

KIDS & FAMILY MINISTRY REFLECTION & REVIEW TOOL



Children & Family
Ministries



WELCOME TO THE MINISTRY REFLECTION & REVIEW TOOL

A resource in 3 parts:

Reflection on your overall ministry with children

This is designed to help you look at the “big picture” and see where there might be opportunities to strengthen your overall strategy with kids and families.

Reflection on your own leadership and ministry

This is designed to help you reflect on how you are personally going as a leader. It’s also a great tool to share with your team members to help them reflect and grow, and facilitate opportunities for storytelling and conversation.

Reflection on specific ministry areas

This is designed to really hone in on one ministry area at a time. You can choose one ministry for now, and reuse it again and again to work through each area within your kids ministry.

As you take this time and space to reflect on these areas, our prayer is that God would renew your vision for what He is doing among children and families in your church and community!

PART 1 REFLECTION ON YOUR OVERALL MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN

Before you review your ministry, it might be helpful to know some of the recent history that got us here and the research that suggests a good way forward.

In 1780 Robert Raikes saw the cycle of poverty and lack of education leading to generational disadvantage. He initiated what famously became known as Sunday School - a way of educating children to read and write using the Bible as their text book. Others including Hannah Moore were also engaging in similar ministries in an endeavour to introduce children to Jesus. In only a few years there were thousands of Sunday Schools. Over time the Sunday School was used as a church planting tool and bible engagement for all ages. In the 1950's in Australia it was common for parents that drop their children to Sunday School and many churches had buses that picked up kids. By the 1980's many churches moved their Sunday Schools to be at the same time as the Sunday service. The prevailing thought that kids might be best educated in the faith by specialist teachers. Sunday Schools had transitioned from an evangelism and justice tool for those who would otherwise not be introduced to Jesus and became primarily the discipleship tool for children of families already participants in the local church.

Today approximately 16% of the Australian population are regularly involved with a local Christian church however in this statistic children and young people are underrepresented compared with the general population. There are millions of children and their families who are living lives without connection to the good news of Jesus and God's desire for relationship with them. The National Church Life Survey also tells us that approximately 45% of people who have parents worshipping in Baptist Churches in Australia are no longer connected to a faith community the majority having left the church by the age of 25. Tragic statistics that we would do well to reflect on.

So what do we do? Is there a way forward to a more Jesus shaped, Spirit empowered, holistic lifelong faith for more children and their families? Observational research across many years has demonstrated that there are a number of key experiences for children who find lifelong faith.

1. They usually grow up in homes where their parents love Jesus and are involved in the local church. These parents model faith to their kids in all of life. Their words about faith and their actions align.
2. They belong to a faith community where the relationships are numerous and warm. The ministry of the faith community is a shared experience. There are aspects that are for kids but also ministry that is with or alongside kids and space for ministry to be received from kids. The generations give and receive from one another in mission, service, worship, celebration and learning. Turns out this is good for everyone not just children.

3. They participate with peers in programs led by leaders who care about them and follow Jesus alongside them.

In addition there are numerous opportunities for churches to connect with their local communities and introduce children and their families to Jesus. A report from the UK found that 74% of families with children under 5 had attended a church based activity in the last year. In NSW Special Religious Education, SUPA groups and the One Hope mentoring program are offered in 100's of schools.

WHERE IS MY FOCUS?

Thinking about the following key areas of ministry, what percentage of your time would you spend on each?

