



DNA Coaching



Helping You Perform at a Higher Level

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Child Protection?

I was meeting with a church not long ago and the subject turned to their children's program. I asked a question about how they implemented their child protection program. A member of the church responded, "Oh, we don't do that. We are in a small town." She seemed both surprised and a bit bothered when informed that churches really do not have a choice about whether or not they abide by the child protection policies adopted by their annual conference and or required by their insurance company. By the way, the population of the town is 100,000!

Following all of the requirements of a robust child protection policy can present challenges. We overcome these, however, because children and families are important to us. The world has changed a lot in the last 50 years and these policies have changed with them. It is much more common now for a church to be impacted by custody disputes, children in the child welfare system, situations of domestic violence, etc. It is worth the effort to create a safe, secure environment so that we can reach out and involve more families in the worship and ministry life of the church. How do you protect children in your church? How do you share this information with prospective and first-time guests?

Increase Safety and Outreach at the Same Time

Here is an idea that can improve safety at your church and serve as an outreach activity. It is important for people to know CPR, First Aid and how to use an AED (Automatic External Defibrillator). Accidents can happen at any time. With our congregations and our facilities aging, the frequency of incidents requiring some kind of medical response is unlikely to decline anytime soon.

The church could host training events to address these three key skill sets. While all three could be covered in one day it might be easier to hold two training events – one for CPR/AED and one for First Aid. Publicize these training events to the community. Put up signs, ask people to invite their friends, advertise on Facebook, put it on your web site, go door-to-door handing out flyers or whatever it will take to get the word out in your community. If you can offer the training for free, that is even better! Provide great hospitality and have the people from your church make a point of sitting with and getting to know those who do not attend your church. This activity will enhance the level of safety at your church, provide good and useful information to people in the community and create an avenue through which you may come into contact with those who do not attend a church.