

1-1-2008

CD 655 Ministering with Children through the Church

Catherine Stonehouse

Follow this and additional works at: <http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi>

Recommended Citation

Stonehouse, Catherine, "CD 655 Ministering with Children through the Church" (2008). *Syllabi*. Book 165.
<http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi/165>

This Document is brought to you for free and open access by the eCommons at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. For more information, please contact thad.horner@asburyseminary.edu.

FINAL DRAFT

Catherine Stonehouse, Ph.D.
Professor of Christian Education
Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, KY 40390

Syllabus
Spring 2008
Three Hours

CD 655 - Ministering with Children through the Church

Examines the potential and needs of children in contemporary society, biblical perspectives on children and how they are to be involved in the faith community, the characteristics of the child's physical, emotional, cognitive, moral, and faith development. Explores the ministries a church can provide to involve children in the faith community, meeting their needs, nurturing wholeness and faith.

Course Objectives

Having completed this course with competence, the student will:

1. Have a basic understanding of the physical, psychosocial, cognitive, moral, and spiritual development, the potential and needs of children from birth to age 12.
2. Identify processes and commitments characteristic of ministries designed to involve children in a faith community and nurture them in wholeness and a maturing faith.
3. Be able to articulate his/her theology of children's ministries based on Scripture, an understanding of child development, and spiritual formation.
4. Have grown in ability to:
 - a. Involve children in meaningful worship and learning.
 - b. Support families in the nurture of children.
 - c. Support children in times of crisis such as illness, divorce, grief, or abuse.
 - d. Nurture special children such as the gifted and those with handicaps.
 - e. Identify the support and equipping needs of lay volunteers ministering with children in the church.

Assignments

Reading

Children Matter: Celebrating their Place in the Church, Family, and Community,

Scottie May, Beth Posterski, Catherine Stonehouse, and Linda Cannell

Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey: Nurturing a Life of Faith, Catherine Stonehouse

Real Kids Real Faith: Practices for Nurturing Children's Spiritual Lives, Karen Marie Yust

Offering the Gospel to Children, Gretchen Wolff Pritchard

Children in Crisis: A New Commitment, Phyllis Kilbourn, ed.

Additional reading for research paper

Processing Reading: Come to class each week ready to articulate at least two significant insights

FINAL DRAFT

from the reading and two ministry implication questions related to the insights. These will be used in class sharing and discussions.

The course Schedule indicates the material to be read prior to each class session, and the dates when Reading Cards are due.

On the date when all reading is to be completed for a given text, submit a Reading Card stating that you have completed the reading in that text.

Projects

Make this a semester of observing children; instruct your consciousness radar to seek them out. When they are present, notice what they are doing, how they respond, how others are relating to them, and the impact this seems to have on the child. What are children experiencing in the church you attend, and where you observe? What children are present and who is missing?

1. Mapping the Journey: (20 points)

Based on the readings assigned through March 4, prepare a comprehensive chart that lays out the characteristics of a child's psychosocial, cognitive, moral, and spiritual development during the various segments of the journey through childhood: infancy, preschool, early elementary, and pre-adolescence. Gather the information for the chart as you do the reading and document sources. After laying out the characteristics, identify ministry implications that flow from those developmental processes and include those in columns for "Family Implications" and "Ministry Implications." Note the sample template at the end of the syllabus. Think of this Map as something you can use to help volunteers working with children and parents understand the development of children and how that relates to how we can join them on the spiritual journey.

Following the first class session, you will be assigned to a learning and interaction group. You will work on this project with each group member focusing on one age-level, providing the sections of the map that apply to that group of children. Assignments will be posted in "Moodle" so that you can share, interact, and refine your Map on line, and also I am able to check in on the process to give guidance if needed. You may also meet face to face to work on the project if you want to.