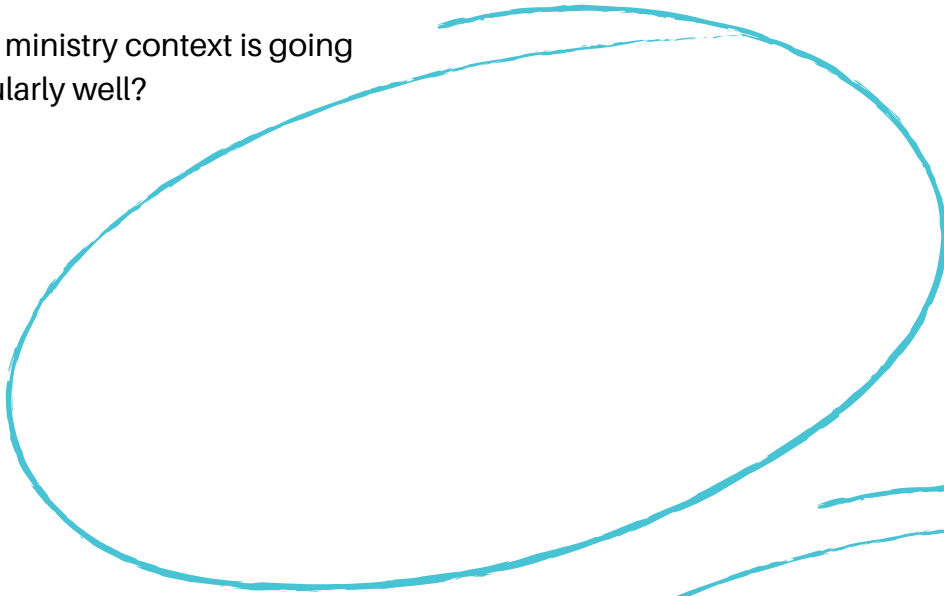


Ministry Context	% of Time Spent	Specific Ministries/Tasks that Contribute to this Focus Area
Generational Connections		
Family Household Nurture		
Positive Peer Community		
Ministry Emphasis	% of Time Spent	Specific Ministries/Tasks that Contribute to this Focus Area
Head & Heart - Knowing God's Big Story - Experiencing Jesus		
Faith in Action - Responding with Compassion - Serving in Mission		
Companions for the Faith Journey - Mentors and Peers		
Markers on the Faith Journey - Peak Experiences and faith anchors - Rites of passage		
Other		

See www.here2stay.org.au for more info about each area

WHICH CONTEXT NEEDS MY ATTENTION?

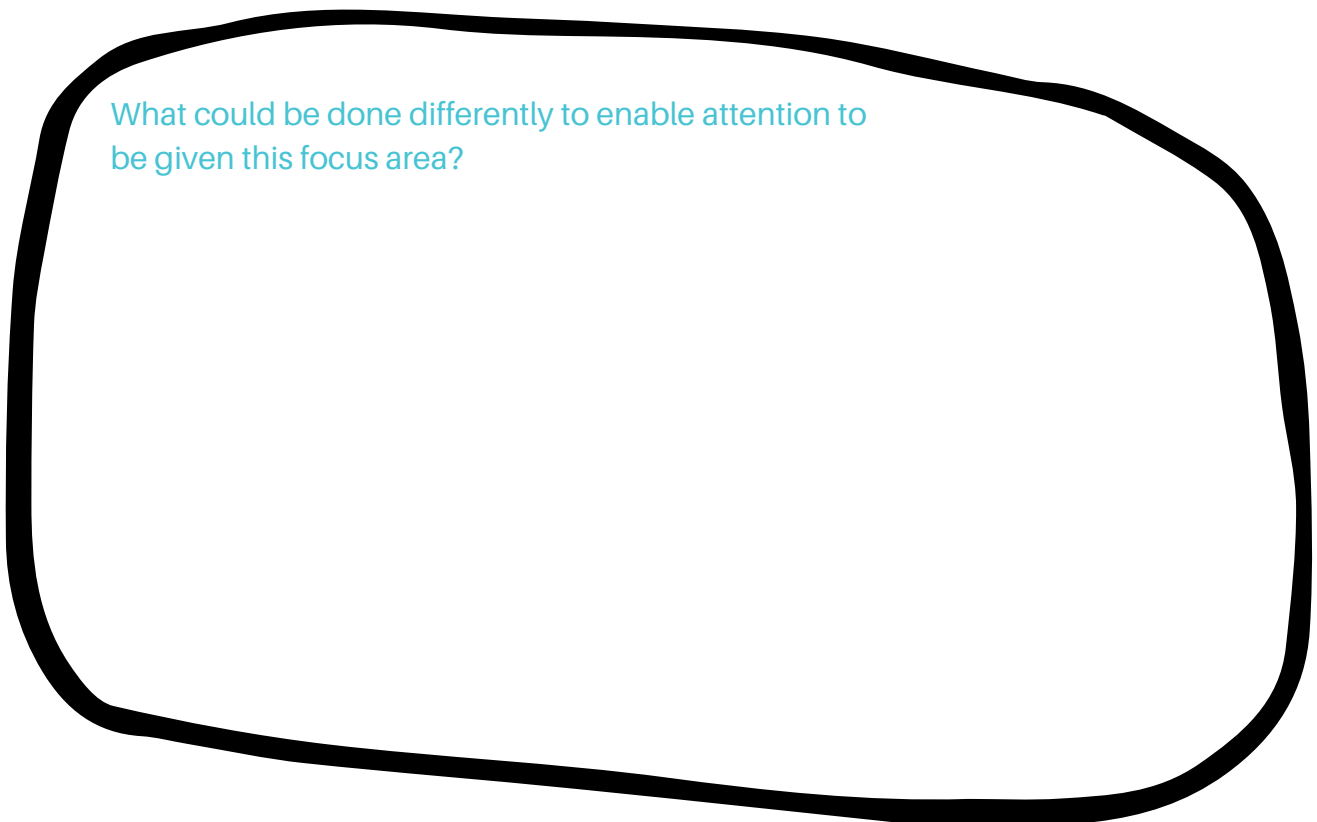
Which ministry context is going particularly well?



