



hands on

Stories, ideas & news from Kids Friendly | ISSUE 16 | May 2010



What makes a great leader?

Thousands of books have been written on the qualities of leaders. And as many experts have debated the influence of nature or nurture. But what motivates me is how we encourage our children to be Jesus leaders? If we want to define the qualities of a great leader, surely we need look no further than Jesus.

In the last two months 50 children have explored what it means to be a "Jesus leader" at Transformers – Raising Up Young Leaders camps. Transformers is a Kids Friendly initiative to help children develop leadership by discovering their God-given gifts and serving others as Jesus taught. Read all about the Dunedin camp on page 2.

While schools have long recognised the importance of encouraging leadership in children, many of our churches still cling to the "children should be seen and not heard" mentality. Students from the age of 10 and upwards start making crucial decisions about their life. This is also a time when many are transitioning from primary school to intermediate or intermediate to high school and it is in times of transition that churches often lose members. If we're serious about our future church, we must be serious about investing in these young leaders.

We know that one of the best ways to develop leaders is mentoring. Every child attending a Transformers camp is accompanied by a mentor who commits to encourage and facilitate the child's leadership in their church for the next year.

Our churches are full of wise, faithful people and when these "missionaries" befriend and mentor younger Christians, amazing things happen. I'm sure you'll be inspired by the story from Knox Church Morrinsville who buddied their youngsters with parish councillors.

And Joseph from Mosgiel is a truly Transformational leader. Many of our churches enjoyed sharing his Lego Easter story with their children and will later this year be blessed by his Lego Christmas DVD. And leadership starts pretty young as you'll read below.

Jesus was never in doubt of the potential of children and reminded us that they are amongst our greatest teachers. May this focus on leadership inspire you to truly "let the children come" in your churches.

As always it is your stories that inspire and encourage me and I love to share them with others, so please keep them coming.

Blessings, Jill

Never too young to lead

Benita Barton, the passionate and experienced children's minister from St Mark's Pinehill in Dunedin sent us this delightful story: *"Liam had his 5th birthday party in the church hall recently. I called in and was surprised to see a group of older girls 9-11 years at this little boy's party. The girls who come to church without their families, were walking past the church when Liam spotted them from the doorway and said: "Come in. There's plenty of food and a bouncy castle!" So the girls came in. The next day the scripture was on the call of the first four disciples: "bring the outsiders/uninvited in, there is room for all and plenty to eat". I think Liam, at 5, is getting it right."*



Contact us

Jill Kayser, Kids Friendly Coach
Email: jill@kidsfriendly.org.nz
09-5850959/027-2103784

Lorraine Morgan, Kids Friendly Co-ordinator
Email: lorraine@kidsfriendly.org.nz
03-6938248/027-4038126

Cheryl Harray, Kids Friendly Coach Dunedin
Email: cheryl@kidsfriendly.org.nz
03-476 3932/027-4896153

Transformers RUYL



Sandy Gorman, leader from Otago Peninsula Presbyterian church said:

"Not only did I come away inspired, I came away knowing what a true blessing my kids are! They all stepped up into that "young leader" role and were comfortable in showing their gifts and talents to others. I think what sticks out in my mind was the final worship service and the contributions of my youth. There were 2 of my girls who are not keen to be up at the front singing or speaking but absolutely blew me away with the puppets! They are very ready to write a script for next week's service! Fantastic! I have heard nothing but raves about the weekend if facebook is anything to go by, and I have kids that are keen to get right into the worship service next week."



Transformers Camp - Waihola, Dunedin 23-25 April.

R.U.Y.L.(Raising Up Young Leaders) Twenty 10-13 year olds plus 12 leaders and mentors.

Arranged into 4 teams with fantastic enthusiastic teenage leaders.

Night time treasure hunt and banner making got them in the mood.

Stories of Jesus - Checking out His leadership style through 5 stories - Jesus is the leader and example to follow.

Four workshops to choose from - worship, puppets, computers, art.

Opportunities to share their gifts. Original ideas. Wow!

Responsiveness of all the young people to the activities and learning of the weekend.

Mentors stood alongside, observing, ready to carry on encouraging leadership and gift sharing back in their churches for the next year.

Energy! Enthusiasm! Exuberance! Capture this in our churches!

Really special commissioning service, reciting their learning, receiving their certificates, ready to be.....

