



Oct/Nov/Dec 2008



One of the best “old school” promotions is the Super Bus Contest. It’s simple and, best of all, it works.

You can do it for one Sunday or for multiple Sundays and some churches have three contests (more about this below) going at the same time, but I think it’s best to have Super Bus Sunday on Super Bowl Sunday and to focus in on only the Super Bus Contest rather than multiple contests. We used this promotion

for many years and it always gave great results.

What makes the Super Bus Contest work so well is that each bus is competing against itself rather than the other buses (if you only have one vehicle, see below) and each bus decides and plans its own promotion. Here are step-by-step guidelines:

1. Average the attendance of each route for the past three months. This becomes each bus’s base number or goal.

The bus will gain or lose points using this number.

2. Develop a “budget” for each route. You can give each bus the same amount or give larger routes more money. Some churches give a dollar amount for each rider in the base number, ex. \$5.00 a rider—that means a bus with a base number of 25 would get \$125.00 for Super Bus Sunday. The bus

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Answering the “Hot Questions” About Children’s Worship

Here at Bring Them In we get lots of letters. From time-to-time we send them out in our e-newsletters but we wanted to share this one we got a few years ago with you in this issue of BTI News Online. The person writing is the

Children’s Minister at a large, fast-growing church and had what she called “Hot Questions” about Children’s Worship. Her questions are in italics and Dr. Hipps’ answers follow.

I’m excited that your church continues to

grow and that you’re looking at a Children’s Worship service. I know that it presents a lot of work and challenges for you. I’ll try to answer your questions and

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Ricky has 24 different programs using tricks and ventriloquism. His programs are tailored for adults, as well as for children.

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Twenty Truths to Remember

1. Faith is the ability to not panic.
2. If you worry, you didn't pray. If you pray, don't worry.
3. As a child of God, prayer is kind of like calling home every day.
4. Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape.
5. When we get tangled up in our problems, be still. God wants us to be still so He can untangle the knot.
6. Do the math. Count your blessings.
7. God wants spiritual fruit, not religious nuts.
8. Dear God: I have a problem. It's me.
9. Silence is often misinterpreted, but never misquoted.
10. Laugh every day, it's like inner jogging.
11. The most important things in your home are the people.
12. Growing old is inevitable, growing up is optional.
13. There is no key to happiness. The door is always open.
14. A grudge is a heavy thing to carry.
15. He who dies with the most toys is still dead.
16. We do not remember days, but moments. Life moves too fast, so enjoy your precious moments.
17. Nothing is real to you until you experience it, otherwise it's just hearsay.

18. It's all right to sit on your pity pot every now and again. Just be sure to flush when you are done.
19. Surviving and living your life successfully requires courage. The goals and dreams you're seeking require courage and risk-taking. Learn from the turtle—it only makes progress when it sticks its neck out.

20. Be more concerned with your character than your reputation. Your character is what you really are while your reputation is merely what others think you are.

Author Unknown

Who is Running the Show?

When you turn on the news it seems like there is always a story about war. You can see the weapons being fired and the missiles being launched. The news tapes show the big military ships with their huge canons ready to fire. There are bombings here and explosions there. Truly, this is an incredible day and time in which our kids are growing up. When I was a child, I never heard the word "terrorist." I thought Gorilla Warfare was a bunch of apes smacking on each other in the jungle!

As a Children's Pastor I get asked a whole lot of questions from parents and children about what all is going on in the world today. Some of the questions that children ask may seem "silly" to many (I know they are to many parents), but I promise you the child asking the question is very serious!

One question I get asked is this, "Pastor Jack, who is running the show?" What this question means is, "who is in charge?" One thing I believe we have to do repeatedly is to preach and teach to our children (and parents as well) that God is very much alive! Even though times change, even though Presidents come and go, God is very LARGE and in CHARGE. In fact it does not matter who the president is! It does not matter if the President is a man or a woman! Nothing, and I repeat, NOTHING ever takes God by surprise.

We have to make sure that the faith of these little ones does not rest in the news media, or the Government, it should rest on our great God. I am in no way trying to say that we should not respect and pray for our leaders, I am simply saying that we need to press the truth of FAITH into the hearts of our

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Super Bus Contest

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team will use this money to plan their promotion for the big Sunday. If they wish, they can use their own money to add to this or ask the riders to bring additional money to help with the cost of the promotion.

- About six weeks before the big Sunday, go over all the rules and details with your bus teams so they can start planning what they are going to do. Make sure you have a date for them to get in their flyer information so each bus can have the specifics of their promotion for their riders.
- Decide what the winning bus will get—special recognition in the worship service, a trophy, a trip to the local McDonald's for the kids and an evening out for the bus workers at a nice restaurant—all work well.
- The point system is given on the chart at the right.
- Remind each route they are competing against themselves—this way no bus has an advantage over another bus.