Which ministry context needs more attention?

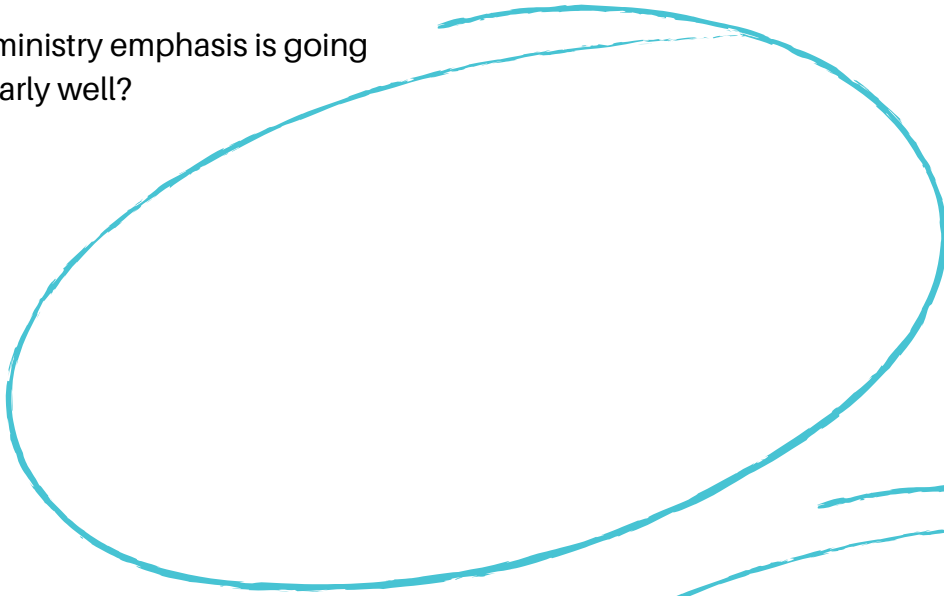


What could be done differently to enable attention to be given this focus area?



WHICH EMPHASIS NEEDS MY ATTENTION?

