

if we want our kids to pray – we must pray

Shannon Harmer and Ruth Newmarch write about praying with children and youth.

Children and young people have one of the most privileged positions to effect change throughout the world for the Kingdom's sake. Despite the fact that they can't travel abroad, contribute much financially nor speak many languages, they can still be a part of God's ongoing work in countries around the world - through prayer.

God is never too busy to hear the prayers of his little ones, and with technological advancements such as the World Wide Web, it is so easy for kids to get useful information on countries, people groups and prayer needs!

So how do we raise this army of young pray-ers? What is our role in discipling the next generation of young people to be active in world mission?

Be an Example

A 15 year old girl recently commented: "I love praying with other people, you learn so much from them!" So many life lessons are taught to children and youth through the example of trusted adults in their lives. Parents, teachers, pastors and youth group leaders all have an



Pray with a child, like this Malaysian parent.

incredible opportunity to encourage Kingdom values in those who look up to them.

We have a great responsibility. If we want young people to be passionate about the Kingdom of God, about reclaiming souls around the globe, then we must be passionate about such things! It is through our example that they will learn. It is by our example that they will follow and realise that prayer for the lost is a value fundamental to discipleship.

So, ask yourself, do I ask the Lord of the harvest to send workers into the field? Does my heart burn for the lost? Do my children regularly see me praying?

If you desire to raise a family, ministry or small group of young people who are passionate about seeing souls saved around the world, then it needs to start with you. They will follow your example. Why not say a prayer right now for CMS missionaries and the proclamation of the gospel.

be creative . . .

There are many helpful tools and resources to assist you in praying for cross cultural mission. The CMS Kid's Prayer Diary, books on unreached people groups, kid's and youth devotionals are great places to start.

Creative and interactive activities are also effective learning tools for young people. For example, you could:

- Have a prayer party. Cake, balloons, flowers, party poppers – all of these can represent different prayer points for cross cultural mission, and are a delicious way to make prayer fun!
- Use a variety of styles and forms of prayer. Ask children to draw their prayer points.
- Make group prayer fun and pray 'popcorn prayers'. In a similar way to how popcorn randomly pops when cooking, encourage children to jump in with a brief prayer. You may need to open the prayer time, and close it again after an appropriate silence.

- Pray from the Bible. Encourage children to memorise verses from God's word so they can pray them anytime.

- Use visual reminders. Decorate a room with pictures and maps. Then walk around the room, explain what God is doing in the world and ask children to pray that people in different countries would know Jesus.

No matter how it is done, creative or not, the most important thing is just to start praying.



CMS Kid's Prayer Diary.