



Course Syllabus
WYP1450HS - Approaches to Holistic Ministry with Children
Wycliffe College
Toronto School of Theology
Summer 2025

Instructor Information

Instructor:	Sheryl Grunwald, PhD, Adjunct Professor
Office Location:	
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Office Hours:	Daily 2:30-4 pm during course. Before/after course by email and/or appointment by Zoom.

Course Identification

Course Number:	WYP1450HS
Course Format:	In-person (hybrid)
Course Name:	Approaches to Holistic Ministry with Children
Course Location:	TBA
Class Times:	May 26-30, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Prerequisites:	None

Course Description

Children are whole beings – physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual – and God desires for them to flourish in every way. This course is designed to provide a basic understanding of and framework for holistic ministry with children in today's cultural context. Students will explore the biblical foundations of ministry to, for and with children as well as effective strategies for their protection, nurture, evangelism and discipleship in the context of their family, church and community. These learning experiences will guide students in developing a personal philosophy of holistic ministry to children and families.

Modelling transformational learning practices, this course will be collaborative and interactive in nature, utilizing lecture, discussion, small group work and presentations, video, reading, community engagement, written reflections and a final paper as teaching methods. Students' commitment to participate in this dynamic process is essential while we are in class together.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts/Bibliography

- May, Scottie, Beth Posterski, Catherine Stonehouse, and Linda Cannell. 2005. *Children Matter: Celebrating Their Place in the Church, Family and Community*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Tan, Rosalind, Nativity A. Petallar, and Lucy A. Hefford. 2022. *God's Heart for Children: Practical Theology from Global Perspectives*. Carlisle, UK: Langham Global Library.
<https://langhamliterature.org/god-s-heart-for-children>
- Stafford, Wess. 2005. *Too Small to Ignore: Why Children are the Next Big Thing*. Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press.
- Additional readings provided by the instructor.

Course Website(s)

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701> . Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should contact the registrar's office for further help.

- Personal Website: <https://www.actioninternational.org/missionary/Sheryl-Grunwald>

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Wycliffe College

BD Level

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

AREA OF OUTCOME	COURSE OUTCOMES By the end of this course, students will	ACHIEVED THROUGH COURSE ELEMENT This outcome will be achieved through these course elements
IN RESPECT OF GENERAL ACADEMIC SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- analyze Scripture and course readings and formulate questions in response- demonstrate basic-degree-level writing skills- develop skill in qualitative research and synthesis of results	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- in-class discussion and reading reports- reading reports and final paper- listening assignment

<p>IN RESPECT OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTENT OF ONE OR MORE THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describe what the Bible says about children and God's heart for children (articulate a biblical understanding of children). - identify issues that affect the holistic development of children. - discuss the role of the church in responding to the holistic needs of children, including their faith development. - investigate strategies for the evangelism and discipleship of children. - examine the strategic importance of children's role in the mission of the Church. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - readings, lectures, and class discussion/activities; final paper - readings, lectures, and class discussion/activities; listening assignment - readings, lectures, and class discussion/activities; final paper - readings, lectures, and class discussion/activities - readings, lectures, and class discussion/activities
<p>IN RESPECT OF PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflect on daily devotions and lectures and their application to personal or ministry contexts. - articulate a personal philosophy of holistic ministry with children and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflection papers - final paper
<p>IN RESPECT OF MINISTERIAL AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explore contemporary models of children's and family ministry. - integrate personal philosophy of children's ministry with application to personal or ministry contexts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - readings, lectures, and class discussion/activities - final paper

Evaluation

Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in 5 areas:

1) Class Participation (10%)

This class is designed to be highly interactive. In addition to participating in the regular activity of the class, including completing daily readings, students are expected to contribute to in-class discussions, group work and presentations.

Students are expected to be on-time for each class. Absences will only be excused due to illness or emergencies. Notify the instructor before the class, when possible.

2) Daily Reflection Papers (20%) Due: 9 a.m. the day following each class.

Following each day's class you will write a short reflection paper (1 page, double spaced). A reflection paper is simply a reaction to or a reflection on something that was said in the lectures, discussions, activities, or something from the assigned reading. It may include something that was new to you, something with which you disagreed, something which had a big impact on you in some way, or an "aha" experience. Your reflection paper will also apply the observation or critique to your personal or ministry context. **Note:** Please cite all quotes according to Turabian style guidelines.

Be prepared to share your reflection with a partner or group in class each day.