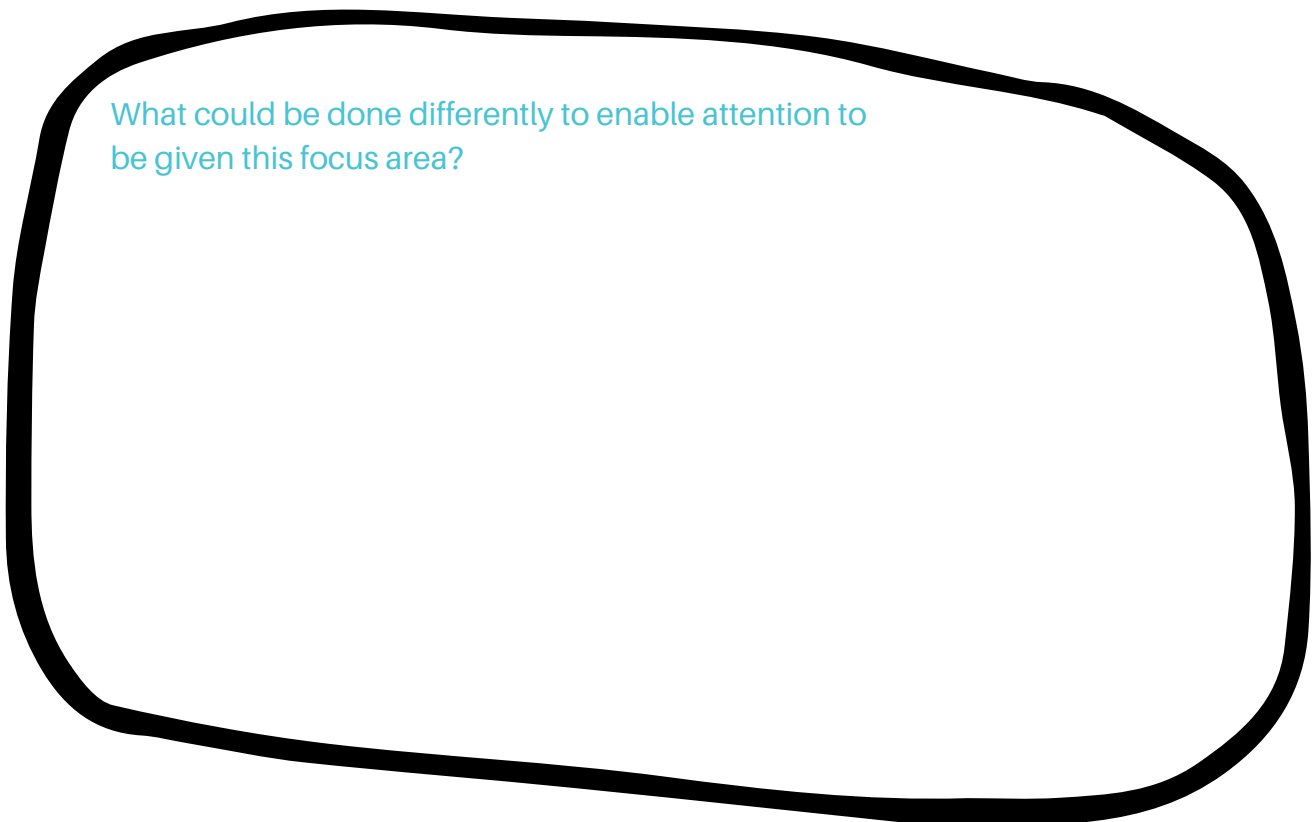
Which ministry emphasis is going particularly well?



Which ministry emphasis needs more attention?



What could be done differently to enable attention to be given this focus area?



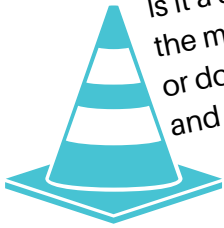
WHAT ABOUT THE BUILDING?

What about the building you might ask! We know that the church is the gathered people of God not a building ... but the building still matters. Whether you like it or not the building, the physical space expresses values and sends messages.

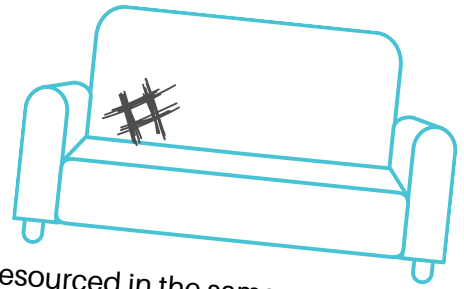
So what is the space where your ministry happens saying?



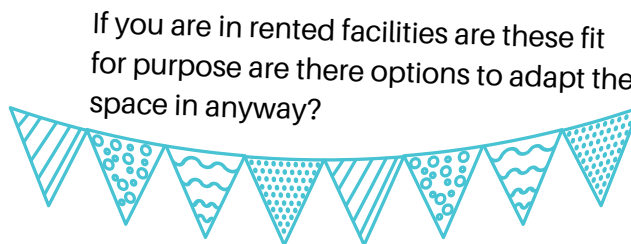
Is it easily accessible or do you need the hidden map and secret password just to find it?



Is it a safe appropriate space for the ministry that happens there or does it feel a little makeshift and temporary?



Is it resourced in the same way as other spaces or does it receive all the old hand-me-down furniture and resources?



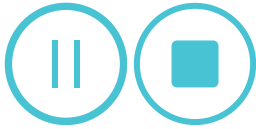
If you are in rented facilities are these fit for purpose are there options to adapt the space in anyway?

Think about what message your space is sending to different demographics - kids, teens, adults, older people, visitors. Does this line up with what you want to convey to each of these demographics?

What are some possible ways forward? Who could you talk with about this?

DISCOVERIES?

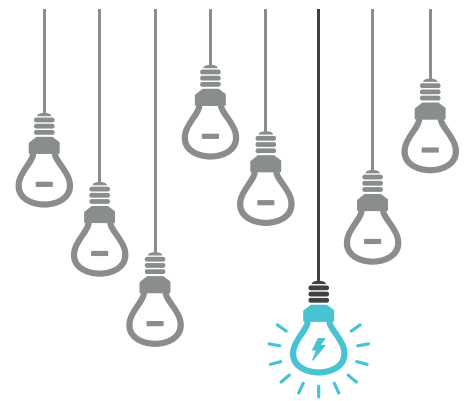
The pandemic was a major disruptor to our well worn paths and rhythms. Existing ministries were adapted or put on hold. New initiatives and focus' emerged and there was an opportunity to experiment. Perhaps there have been other season where things paused or stopped or new things were tried, these can be good insights to ways we can adapt in the future.



