

Grants and Fundraising

Judyth Roberts

Key points:

- Part of overall strategy in children's ministry/church ministry, talk to church council, leaders FIRST, and pray about your idea
- Think things through and plan carefully and write it all down – transparency in process is important
- Do not expect secular organisations to pay for missional projects – the church must 'own' its ministry with children and families
- When churches publicise what they do through the community and apply for grants or fund-raise, then the community building work the church does becomes known
- Playgroups are usually 'under the radar' with minimal signage and promotion, so in order to get money for them you will need to think about what you do and why it is important and why you should have money given to you

Grant writing:

- If applying for a grant you will be legally accountable and there's always lots of paperwork – it is competitive!
- But once you have written out one grant application, you will have the basic information you need to write out lots more
- The quality of the application is assessed, and the evidence provided is assessed
- There is usually a time frame in which to spend the money or it must be returned
- Successful grants gain publicity and you can use this to raise the profile of your group and church

Fundraising:

- If fundraising you will also be accountable for the way the money is spent
- Fundraising is often done within the local community but think about broadening your base of donors by asking people to promote it more widely, eg through work or family contacts
- It is easier to raise money for a specific target for a specific purpose than a vague "we need money for the playgroup..."
- If fundraising for a playgroup, involve the parents – many will have valuable contacts and may be able to help in unexpected ways

Warning: If your playgroup becomes obsessed with money, it will not be a good place to be! Be assured God knows your needs and can provide for them, so pray and ask God, who is abundant and generous.