Super Kid/One Vehicle Contest

If you want to do this, bus riders get 1 point for riding the bus, 3 points for a first-time visitor, and 5 points for bringing an adult. You can also add points for bringing their Bibles, etc. You can decide on what the winning rider will receive.

Super Bus Captain Contest

The point system is the same as the Super Bus Contest but add one point for every hour visited on the route. You can decide what the winner captain will receive.

Super Bowl Sunday is just two months away—it's time to get busy!

This article first appeared in the IBMA Newsletter exclusively for its members. To join the International Bus Ministry Association, visit the Bring Them In website at www.bringthemin.com.

IBMA Retreat

March 9—11, 2009 are the dates for the 14th Annual IBMA Retreat in Pigeon Forge, TN. It is a great three days for

bus workers to get some rest, to relax, and to recharge. Bus Ministry leaders will network and fellowship as they share ideas, problems, promotions, methods, and victories.

The entire retreat takes place at the Comfort Inn Apple Valley. The rooms are available at a special rate and the meetings take place in the hotel. To view the complete schedule for the retreat and get more information, just visit the IBMA section of the Bring Them In website.

This meeting is unique in that there is no fixed agenda or workshops—those attending focus in on the needs and topics that everyone is interested in and those needs and topics are discussed by the group.

It is a great time to have other Bus Ministry folks help you with your problems as you help them. It really is a remarkable three days that you will

Super Bus Sunday	
Bus Captain _____	Bus # _____
Goal _____	
Points:	
1 point for each rider over your goal.	
2 points for every first time bus rider.	
5 points for every adult rider.	
Total Bus Attendance	
Time Back In	
Add 1 point for each rider over your goal	
Add 2 points for each first time rider	
Add 5 points for each adult rider	
Add 10 points if you reached your goal	
Total Super Bus Points:	

Please turn in this sheet when your bus arrives at church. The winner will be announced in Children's Church. In case of a tie, the bus who got back to church first will be the winner.



Think You Couldn't Host a BTI Conference?

We are working on the 2009 conference schedule and we are looking for host churches.

What we are looking for is churches that have a heart for children, that want to get quality training for their Children's Ministry leaders, and want to help other churches in their area reach kids for Christ as well. Oh, did we mention *it won't cost you anything?* That's right, the conference is free to any church willing to host one.

We have conferences in all size churches in all sorts of locations, so don't let those things stop you from contacting us. We'll work with you to make a conference happen in your church.

Get complete information three ways: check out the "Host a Bring Them In Event" link under the BTI Training Events tab on the menu bar on the home page of our web site, call us at 281-922-6743, or email us at bringthemin@bringthemin.com

Who is Running the Show?

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kids! Yes, God always has been, is now, and always will be in charge of the "show." He is the one who opened the curtain on humanity and only He can close it. I know there are many things that don't make much sense right now in this day we live in, but, we can rest assured that everything is working according to God's time table and plan.

So what are we to do? We are to keep on! We are to keep on serving! We are to keep on loving! We are to keep on praying! What I am seeing in this day is more and more falling by the way side. More and more getting "off" than "on." I see Bus workers quitting. I see Sunday School teachers quitting. NO! NO! NO! WE MUST STAY FAITHFUL! God is so faithful to us and we must be faithful to Him. The kids need us! They need you! Believe it or not, the parents need us as well. There is no doubt in my mind that God is calling more and more into the field of service but so few are listening. The last thing that any church should have to do is to beg people to work in the children's ministry. Why? Because it is so needful and rewarding. The GOOD always outweighs the bad.

Bottom line... God is in total control. Let's preach to our kids in word and in action that we must trust in Him. Those children in the midst of a nasty divorce need to know that they can trust in God and that there is someone there (you) that they can depend on. That child that is discouraged needs to know that God cares about them. Those children who seem to be on the low end of the Christmas gifts, they need to know that Jesus is their true gift (and it wouldn't hurt to make sure they had something cool under their tree).

Jack Henry is the Children's Pastor at Grace Baptist Church in Powder Springs, GA where he heads up the Grace Baptist Kidz Connection. Pastor Jack is available for special Children's Meetings as well as Camps and Retreats. You can get more information by visiting www.gracega.org

Great Truths Children Have Learned

1. No matter how hard you try, you can't baptize cats.
2. When your Mum is mad at your dad, don't let her brush your hair.
3. If your sister hits you, don't hit her back. They always catch the second person.
4. Never ask your 3-year old brother to hold a tomato.
5. You can't trust dogs to watch your food.
6. Don't sneeze when someone is cutting your hair.
7. Never hold a Dust-Buster and a cat at the same time.
8. You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk.
9. Don't wear polka-dot underwear under white shorts.
10. The best place to be when you're sad is Grandpa's lap.