What has paused or stopped that you do not want to pick up again?

What new things did you try?

Which innovation, experiment or adaptation do you think was the most successful? Why do you think that was?



What new skills, capacities or gifts have been uncovered?

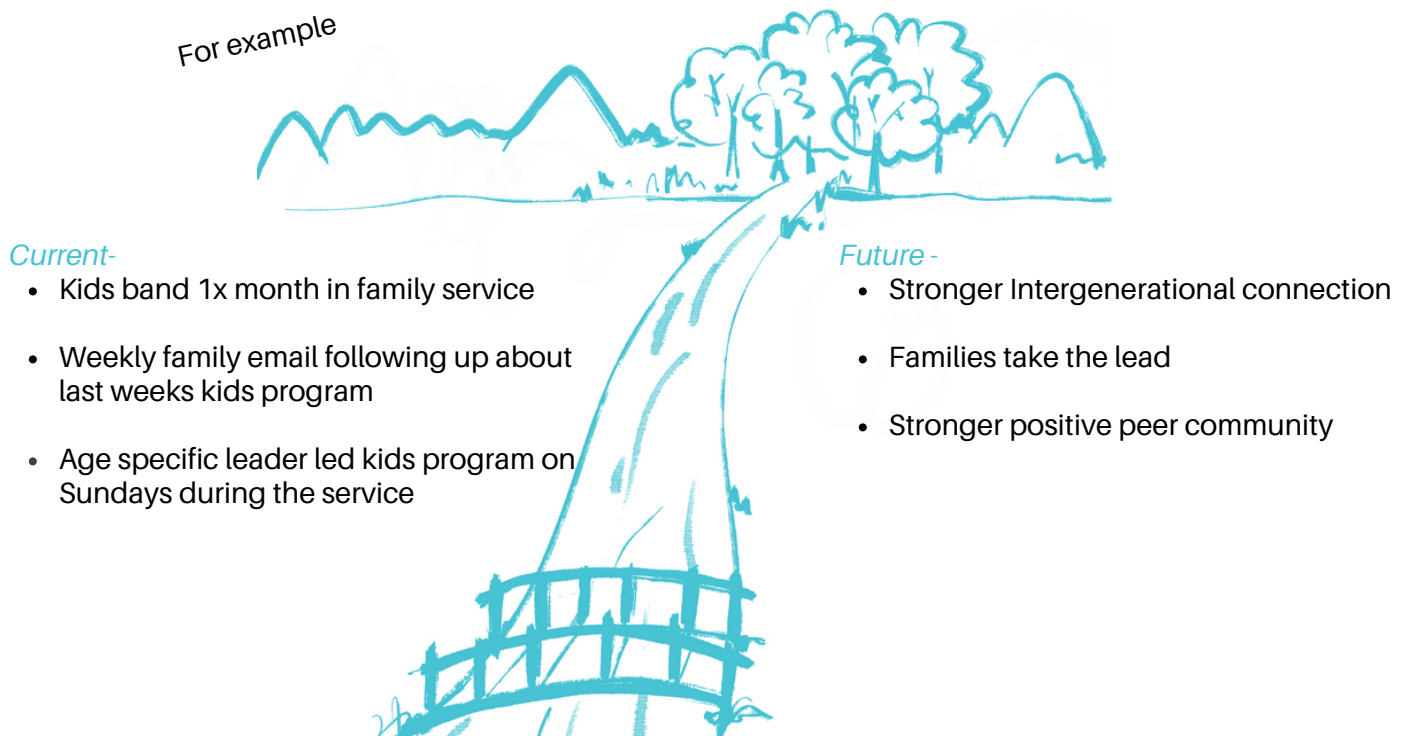


What do you want to make sure you take forward?

HOW CAN I BE INTENTIONAL?

Sometimes the ministries and tasks that we are already doing can be honed or tweaked to help us reach a goal or desired future. Shifting our focus doesn't mean we need to start from scratch. You might find this exercise helpful.