Due: Formative Chart I – February 26 – Post for discussion

Formative Chart II – March 4 – Post discussion

Full Chart – March 11 – Hand in completed chart

Grading Criteria:

1. Comprehensiveness and clarity of developmental descriptions
2. Comprehensiveness and Insightfulness of ministry implications

2. Spiritual Journey Reflections: (5 points)

Particularly in the early part of the semester, reflect on your spiritual journey, looking more deeply at your childhood and how that part of the journey has influenced the rest of your journey to this point. Across the first 5 weeks of the semester, set assigned two or three times (a minimum of 20-30

FINAL DRAFT

minutes each time) to reflect and journal on the following clusters of questions.

1. Where do you see God at work forming you?
2. What relationships and experiences, both positive and negative, do you see as formative?
3. Reflect on the following formative values—written for seminarians, not children, I realize. Do you recall from your childhood any practices, influences, or teaching, that might have been the beginning of your formation in any of these areas?

The seminary's Christian Formation Plan identified six Formative Values. The first three are:

Personal and Social Holiness

Personal purity based within adoration of the Father and social engagement based on the servanthood of the Son and engendered by the Holy Spirit.

Crucial Moments and Continual Processes

Specific and unique momentary submissions of the believer to God and processes mapped against human spiritual, psychological, social, and cultural development.

Justice and Mercy

Social engagement fueled by mercy for fallible humanity and the quest for justice in personal, communal, political, and international contexts.

Based on your reflections and journaling (you will not submit your journals, so you can be free to include in them whatever flows as you journal) write a 3-5-page report of your reflections on your spiritual journey during childhood that includes the following.

- a. The story, in outline form, of your spiritual journey from birth to 12 or 14 years of age and how that part of your journey has impacted you later in life.
- b. Reflection on the presence or absence, during your childhood, of influences relating to the Christian Formation Plan's Formative Values listed above.
- c. Reflect briefly on how your experience compares to the child development understandings from course readings.

I will be looking for:

1. Quality of reflection
2. Insights regarding the relationship between childhood and your ongoing journey

Due: March 18

3. Children's Ministry Observation and Report (20 points)

This project is designed to let you learn from churches and children's ministry leaders who have strong ministries with children and their families.

In your group, discuss what ministry models, programs, approaches, ministry sizes, etc. you would like to learn about by observing and talking with children's ministry leaders using that approach. Decide what each group member will focus on to gather a good mix of insights for the team.

FINAL DRAFT

Locate two churches that have an effective ministry related to your focus. Invest 4-8 hours observing those ministries and talking with leaders in the church about their ministry and the principles behind it. (You may even want to shadow a children's pastor for parts of a couple of days to see what is involved in that ministry vocation.) Find out what resources are being used in the ministry you observe.

Submit to your group and to the professor, a 3-4 page report on what you learned from your observations and interviews. In the report identify the churches and the persons you learned from and the number of hours invested in the project. **Note that the potential number of points for this assignment is based on the time invested in learning from persons in ministry as well as the insights reflected in the report.**

In your report, describe the models, methods, and resources used in the area of ministry you focused on. Take at least a half page of your report to share comments on at least two of the following questions.

What place do the children have in the faith community?

How are relationships built between children, their peers, and other generations? What leadership structures are in place?

How were concepts presented in this course are implemented in the ministries you learned about?

How might the ministry be strengthened by more fully applying course principles?

Read the reports from each of your group members and in Moodle discuss the insights that you find valuable and questions raised by each report. I will give more instructions when I post the assignment in Moodle.

Grading Criteria

1. Significance of learning from the observations and interviews
2. Insightfulness of assessment in the light of course content
3. Quality of participation in group discussion
4. Time invested

Due: Report: April 8

Online discussion: April 8-11

4. Theology of Ministry with Children Paper (20 points)

Write an 8-10 page paper articulating your theology and philosophy of ministry with children. Write your paper as a means of presenting your theology of ministry with children to a congregation that is exploring the possibility of hiring you as their children's pastor.

Articulate your vision and core values for the church's ministry with children and their families. Present the biblical and theological perspectives on children and your understanding of how God has

FINAL DRAFT

created them to grow, learn, and be formed. What do you believe about the child’s relationship with God and what the faith community should be providing for the nurture of children? Show how these beliefs under gird your values and vision for ministry with children through the church. What basic elements would you build into the church’s ministry with children to live out these core values? Be sure to document the biblical, theological and social science support for your beliefs.