Sent out to be transformational leaders for Jesus. Yay!

Carolyn Sims, leader from Flagstaff Union said:

"I really liked the way the workshops directly related to the worship service. I was amazed at the way our children participated in workshops and then brought it to the worship service. I wouldn't have thought my kids could have done the puppet show they performed. It shows we just need to give them the opportunity. The commissioning service was a very special time. I am looking forward to working with the young leaders in training as a mentor, as we set goals and keep an eye out for opportunities where they can serve and lead!"



Friends across the ages

There has been extensive research on the benefits of young people having "significant" other adults in their lives. Bev Reid from Knox Morrinsville was inspired by Calvin (Gore) Church's story in "Hands On" of children serving and getting to know elders, and decided to intentionally facilitate all age friendships at her church.

"We decided that we would like to introduce something to help our children feel more a part of the whole church. We invited the members of Parish council to morning tea after church one Sunday to meet our children. We facilitated conversation by giving adults and children a list of possible questions they could ask each other. At first the exercise seemed to be a bit of a disaster, starting with the disappearance of the morning tea goodies the children had made the Sunday before. And many of the "matches" we had envisaged didn't materialise because one of them didn't show up on the day! However we boxed on through the chaos and everyone got to ask questions.

The following day, as I reflected on my disappointment with the venture, I felt the Lord encouraging me. He seemed to be telling me that we were onto something good and not to give up. So we made a special effort over the next few weeks to match adults (Parish

Councillors) and children. The matches were made with careful and prayerful thought. Parish Council members are encouraged to take a special interest in their buddy, to remember their birthday (and vice versa), to greet them at church by name and to ask after them. We started not long before Christmas so the children had the thrill of getting a small Christmas gift from their buddy.

We have had some really exciting things happen as a result of our mentoring. A little girl who has been attending our children's church for about two years and who struggles to follow instructions and learn, was buddied with a teacher from Kip McGrath last year. Recently she came running to me at church saying: "Guess what Mrs Reid, I'm not dumb after all! I can read better when there is coloured cellophane put over the words! Now my friends won't tease me anymore". I later learned from her buddy that she had given her a Christmas gift of one term's free help at Kip McGrath, where they had quickly discovered she had an eye defect (Irlen) which can be corrected with coloured lenses. Glory to God! What a thrilling outcome."

Kids leading kids By Carolyn Sims

In January 2010 Flagstaff Union Parish hosted the **Kids2Kids** team from First Church, Papakura, Auckland. The **Kids2Kids** team, led by the amazing Warrick Baty are available to come along to your church in January for a week and run a holiday programme in partnership with you. They put in all the hard yards including a fun and active programme, great computer graphics, worship, dramas and more. This gives their kids an opportunity to use their leadership gifts and talents, and us an opportunity to learn the tricks of running an outstanding holiday programme that shares the Good News about Jesus with our community's children.

The **Kids2Kids** team consisted of 9 young people, 7 leaders aged from 10 to 14 years old, 2 aged 16 to 17 years and Warrick. They, with our help, led a 5 day programme of games, worship (including some great new songs) and teaching time. Most of the programme was led by the very impressive young leaders using stories, memory verse games, object lessons, dramas, and quizzes.

10 year old Timothy led a number of the quiz type games and gave very clear and precise instructions. 13 year old Zoe told the most fantastic and inspirational stories from the bible with great expression. Lorna demonstrated God's Love to us by stacking wine glasses in a pyramid and pouring coloured liquid into the top glass and letting it overflow into the glasses beneath. A great visual lesson for all ages as a parent helping out said: "That was so amazing to see God's love demonstrated like that. It made it really clear to me".

And 11 year old Sam's using a real sheep's heart to demonstrate love certainly captured the kids' attention.

It was very beneficial for our church to host the **Kids2Kids** team to demonstrate how to run a holiday programme, but the most amazing and challenging thing for us was to see Kids as young as 10 ministering to other kids.

If you have the opportunity to invite the **Kids2Kids** team to your church, take it, and be prepared to be blown away by amazing young leaders running a great holiday club.

For more about hosting the **Kids2Kids** team check out the information on our Kids Friendly web pages.



To contact Warrick and his Kids2Kids team email warrick@firstchurchpapakura.org.nz or for more information from Flagstaff Union email Carolyn on carolyn@churchatflagstaff.co.nz.