1. Look at the picture of the river below. On the left side of the river list all the things that are currently happening in your ministry context. List the programs, activities and tasks that make up your week.
2. On the right hand side of the river use words or phrases to describe the desired future you feel God is leading you into. For example, you might envision intergenerational connections or families partnering together in discipleship and mission. This is describing where you are going.
3. Then think about how what you are doing now could be part of shaping the future. What "bridges" are there between what is happening now, and where you are going?

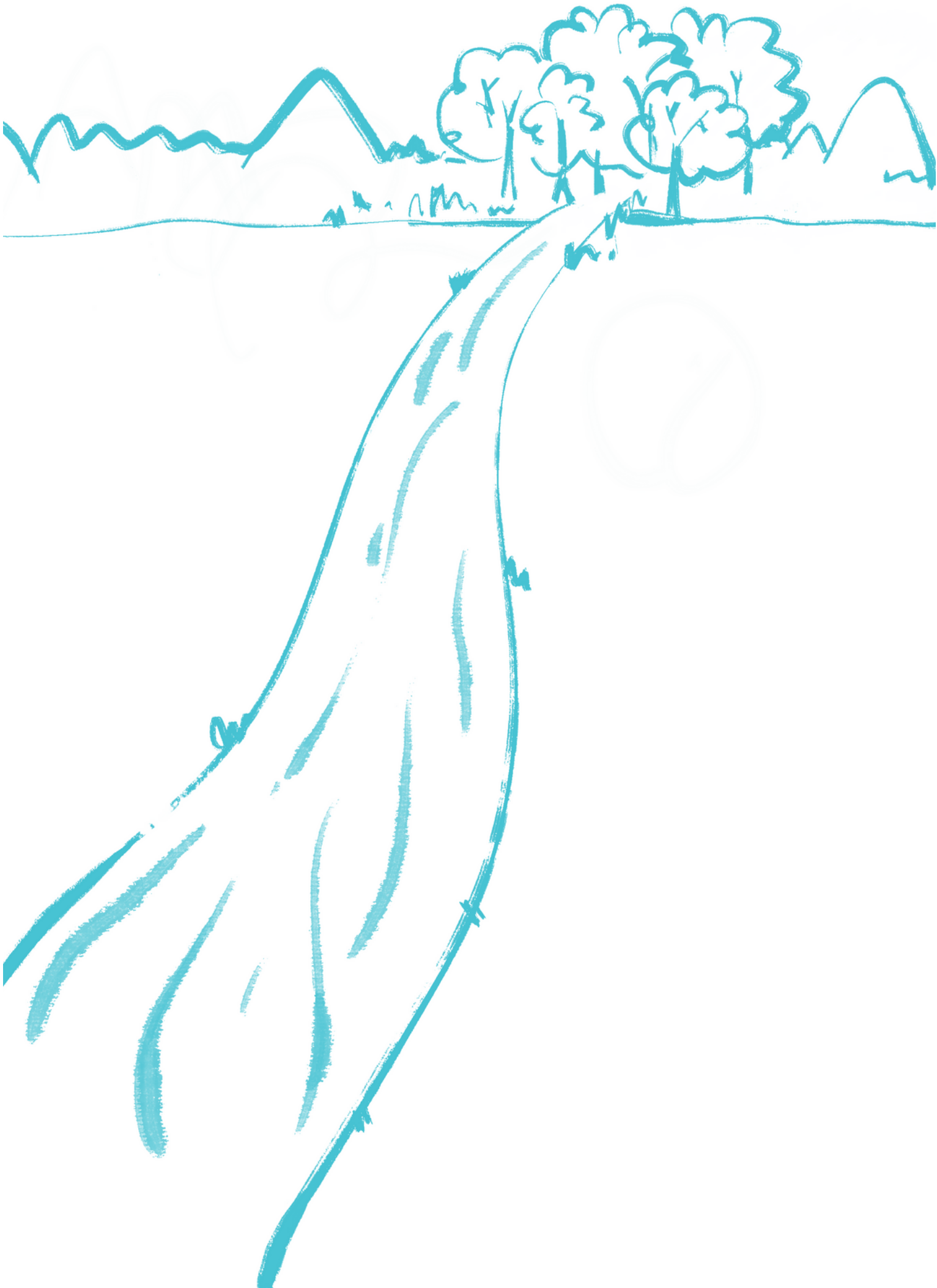


Bridges -

Integrate the musical kids across all of the services, making each band intergenerational, enabling the generations to connect and serve alongside one another.

Tweak your emails to include practical ideas for bringing faith into everyday moments, also letting them know what's coming up in Kids' Church, so that they can take the lead.

