

Leading Kids in Worship Masterclass

Session 7: Building a Team of Next Gen Volunteers

Key Theme

Every child was created with a purpose—to serve others. Our mission is to help them find that purpose.

No Appendixes

Paul uses the metaphor of the body in 1 Corinthians 12 to illustrate how every part of the church has a purpose. He talks about eyes and ears, hands and feet—but not the appendix. The body doesn't seem to need it.

In the body of Christ, though, **there are no appendixes**. There is no part without purpose and no person the church can live without. Each child is created with both purpose and the means to fulfill it.

Equipped for Works of Service

Paul writes, “Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ... *as each part does its work.*” (Eph. 4:11-16)

Ephesians 2:10 says, “For we are God’s handiwork, *created in Christ Jesus to do good works*, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Our young volunteers don’t just help us accomplish the mission—**they are the mission**.

Our task is to connect children with the purpose for which they were made by **creating opportunity, cultivating belonging, and confirming identity**.

Step One: Create Opportunity

The first step in building a team of young volunteers is to **increase opportunities to serve**. These are the “entry points” for participation.

- How many ways can kids or students serve each week?
- How often do we invite them to serve?
- Do we have regular onramps or onboarding moments for new volunteers?

If there are few opportunities for kids to jump on board, we shouldn't be surprised if the train feels empty.

Don't simply ask yourself, "What do I need?" Instead, think about all the different ways kids can help.

Kids can serve as greeters, ushers, or tech volunteers. They can help take the offering, share speaking roles, lead hand motions, or even lead worship musically—with a bit of adult guidance.

Step Two: Cultivate Belonging

Once we've added new volunteers, our work is just beginning. We want them to move from *outsider* to *team member*. This is a "tipping point" where kids find a sense of belonging.

Belonging develops over time through four areas: **competence, confidence, community, and commitment**.

- **Competence** grows through training. Training and correction build trust and show care.
- **Confidence** grows through encouragement. Be specific and be public. Proverbs 16:24 says, "Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones."
- **Community** grows through fellowship. Having fun together matters. Plan times outside of Sunday morning to connect with your team.
- **Commitment** grows through vision. Remind your team why they serve. Vision isn't a one-time thing; it's the slow, persistent drip of a consistent message.

Step Three: Confirm Identity

Our long-term goal is to confirm a lifelong identity of **servanthood**.

This identity often begins with a "flash point"—a moment of clarity about who we are and what we're meant to do.

A flash point can happen when a child steps out of their comfort zone—on a retreat, a mission trip, or, most commonly, when they're entrusted with a new level of leadership.

David experienced his flash point when the prophet Samuel anointed him as king: "The Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David." (1 Sam. 16:13)

It's hard to imagine David standing courageously before Goliath if he hadn't first stood nervously before Samuel.

When evaluating young leaders, ask:

- How do their peers respond to them?
- Have they proven trustworthy in smaller tasks?
- Do they have a heart for God?

The Next Generation of Leaders

Barna reports that *“over 80% of church leaders were consistently involved in children’s ministry prior to age 13.”* The future leaders of the church are already in your ministry.

They might look like Bailey. She started as a quiet sixth-grade singer on the chapel team—content in the background. Over time, she found her confidence, earned respect, and grew as a leader. By high school, she was leading worship for her peers and later joined the adult team.

In six years, Bailey went from quiet background singer to confident leader.

Every child in your ministry was made on purpose with a purpose—to imitate their Servant Savior by becoming a servant themselves.

Teach your children to worship by serving others, and the impact will ripple out across generations.

Discussion Questions

1. How does Paul's metaphor of the body of Christ help you think differently about kids serving in your ministry?
2. What opportunities currently exist for kids or students to serve in your ministry? What new "entry points" could you create?
3. How can you help young volunteers grow in competence, confidence, community, and commitment?
4. What experiences might become "flash points" that confirm a child's identity as a servant leader?
5. How can you develop the leadership potential of the children in your ministry?