The Easter story meets Lego

When **Joseph Peacock** (a 13 year old from Mosgiel Presbyterian) was asked to put together a PowerPoint of the Easter story, he never dreamed it would turn out to be so big or have such an impact on others, far beyond his home church.

Joseph is a Star Wars fan and a keen collector of Lego. He is also very able with computer technology and having had just a little experience through school at creating an animated movie, he thought it would be fun to 'have a go' at making an animated movie of the Easter story using Star Wars lego. What resulted, after 2000 photos were taken, was a 12 minute long movie, complete with dialogue and music. This remarkable achievement was done entirely by Joseph, whose parents saw the finished movie for the first time when it was shown in church on Palm Sunday. He posted it on You Tube and an email to the Kids Friendly network resulted in many churches using it on Easter Sunday with really positive feedback.

Tracy Inwood, Children's ministry worker from Weston, said: "I had planned a programme for our Whizz Kids but binned that and used the Lego Story instead. All the children loved it."

Joseph's creativity and hard work has been inspiring many others around the country. Kids Friendly (KF) caught up with Joseph just after Easter to ask him about this project.

KF: When and how did you start?

Joseph: About a month before Easter I started getting my characters ready. I built the Jesus figure first. I chose the purple hair because it was funky and it would make him more noticeable. I looked at several computer programmes to find the right one to do the job. The iMovie programme on Mac was good to use. It has a story line with a video line and audio line so that made it easier when I was matching up speaking parts and music.

KF: What else did you have to do to prepare?

Joseph: Well, I had to go to the Bible and read the whole Easter story again! I knew the story but I wanted it to be right. Then I made a plan and decided what bits to do and what bits to miss out and how many scenes I would do.

KF: Then you took over 2000 photos! Did that take you a long time?

Joseph: Not really because I just took a photo, moved a figure a bit, took another photo and so on. To tell you the truth, the bit that took the time was all the editing and working out how long each clip should be and matching that to the speaking and the music. In the last week it was pretty full on to get it finished in time. I stayed up to midnight and made the finishing touches just half an hour before church! It was quite intense!

KF: Do you have a part of the movie that you are really pleased with?

Joseph: There are lots of parts now that I look at and

say 'Oh, I wish I had done this or that instead!' But I do like the music I chose for the Crucifixion from the Star Wars 1 movie. It was when all the Jedi knights get killed. I have always found that really sad but now it's twice as sad because it's the music I used when Jesus died. I think it works really well.

KF: Your music teacher at school has seen it too hasn't she?

Joseph: Yes, I showed her on my ipod after our 'Jesus Christ Superstar' practice. (Joseph plays trumpet and cornet in the orchestra at Kavanagh College). She loved it so I gave her a copy and she showed the drama teacher, other teachers and the principal! It might get shown at school sometime and I am going to be allowed to use it as my RE project due in term two.

KF: What was the funniest thing that happened during the making of this movie?

Joseph: I got the flowers for the Garden of Gethsemane scene off TradeMe. Not many 13 year old boys would order Lego flowers from TradeMe! I borrowed the pizza and wine glass Lego from my neighbour so he had to come over and watch his pizza in the movie!

KF: What would you say to someone wanting to do something like this?

Joseph: Persevere, don't give up. It can get stressful in the production, when things don't go right but in the end it's worth it - to see people enjoy it. You get a lot back from that.

KF: Yes, how did that feel on the Sunday morning and since then?

Joseph: I was really nervous and shaking on Sunday morning. I wasn't sure how people would take it, but after church lots of people kept coming up to me and saying how much they enjoyed it. It was so hard to get out of church! I was quite surprised but glad that everyone liked it. I think kids liked it 'cause it was Lego and the older people liked it because it was funny, but also because it was true. I wanted the whole Easter message to get across in a way that would be remembered and I think because it was Lego and a bit funky it might be remembered longer. Lots of people have been viewing it on YouTube too. It's amazing to see the number of views go up into the hundreds.

KF: So what's next? Do you have any more plans?

Joseph: Yes! I am planning to do the Christmas story too. I have already ordered a 'Baby Jesus' figure off TradeMe and I am having ideas of how to make the characters and sets for that. I am hoping the Christmas story will build on this one and be even more popular.

(Kids Friendly is 'in negotiations' with Joseph about the best way to make the Christmas and Easter Lego stories available to the Kids friendly network. So watch out for news of this resource later in the year!)

