

Purchase Strategy for Children's Ministry

1. List items for proposed budget for each department.

Know what you need to teach children effectively with creativity, fun, and excitement. Getting a plan early will help you to save time and money. Know what you want, make a list, and stick to it. Be careful not to impulse shop. Be careful not to waste money on unnecessary items.

2. What to buy, what not to buy

Do not make furniture purchases until you know where you're meeting. Some facilities will already have tables, chairs, etc.

With every purchase, think about portability. Don't just think about what you're buying – think how you are going to store it and how you are going to move it each week.

Only buy durable products. The quality of your furniture and toys must withstand being moved back and forth. They also need to hold up to extended and multiple use.

Only buy washable items. Stay away from cloth dolls or stuffed animals. Germs and bacteria can be easily spread through items that are not disinfected after use. If you need floor covers consider the colorful, interlocking foam squares that can be wiped down.

Your storage unit will only hold so much stuff. Only buy items that you will get good use out of.

Buy colorful and quality items that will make a good presentation to visitors, parents, and kids.

3. Set up a storage area.

You'll need shelving and plastic tubs of various sizes for organization and storage. If you are storing in a garage or storage unit, get lids to keep out dirt and bugs.

4. Begin making purchases

Some items you will want to purchase new, but also consider saving money by buying used. Many people sell quality toys and nursery furniture that are like new. Consider looking into consignment shops, Goodwill, Salvation Army, garage sales, clearance and sale items, newspaper ads.

5. Shopping strategies

Start early. Don't wait until the last minute to prepare for children's ministry. There is a lot involved to have a quality program.

Don't overspend too early. Spread out your purchases. If you have several months, you have time to watch for sales and deals.

Communicate with the core group, neighbors, friends, businesses. The more people who know what you need are the more people who can help you find your items. You may find people or business that want to donate items or give you a discount.

Work with the financial administrator. Give the financial administrator a written proposal so that person will have knowledge for oversight for fund distribution. Every area of the church is making purchases, so be a team player and work with what is allotted to you.

Consider fundraising.

Go shopping with the Holy Spirit. He's your helper. He'll help you use wisdom in making purchases at the right time and for the right price. He'll also direct you to the stores and to the people that will give you the best deal.