

## Active Kids Learn More

Children learn best and develop ministry skills when we help them put lessons into action. Here are some creative suggestions by and for children's workers.

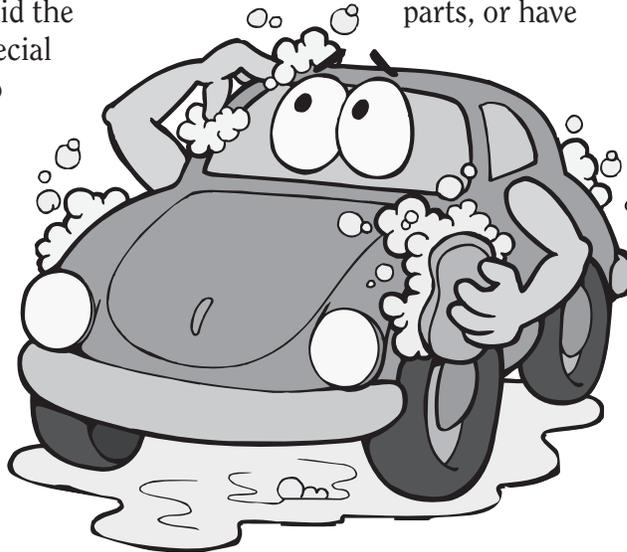
A church recently had the fifth grade Sunday School class wash the cars in the parking lot during the service. They provided their own buckets, rags, and cleaning items. The teachers supervised, but the kids did the work by themselves. A special note was then attached to the windshield that read: "This was an act of love by the fifth grade Sunday School class."

The car wash was a big hit with the congregation. Kids were thrilled when adults thanked them for their hard work. Children love to be noticed, and when you combine attention and service you have a powerful tool for ministry.

A teacher suggests teaching responsibility and cooperation by having children take class attendance. Whether you are using a computer printout sheet or handwritten pages, you can have elementary children write their names or draw a marker

line through their own names. This sends a big note to the child saying, "You are responsible, and I know you can handle this job." In a world that seems to reject responsibility, the church should do whatever it can to help the children develop this important character trait.

Use kids in telling Bible and life-application stories. Have them act out parts, or have



them do something each time they hear a keyword or phrase.

More and more churches are using ideas of welcoming kids right from the start with interesting activities. Have kids help greet at the door and take new kids to the activities. Think like a child. What would you

like when you walk into a room? Music playing, kids laughing, or maybe kids hovering over tables, intent on working together on puzzles or other projects.

Change your routine periodically to keep the kids' interest. You can change themes, order of service, and decorations.

Having trouble with discipline? Involve your older children in the service to do puppets, be ushers, hand out rewards, and operate the overhead. Typically, kids create discipline problems because they either are bored or think they are too big for the things going on in the classroom. Giving them responsibilities alleviates that feeling and elevates them in the eyes of their peers.

Do not forget the new kids. Include new children by pairing each with a partner—someone to help show them the ropes. Call new kids and/or visit their homes. Most churches visit the adults, and many are finding families appreciate a visit especially for a child. Visit or call a child and you may win a friend for life. Getting acquainted with a child's parents and family also helps you understand the child's behavior and actions.