Swap Links with BTI

If you're a church, a ministry or a Christian business, we would like to swap links with you. Just contact us at bringthemin@bringthemin.com and then add our link to your website and we will do the same for you. It is easy and it benefits both of us. To see what sort of ministries and businesses have linked with us, visit the [Links We Like](http://www.bringthemin.com) page of www.bringthemin.com

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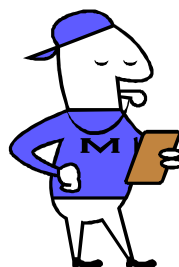
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Answering the “Hot Questions” About Children’s Worship

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hopefully be some help to you as you pray and plan.

1. *What has been your experience with children worshiping without discipline issues when you have a large number (900) together without their parents?*

I've only done a children's services with over 900 a few times during Kid's Crusades and VBS - the largest weekly services I have done is about 600 each week and most of those were unchurched "bus kids." You find the kids will act just about how you allow them to act. We always had "rules" for children's church—in our case, "Sit up straight, Fold your hands in your lap, No talking, No moving around." We also worked to have a fast moving program that was heavy on visuals: lots of puppets, poster board stories, gospel magic, etc. It's pretty "old school" but it works well with a large group.

2. *The argument seems to be that if children do not worship with their parents they are missing out...and when will they be ready? If they wait until Middle school...then they don't sit with their parents so will they ever worship with their parents?*

This argument has been around since churches started doing Children's Worship in the late 60's and I don't think either side has proven its point.

It comes down to what your church wants and you decide what is best for your situation.

I think everyone worships better if they are in a service that they understand and enjoy. For some reason, worship is the only thing that those who favor children sitting with their parents in church advocate. For example, they don't think kids and adults should be in Bible Study together—only worship. My experience has been that when a child is coloring, reading or, worse, getting into trouble because he or she is bored with the adult service, then the family isn't worshipping together, they are just sitting together.



If a parent would rather their child sit with them in church, then that's fine. Children's Worship isn't mandatory, it's an option for the parents.

3. *Another argument is...it is the parents' responsibility to teach their children to worship.*

I think this is true but how many parents actually do it? I grew up in church and the extent of my parent's teaching was that I was to be quiet in the church service or I would get in trouble. I was an adult before I really learned about worship and how to do it.

I think part of your children's worship program should include continuing lessons on what worship is, how to worship, why God wants us to worship, etc. presented in a way that children's understand and enjoy.

4. *What has been your experience of children remaining in church if they attended a children's worship?*

I've found it's about the same as those who attend the adult worship service. I was at our church's Senior High Students camp a few weeks ago and I had literally dozens who talked to me about their years in children's church.

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Answering the “Hot Questions” About Children’s Worship

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5. *What has been your experience of children coming to know Christ through your Children’s Worship?*

We’ve always had an invitation in our children’s service so most of our church’s children’s salvation decisions came from there. God has allowed us to have hundreds of children come to know Christ through the years in our Children’s Church.

6. *What do you do with the argument that younger children may make a decision based on those of their peers?*

No doubt that has some truth to it, but it depends on how well your counselors are trained. You could make the same argument that a younger child who sees an older child go forward or baptized in the adult service, would do the same.

7. *If you were starting over...knowing what you know now...would you provide children’s worship?*

Yes, I would. I think children having a service designed for them is a great thing. I have three grown children now, all of them not only attended children’s worship but worked in Children’s Church during their teen years.

They had no trouble at all making the transition from the children’s to the adult service. All of them are active in church now and look back fondly on their children’s church experience.

8. *How did you get volunteers to help with your children’s worship?*

The same way you get volunteers for Sunday School, AWANA or anything else—prayer, promotion and persistence. I think you need a “core” group of leaders that are the ones who are there every Sunday and plan the program, but you can also use teens and volunteers that rotate.

9. *What other things should we be think about as we get started?*

Here are some things to ask as you look at having a Children’s Worship Service:

- Where will we have Children’s Church? (Location in the building.)
- What are the ages for those attending Children’s Church?
- Do we need more than one Children’s Church? You’ll find the smaller the age span in a service, the better. Our current set-up is that we have three Children’s Churches - one for K & 1st grade, one for 2nd, 3rd & 4th grades, and one for 5th & 6th grades. This is much better than when we only had room for one service which was grades 1 - 5.
- What is the time frame?
- What personnel do we need? Will these people rotate? What will we expect of them?
- What sort of curriculum will we use? (You can get some idea as to how to develop your own curriculum on our web site.)

I hope this is helpful. Just let me know if you need anything else.

Larry Hipps
1 Cor. 15:57

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