Swap out some of the leader led activities, for experiences and opportunities for kids to share, pray and work together.



REFLECTION ON YOUR OWN LEADERSHIP AND MINISTRY

Healthy leaders lead healthy ministries. No-one wants to burn out, crash out or rust out in ministry. Ideally leaders would flourish and thrive in ministry setting. Thriving is not the absence of difficulty, but rather the ability to cope well with stress and the demands of ministry and finding ourselves energised, engaged, and satisfied.

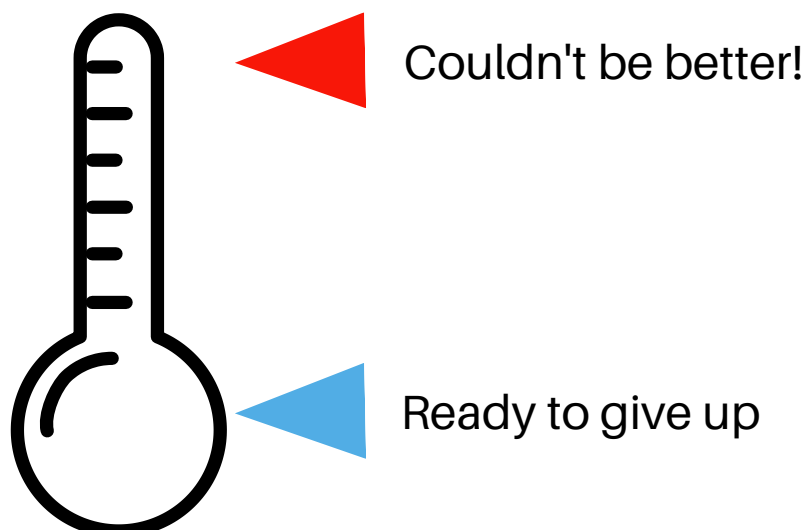
The questions here will help you reflect on your own leadership and ministry, but they may also be a great reflection tool to put in the hands of those in your ministry team, to open up storytelling and conversation.

How are the following areas of health going for you?

	Great	Good	OK	Average	Poor
My physical health is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My emotional health is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My social/relational health is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My spiritual health is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Is there an area of health you need a plan for working towards better wellbeing?

How do you feel you are going overall in ministry at the moment?

