

Starting a Bus Ministry

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**childhood
ministry**

Often a new ministry begins with the questions “how,” “who,” “what” and “when.” Before starting a bus ministry, it is crucial that a church spend time answering the bigger question: “Why?” Can your church clearly articulate, “Why are we starting a bus ministry?”

Listed below are questions and ideas to help your church decide if bus ministry is a ministry to be developed:

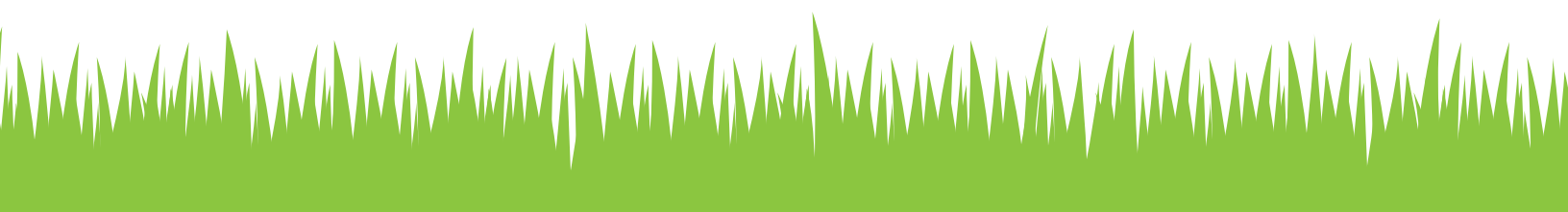
Rationale for a bus ministry

- Is this ministry based on an answer to prayer? Is this ministry clearly motivated and directed by God?
- Is there a vision/mission statement that answers the question, “Why should our church start a bus ministry?” This statement will include the specific vision and calling to bus ministry for your church and will also answer how the children will be discipled and integrated into the life of the church. Vision helps define and fuel ministry when conflict and weariness threaten a ministry’s existence.
- Will there be research to discover the feasibility of reaching the targeted community and define the needs of the target groups/community?
- Is language a barrier to reaching this community? If so, who will bridge this gap?
- Are these targeted groups/communities in close proximity to your church? Is there an influencer and leader in the community with whom you can build a relationship?
- Is one of the primary reasons for starting the ministry to increase numbers in your church’s children’s ministry? Increasing numbers alone is not a sufficient reason to start a bus ministry.
- Are we trying to mimic another church’s success with a bus ministry?
- Is this ministry designed to reach a “pocket of lostness?”

<https://www.ncbaptist.org/index.php?id=290>

Senior leadership team

- Is there buy-in for this ministry from the pastor and senior leadership? Will the leadership be a support and defender for a bus ministry?
- Is this ministry being developed as part of the church’s overall outreach and mission ministries?
- Is there a desire to impact the families of the children who are bussed?
- Is this ministry seen as part of the overall strategy of the church or is it a “niche” ministry of a few members?
- Are other churches already involved in a bus ministry in the targeted community? If so, is there a possibility of partnering with these churches who want to reach the community for Christ?



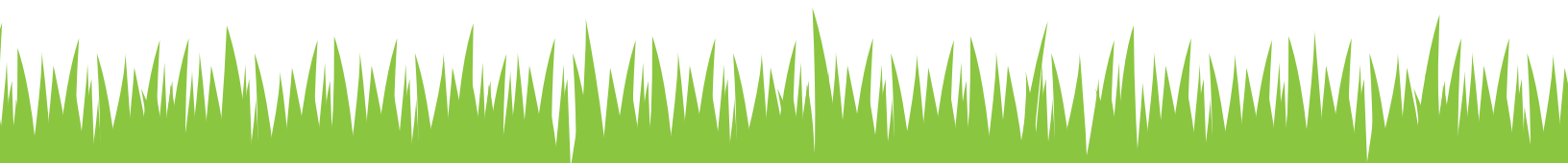
- Are there other churches who are not currently involved in bus ministry that will partner with your church in outreach to the targeted community(ies)?
- Are there other resources to reach this community beyond the bus ministry?
- Is there a desire to reach into this community with “boots on the ground?” Is there a sense that the church can “minister with” in addition to “ministering to” the community?
- What format will this ministry take: involvement in regularly scheduled Sunday morning programming, Sunday evening programming, Wednesday evening programming or by offering separate programming at a different time of the week or month for these children?
- Is there a plan to build tolerance for this ministry in the church at-large?

Volunteer base

- Are there plans to develop a ministry team to oversee the bus ministry? A bus ministry will not survive if built solely on the desire of a few people.
- Is there a large team of committed volunteers ready to do the work of the ministry? Is this team committed to building relationships with the children and the community?
- Are there both male/female volunteers who are willing to build mentoring relationships with the boys/girls and young men/women of the group?
- Are there plans to train, equip and develop leaders for this ministry on an on-going basis?
- Have our volunteers been background checked and trained in the church’s safety and security policies and procedures for children’s ministry?

Practical considerations for the ministry

- Is the bus/van in good repair?
- Is the bus/van adequate for the anticipated number of children to be brought to the church?
- Are there enough qualified drivers?
- Will a meal be served?
- Is there budget for food, supplies and transportation costs?
- Is our programming conducive for discipling the children who are bussed?



- Will there be leaders in place ready to teach when the bus arrives?
- Is our insurance coverage adequate for a bus ministry?
- Will we require written permissions before children can participate in the bus ministry?
- Are our safety policy and procedures written and enforced? Do our volunteers understand and adhere to our policies? Do our policies need updating to incorporate the needs of a bus ministry?
- Is there a plan for dealing with children who do not adhere to minimum standards of expected behavior?

Resources

<http://cogop.org/children/bring-them-in-developing-a-van-or-bus-ministry-in-your-local-church/>

<http://www.pastoralcareinc.com/resources/bus-ministry-manual/>

<https://ministry-to-children.com/better-bus-ministry/>

<http://childrensministry.com/articles/successful-bus-ministries/>

<http://busministryworks.com/bus-ministry-math/> role of outreach to the community

<https://ministry-to-children.com/church-bus-ministry/> realistic pros and cons of bus ministry

<http://childrensministryvault.com/ministry-lessons-ideas-training/285/discipline-in-bus-ministry/> Permission Forms

<http://www.religiousproductnews.com/articles/2008-November/In-Every-Issue/Protecting-Your-Bus-Ministry.htm>

<http://www.bringthemin.com/bus-ministry/> Resources for bus ministry for purchase

http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/profdev/profdev137.shtml How to Accentuate Respect and Eliminate Disrespect in Students

