

# Tips & Trends

## Girls' Ministries—Staying in Touch

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### Cost vs Value of Raising a Child

The government recently calculated the cost of raising a child from birth to 18 and came up with \$160,140.00 for a middle income family.

Talk about sticker shock! That doesn't even touch college tuition.

But \$160,140 isn't so bad if you break it down. It translates into \$8,896 a year, \$741.38 a month, or \$171.08 a week. That's a mere \$24.24 a day! Just over a dollar an hour.

Still, you might think the best financial advice says don't have children if you want to be "rich." It is just the opposite.

So, what do you get for your investment of \$160,140?

- Naming rights— First, middle, and last!
- Glimpses of God every day.
- Giggles under the covers at night.
- More love than your heart can hold.
- Butterfly kisses and Velcro hugs.
- Endless wonder over rocks, ants, clouds, and warm cookies.
- A hand to hold, usually covered with jam or peanut butter.
- A partner for blowing bubbles, flying kites, building sand castles, and skipping down the sidewalk in the pouring rain.
- Someone to laugh yourself silly with no matter what the boss said or how your stocks performed that day.

For \$160,140, you never have to grow up.

- You get to finger-paint, carve pumpkins, play hide-and-seek, catch lightning bugs, and never stop believing in Santa Claus.
- You have an excuse to keep reading the Adventures of Piglet and Pooh, watching Saturday morning cartoons, going to Disney Land, and wishing on stars.
- You get to frame rainbows, hearts, and flowers under refrigerator magnets and collect spray painted noodle

wreaths for Christmas, hand prints set in clay for Mother's Day, and cards with backward letters for Father's Day. For \$160,140, there is no greater bang for your bucks.

- You get to be a hero just for retrieving a Frisbee off the garage roof, taking the training wheels off the bike, removing a splinter, filling a wading pool, coaxing a wad of gum out of bangs, and coaching a baseball team that never wins but always gets treated to ice cream regardless.
- You get a front row seat to history to witness the first step, first word, first bra, first date, and first time behind the wheel. You get to be immortal.
- You get another branch added to your family tree, and if you're lucky, a long list of limbs in your obituary called grandchildren.

- You get an education in psychology, nursing, criminal justice, communications, and human sexuality that no college can match.
- In the eyes of a child, you rank right up there with God. You have all the power to heal a booboo, scare away monsters under the bed, patch a broken heart, police a slumber party, ground them forever, and love them without limits, so one day they will, like you, love without counting the cost.

### Girls' Ministries Week

It's not too early to start thinking ahead to fall and the 2005 Girls' Ministries Day and Week set for September 11-17, 2005. Make initial plans with your pastor and WM director to promote your ministry to girls by highlighting this day/week and recognizing the girls' achievements.

## TRENDS

### Stats on Children in the U.S.

**In 2004, there were 73.3 million children under age 18 in the United States. This represents an increase in the child population of more than 50 percent since 1950. These children are the mission field for IPHC Missionettes and Royal Rangers. Are you reaping your share of the harvest?**



The number of children under age 18 in the United States has grown from 47.3 million in 1950 to 73.3 million in 2004. By the year 2020, that number is expected to grow to 80.3 million. Growth has not been steady, however.

During the 1950s, the heart of the baby boom, the number of children increased by over a third to 64.5 million in 1960. After slower growth in the 1960s, the number of children actually fell, and by 1990, at 64.2 million, had not quite caught up to 1960 levels. Growth resumed in the 1990s to the current level of 73.3 million.

Since the early 1960s, children have formed an ever-smaller proportion of our total national population, declining from 36 percent in 1960 to 26 percent in 1990 and remaining stable through 2000. Since 2001, children have made up 25 percent of the total population. This percentage is expected to decline slightly to 24 percent by 2020.

This information was provided by Child Trends Data Bank ([www.childtrendsdatabank.org](http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org)) and the U.S. Census Bureau.