

6

Taking care of your Garden

of Children's Ministry



a.

Sun in your garden: Preventing problems!

Young children have very short attention spans. That can be a negative thing. They'll bother somebody else. You will have lost the class, and your story isn't being heard by anyone. When you are preparing your story, practice it, time it, and work in some physical activity for the children. Don't ask small children to sit and listen to you for more than 4 or 5 minutes. Children in Intermediate grades can handle 15 minutes if it's interesting. Children in 6th grade and adolescents can handle 20 minutes of listening. Object lessons and idea triggers work very well to maintain control during a listening time with older students.



b.

Water your garden: Showing love to the children!

You are not babysitting or providing day care. As teachers, we are winning children for Christ and we are helping to build their lives and increase spiritual growth through biblical truths. Your purpose is not for entertaining the children and taking care of them while the parents worship and are built up in church. Consider that you cannot fix all the damages that the parents have caused. You can listen to the children, pray for them and advise them if you feel able to do it. However, be honest, if you cannot do it.



c.

Weed your garden: Maintaining discipline!

How to sit? I called it "crisscross applesauce" which meant crossing their legs in front of them and sitting on their bottoms. I corrected any student who sat on folded legs. They can't get into as much trouble from the crossed leg position and the teacher can easily see it before it occurs and take evasive action. It's important to remember to let older students stand, plan some breaks, to prevent them from moving, simply because they are physically uncomfortable.

