



Worker Appreciation From A to Z

by Tina Spears

It's 10:30 Sunday morning. Fifty highly energetic children are ready for children's church to start. As you begin the morning's activities, you suddenly realize—*I'm alone! My children's church workers are missing! Ahhh! What am I going to do?* You wake up, covered in a cold sweat. Thankfully, it was just a bad dream.

Can you imagine what children's church would be like without any helpers? What chaos and stress would result? It is easy to get so caught up in the responsibilities of coordinating the ministry that we can forget to appreciate those workers who make this ministry possible. Therefore, it is important to take time to let your workers know you appreciate their valuable contribution to the children's program. The workers will be grateful to know their efforts have not gone unnoticed.

Following is an A-to-Z list of ideas for letting your helpers know you appreciate them. Many of these ideas can either be made or purchased inexpensively. When appropriate, wording for a note to be attached to the item has been provided.

These ideas can be implemented at any time, but you may want to develop an "appreciation plan" so you can be consistent all through the year. For example, you may want to make the first Sunday of every month your day to say, "Thanks!"

A • Animal Crackers

"We know it's a real zoo here some days. Thanks for being such a great zookeeper!"

B • Mini Loaves of Homemade Bread

"Thanks for sharing the Bread of Life with some hungry children!"



C • Cards

Send cards for various occasions (birthday, holidays, get well, thank you, etc.). Jot a personal note inside each card. It will mean so much to your workers to receive a card midweek that lets them know you were thinking of them.

D • Dog Pictures From a Magazine

"Here's someone known as 'man's best friend.'" You're a children's church coordinator's best friend!"



E • Encouragement

Glue small pieces of cotton on a note card to form the shape of a sheep. "Workers like EWE make children's church a 'be-e-e-ter' place to be!"

F • Fish-Shaped Crackers

"We're glad you're in our boat. You're a super 'fisher of kids'!"

G • Gift of Gold

Wrap together a few pieces of gold candy, such as Werthers or

butterscotch candies. "You're worth your weight in gold! Our children's church is so much richer with you here."



H • Hugs

Touching is a way of communicating. Give a hug and say, "Thanks for sharing God's love with the children of (*church name*)."

I • Ice Cream

Take your workers out for some ice cream on a hot summer day. An outing like this is a great way to build relationships among the children's church helpers.



J • Jelly Beans

Place an ample amount of jelly beans on a pretty piece of fabric and tie closed with coordinating ribbon. "Don't know what we'd have done if you hadn't BEAN here today!"



K • Kite

On an inexpensive kite or a construction paper kite with a yarn tail, write, "Thanks for continuing to fly with us even on the windiest of days!"



L • Lifesavers

Give a roll with a note saying, "You're a LIFESAVER each week in children's church."

M • M&M's

"It's a real treat to work with you!"

N • Nuts

Give each worker a small bag of nuts with the note, "We'd go NUTS without you in children's church!"



O • Orange

"Orange you glad to be involved with God's children? We're glad you're here!"

P • Post-It Notes

"We appreciate your sticking with us week after week!"



Q • Questionnaire

Give them an opportunity to give input and ideas about your program. Add a note saying, "There's no question about it—you're a blessing to our children's church!"

R • Resources

Make sure you provide any materials your helpers need. This

communicates your care for them.

S • Smile

Encourage and be an example with smiles. Give them freely to all your workers.

T • Tea

Give an appreciation "tea." Provide a variety of tea and shortbreads. Put a tea bag at each person's place with a note saying, "We're glad you're part of the 'tea-m'!"



U • Umbrella

Make an umbrella from a cupcake paper and pipe cleaner. "Whether it rains, sleets, or snows, it's nice to know we can depend on you!"

V • V8

Give each worker a small can of V8 juice with the note, "You sure add flavor to our children's church!"

W • Worker of the Month Poster

Obtain from the honored worker a current photo of herself and

a few baby/childhood photos. On the poster also include interesting information about her, such as her favorite food, color, Bible verse, what hobbies she enjoys, etc. Display the poster in a prominent area. Let the children write compliments on it in random order.

X • A Large Construction Paper "X"

"It's no X-aggeration—you're an X-tra special person and an X-cellent children's church worker!"

Y • You!

In addition to all these ideas, make sure you look for opportunities to verbally express your appreciation. Hearing a sincere "Thanks for your help!" will mean a lot to your workers.

Z • Zest Soap

"You sure add ZEST to the children's ministry!"



This article originally appeared in *Young Explorers: Olympic Training*. Young Explorers is a grade-school children's church program that utilizes environmental themes for a fun learning experience. For a complete theme chart and order form, call 1-800-641-4310.

