community activities like greeting each other, passing the peace, celebrations, small group time.

Strive to offer a non-threatening and inclusive worship experience. For a sample "Grand Sunday" service contact the Kids Friendly office.

## Kids Friendly Training Events 2008

WAY2GO one day children's ministry training events are scheduled for:

Wellington: 15th March

Auckland: 29th March

Dunedin: 2th April

For more details or to book go to:

[www.scriptureunion.org.nz](http://www.scriptureunion.org.nz)

Scripture Union also offers EXTEND, personalised training programmes for children's leaders at your church. Look on their website under training for details.

Kidsreach national children's ministry conference "Reach 2008" will be held in Hamilton from 22 - 25 May. For details see [www.kidsreach.org.nz](http://www.kidsreach.org.nz).

For details of Kids Friendly training workshops see [www.presbyterian.org.nz/kidsfriendly](http://www.presbyterian.org.nz/kidsfriendly) or email me with your training requirements and we will



Hilarity at a Kids Friendly Storytelling training event

work together to design a workshop for you and your leaders.

Rich Melheim of Faith Inkubators in the USA will also be leading a one day workshop in Auckland in July. I attended a Lutheran workshop with him in 2006 and it was life-changing! Details will be sent to you as soon as they are available. It's gonna be an awesome year!



# Families in Mission continued.

When Sean, wife Gill and their four youngest children visited India in May 2007 to see the work of development agencies such as World Vision, they were appalled by the hundreds of dull-eyed child labourers they met, robbed of their childhood by merciless creditors and ruthless employers. But they also saw hope offered by World Vision's "Born to be Free" project. The Pawson family played with children who had been freed from bonded labour and placed into schools. Says Sean: "When our family returned from a trip from India we didn't want to simply stow away the digi photos, share a few travel yarns and slip back into our consumer-driven lives. The faces of broken and brave children were etched on the back of our eyelids and we were determined to do more to help lift these children out of the pits of poverty and injustice."

The family is partnering with World Vision to attract 1200 new sponsors and raise \$100,000 for World Vision's "Children in Crisis" project.

Ways you can help:

1. Sponsor the riding team by contacting the Pawsons at 027-4992829 or email: [cyclingwithpoor@xtra.co.nz](mailto:cyclingwithpoor@xtra.co.nz).

Some ideas for sponsorship from Sean:

*"Churches could come on board by organising their own fundraising "Cycling with the Poor" event while we are on the journey (January 14 to February 22). Check out [www.cyclingwiththepoor.co.nz/diy-tools/diy-tools.html](http://www.cyclingwiththepoor.co.nz/diy-tools/diy-tools.html) for help with organising a CWTP event.*

*Some ideas to 'prime the creative pump':*

☺ *Organise preschoolers to ride around the church car park (or some other venue) lifting their trikes etc over simple obstacles. Invite folks in the church and community to sponsor them.*

☺ *Get as many church members as are interested to ride to a local venue and have a picnic together. Donate the money they would have spent on fuel.*

☺ *Get teenagers and others who love a challenge to climb a nearby hill on a farm, or ride a public mountain bike track and get sponsored for the number of kms they cover.*

☺ *Get the primary school children to create an obstacle course in a local park, or farm or.... and get sponsored for the number of circuits they do. You could also put a series of buckets with photos of children from the projects on them near the obstacles and invite participants to drop money into them as they go past.*

☺ *Contact us on [cyclingwiththepoor@xtra.co.nz](mailto:cyclingwiththepoor@xtra.co.nz) and discuss possibilities of a group from your church linking up with our expedition team somewhere along the route.*

2. Donate to Children in Crisis by going to: [https://worldvision.org.nz/rampant/Form\\_CIC](https://worldvision.org.nz/rampant/Form_CIC) and become a donor or pledge supporter of Children in Crisis. When you come to the "What prompted you to donate?" question, click on the down arrow and highlight "Cycling with the Poor".

The money you donate will free children from bonded labour, provide care to children impacted by HIV and AIDS and deliver support to orphans and street children.

To share the vision and story of "cycling with the poor" with your children and church you can order a 'Cycling with the Poor' DVD for a \$10 donation or view it online at [www.cyclingwiththepoor.co.nz](http://www.cyclingwiththepoor.co.nz). On the website you can also read the Pawson's story and get blog updates as the family conducts its wild journey.

## Wonderful websites

WWW.

[Sermons4kids.com/hmartin](http://Sermons4kids.com/hmartin)  
(For cool free bible story ppts)  
[Sa.uca.org.au](http://Sa.uca.org.au)  
(amazing aussie resources under children and youth)  
[Faithink.com](http://Faithink.com)  
(Coming to NZ this year!)



## Contact Kids Friendly:

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