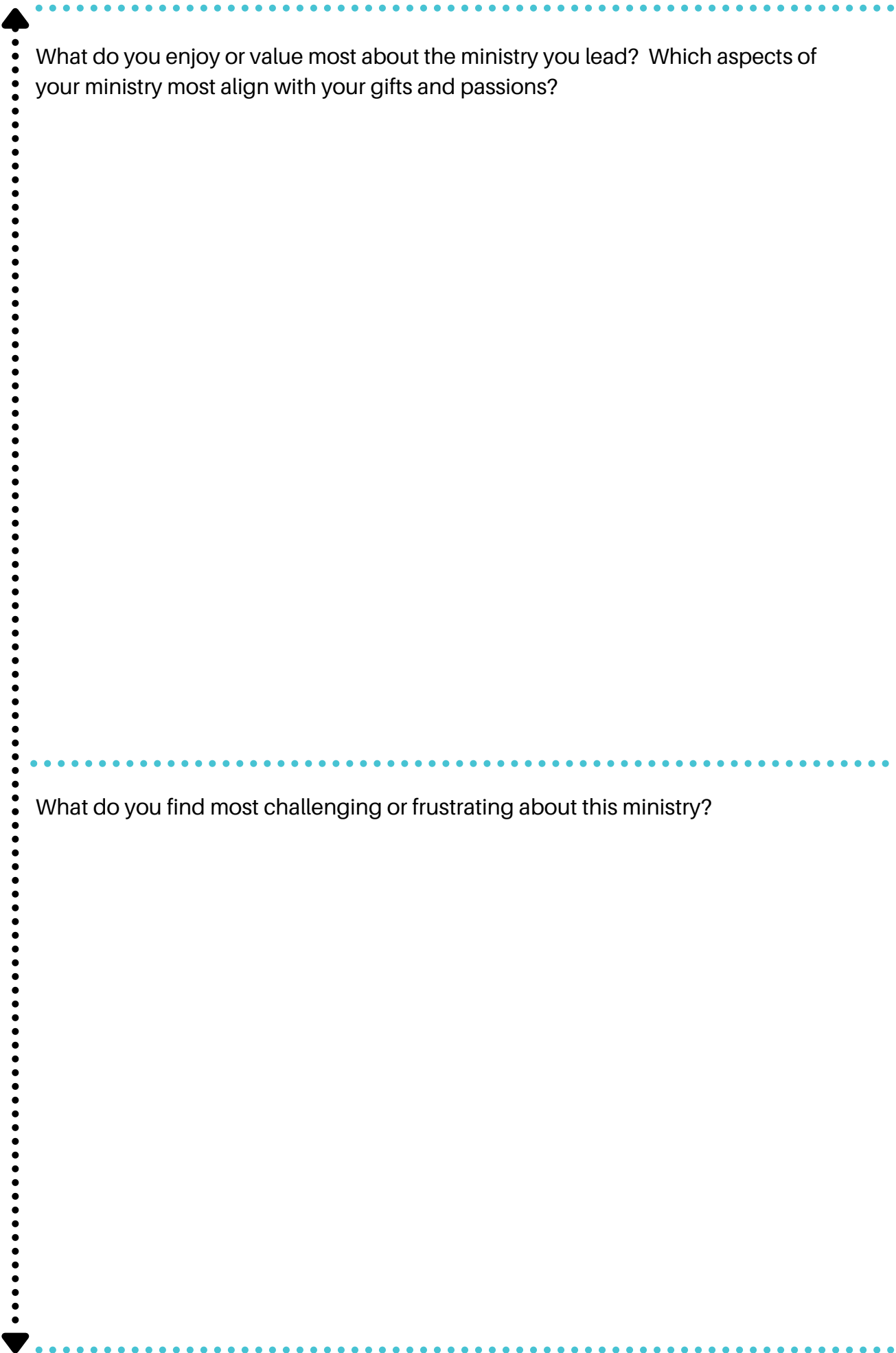


Consider writing, sketching or drawing your response or perhaps record a video of you sharing the story in response to these questions.

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Think about your time in your current ministry context. When were you most alive, excited and committed about your involvement? Take your time and include as much detail as possible, including names of people involved.

.....



What do you enjoy or value most about the ministry you lead? Which aspects of your ministry most align with your gifts and passions?

What do you find most challenging or frustrating about this ministry?

How are your **RELATIONSHIPS** with your pastors, coworkers, ministry leaders, those whom you serve, and the wider church?

Who are your **SUPPORT** people?

What are you doing to **NURTURE** your own **RELATIONSHIP** with God?

Take some time to review your position description (or think through the role you were asked to do for ministry volunteers). How closely does it line up with what you actually do? What are the extra things you are doing? What is not getting your attention?

If you don't have a regular review scheduled for your role, make a note to schedule one soon, and then have them at least annually.

What could you change, think about, seek help with or act upon as a result of this reflection?

PART 3

REFLECTION ON SPECIFIC MINISTRY AREAS

This template is designed to help you reflect on specific ministry areas. You might like to use it to focus on one particular ministry, or you might like to reuse it again and again to reflect on each ministry for which you have oversight. Make sure you focus on just one specific ministry area at a time.

NAME of ministry

WHEN did this ministry start?

What do you know of **THE STORY** of its beginning?

WHY does this ministry exist? What is its purpose?

WHO does the ministry serve?

WHAT needs does this ministry meet?

WHAT would the **CHILDREN** and /or the families involved in this ministry **SAY** about this ministry?

HOW does this ministry contribute to the vision of your faith community?

In what ways do you **SEE GOD AT WORK** through this ministry? What is one recent story as an example?

What **FRUIT** does this ministry bear? What does it look like in your faith community when this ministry is **THRIVING**?

Thinking about people, financial and physical space resources - is the ministry **SUSTAINABLE** in its current form?

What are the major **CHALLENGES** in this ministry? What **INHIBITS** its fruitfulness? What steps are you taking in **RESPONSE** to these challenges?

If you had the resources, authority and opportunity what are two things about this ministry you would **CHANGE** tomorrow?

1.

2.

Who will you **INVITE** into this **CONVERSATION** about this specific ministry?

WHAT NOW?

Spend some time prayerfully reflecting over all you have written and thought through. What are your top 3 reflections from this exercise?

1.

2.

3.

What do you sense are some next steps for you as a leader, for specific ministries and for the ministry overall with children and their families at your church?

Who will you **INVITE** into this **CONVERSATION**?

(think of at least one person from your ministry context and one person external to your ministry context)

The Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT- Kids and Family Team would be happy to talk with you.



baptistcfm.org.au



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