

So, why focus on ministry to kids?

As we consider how to reach the 4.4 billion people on our planet who **do not know Jesus** (yet), it is essential that we consider ministry to kids, not just adults. Let's review the reasons:

Kids are everywhere! There are 2.2 billion children under 18 (33% of our world). In many of the developing countries, where we find the greatest population of unreached people, kids are at least 50% of the population. Although they do not fit the exact definition of a "people group," because they belong to so many different cultural backgrounds, together their numbers make them the largest unreached group on our planet.

Kids are unreachable: They have the time to listen, the availability, and the interest. They are not afraid to respond when they feel the Holy Spirit drawing them to Christ. In several Campus Crusade trainings I've been part of, we learned that 25% of people will likely respond to receive the gospel when it is presented personally, fully. In my over 20 years of evangelism experience, I find that nearly 50% of kids are likely to respond. Not a small thing. In some ways, kids are like the guests in the parable of the banquet in Luke 14. They are invited last to the celebration, yet are the most available to attend and to respond to the generous gifts of the King.

The powers of this world know kids are reachable, too. In the Muslim world, strong emphasis is placed on teaching the way of Islam to children before the age of five. We've heard stories of eight-year-old children so committed to their faith they were willing and ready to become suicide bombers.

Alternately, media and marketing gurus know that they need to capture the hearts of children early with brand names...then keep them for life. Kids are targeted around the world.

The harvest is ripe; children are ready for the gospel.

Kids are needy and poor: The UN estimates that nearly half of the world's population of children live in poverty. With other risk factors added in, nearly 2/3 of our planet's children live in "at risk" situations. Again, most of these children are unreached. Considering the work of Christ outlined in Isaiah 61, to "preach good news to the poor," to "bind up the brokenhearted," to "free the captive," etc., we easily see that this entire passage could be a call to ministry to children. God's heart is to rescue children, the most vulnerable group of people on our planet.