Grading Criteria

- Significance and breadth of core values and vision
- Biblical/theological support for beliefs
- Integration of course related material
- Clarity of presentation

Due: April 29

5. Research Paper/Presentation: (20 points)

Select a topic relating to ministry with children, research it, write up the findings in a 5-8 page paper, and prepare a 20-30 minute presentation for passing your learning on to the volunteer staff or parents that you might be leading as a children’s pastor. Hand in the outline of the presentation along with the paper.

During the last class session you will share your presentation with 2 or 3 of your classmates.

Grading Criteria

1. Significance of findings from research
2. The clarity and creativity of the presentation

Due: May 20

Grading

Potential Points	Course Grade Scale
Mapping the Journey 20	
Spiritual Journey 5	95-100 A 80-82.4 B-
Observation Report 20	90-94.9 A- 77.5-79.9 C+
Theology of Ministry	85-89.9 B+ 75-77.4 C
with children 20	82.5-84.9 B 72.5-74.9 C-
Paper/Presentation 20	
Reading <u>15</u>	
Total 100	

**All papers are to be typed and double-spaced.
Sources are to be documented using some approved form.
Inclusive language is to be used when speaking of human beings.**

FINAL DRAFT

Course Schedule

Dates	Topics	Reading	Items Due
February 12	Getting Started		
February 19	Children in the Bible and in the Church Today	Stonehouse Ch. 1-2 May et al Ch. 1, 2, 5	
February 26	Understanding Child Development	Stonehouse Ch. 3-5 May et al Ch. 4, 6	Mapping the Journey – I
March 4	Knowing God in Childhood Theology of Children’s Spirituality	Stonehouse Ch. 6-7 May et al Ch.3, 7	Mapping the Journey - II
March 11	Communicating Theological Concepts to Children Meeting God in The Story	Stonehouse Ch. 8-9 Pritchard Ch. 1-5 May et al Ch. 11	Mapping the Journey - Complete <u>Reading Card:</u> Stonehouse
March 18	Story in the Child’s Faith Development	Pritchard Ch. 6-10 May et al Ch. 9	Spiritual Journey Reflections
March 25	Effective Teaching Learning Ministries	May et al Ch. 10, 12 Pritchard Ch. 19-24	
March 31- April 4	Reading Week		
April 8	Ministries with Families	May Ch. 8 Yust	Observation/Report <u>Reading Card:</u> Yust
April 15	Generations Learning and Growing Together Schooling Options	May et al Ch. 13 Pritchard Ch. 11-18	<u>Reading Card:</u> Pritchard
April 22	Welcoming Special Children Walking with Gifted Children	May et al Ch. 14	
April 29	Pastoral Care of Children Preparing for Adolescence		Theology: Ministry with Children
May 6	Children and Abuse Ministry with at Risk Children	Kilbourn	<u>Reading Card:</u> Kilbourn
May 13	Leading Ministry with Children	May et al Ch. 15	<u>Reading Card:</u> May et al
May 20	Presentations and Wrap Up		Research Paper/Presentation

FINAL DRAFT

As you are doing your course readings, be identifying the descriptions for each of the areas of the child's development.

Also note how parents and adults ministering with children in the church should respond to children to work with the realities of development and enhance their healthy development.

Prepare charts for infants and toddlers, preschoolers, early elementary, and preadolescents or later elementary children. Landscape layout is probably best.

Age	Descriptions	Implications for Families	Implications for Ministry in the Church
I N F A N T	<p>Psychosocial List in outline the characteristics psychosocial development at the various periods of childhood. Provide enough description for the reader to see what contributes to the positive resolution of life crises.</p>		
	<p>Cognitive In outline form, describe the characteristics of the child's thinking. Include insights from readings and notes on Piaget and Vygotski</p>		
	<p>Moral In the reading, most of the insights on moral development come from Kohlberg's research.</p>		
	<p>Spiritual Include insights from the research of Fowler, Ruzutto, Cavalletti, Berryman, and possibly others.</p>		