3) Reading Reports (20%) Due: Monday, June 30 and Monday, July 14

Read the textbooks *Children Matter* and *God's Heart for Children* and submit a 1-2-page reading report for each book. The reading report should contain the following:

- A one-paragraph summary of the book.
- A description of at least three new concepts gained from the book.
- Your points of agreement/disagreement with the book.
- At least three potential implications for your ministry setting.

4) Listening Assignment - Interview (20%) Due: Monday, June 16

Interview one child 4-12 years old using the guideline provided in class. Following the interview, synthesize the responses and reflect on your observations in a 3-4 page paper.

5) Beliefs and Practices for Holistic Child Development – Final Paper (30%) Due: Monday, July 28

You will write a final paper (5-6 pages) delineating your core values and beliefs about holistic ministry with children. Your paper should include a biblical foundation for your philosophy, your core values and strategies for implementation in your context (work, church, family.) Include references from your assigned reading and other sources. A guideline and grading rubric for this assignment will be provided by the instructor.

Course Grading

Attendance and Class Participation	10%
Reflection Papers	20%
Reading Reports	20%
Listening Assignment – Interview	20%
Final Paper/Project	30%
Total	100%

Grading System - Basic Degree Students

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

90-100 (A+)	Exceptional
85-89 (A)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable
0-69 (FZ)	Failure

Please see the student handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Policy on Assignment and Course Extensions

Assignment Extension (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. Under exceptional circumstances a student may request a short extension to be determined with the instructor. Instructors are not obliged to approve a request for an extension or accept papers that are late where no extension has been requested. If the instructor chooses to accept an assignment, where an extension has **not** been requested and approved before the due date, then **for that assignment one percentage point per late day will be deducted**. The final deadline for the submission of assignments is the date set by the instructor in the syllabus, the examination day scheduled for the course, or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner. If the student fails to submit the assignment by the agreed deadline a mark of zero will be calculated for the assignment.

Policy on Course Extension (BD) Students with documented medical difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) who are unable to submit their work by the end of the term must talk with their instructor and request a course extension. The deadline for obtaining a course extension is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. The course extension, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline, with an absolute deadline of the last day of the examination week within the twelfth month following the end of the course. (The course extension must also be approved by the Basic Degree Director and confirmed by the Registrar.) Under extraordinary situations a student may request an extension on the initial extension. To do this, students must complete a second course extension form, include sufficient

documentation (e.g. a doctor's letter) and receive the approval of both the instructor and the BD director.

An approved course extension will appear on the student's record as an SDF. If the student completes coursework before the new deadline approved by the professor and the student's college, the grade SDF will be changed to a letter and number grade. If the student does not complete the work by the deadline set by the professor and no further extension is granted, the professor will assign a zero for the unsubmitted work and submit a final grade (numerical or letter, including FZ) or, if the student successfully petitions for one, a permanent incomplete (INC). For late papers (with or without a course extension) students will receive a grade but minimal comments.

The link for the course extension form is at <https://www.wycliffecollege.ca/basic-degree-request-extension-pdf>

Late work (Graduate). The prima facie deadline for the completion of work in a course is the last day of the examination week for the trimester in which the course is taken. Students are expected to meet the course deadlines of the instructor offering the course and are advised to plan their research projects accordingly. Students who find themselves unable to meet deadlines for completing coursework can, under certain conditions, receive extensions for completing the work after the dates set by the college in which the course is offered.

The authority to grant an extension for the completion of work in a course beyond the original TST or college deadline (whichever is earlier) for that course rests with the student's college Graduate Director, not the instructor of the course. Nevertheless, the instructor's signature is required for course extension requests to be processed. Students will petition their college Graduate Director for extensions, using a standard form provided by TST on its website. See Section 7.11 of the Conjoint Graduate Degree Handbook.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-26-2012>, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism

is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>. A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges:
<https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library/research/theology/avoiding-plagiarism-in-theological-writing/>

Use of AI. Students are not to submit work generated by AI chatbots such as ChatGPT. If students are found to have done so, they will receive a mark of ‘zero’ for the assignment concerned.

Recording Policy. Students may not create audio or video recordings of classes with the exception of those students requiring an accommodation for a disability (as identified by the Accessibility Services). These students should speak to the instructor in advance of the class.

If a course is to be recorded (either by a student or the instructor), the following guidelines apply:

- Students must be given notice that lectures or a lecture will be recorded, preferably well before the recorded class. Consent forms are available from the Registrar’s office.
- Students must be given the option to opt out of recorded classes without penalty. Students who wish to remain anonymous in a recorded lecture will not be penalized for this choice – if, for example, participation is a required component of the course, students will be given another option to earn participation credit that will not be recorded.

Students creating unauthorized audio and/or video recording of lectures violate an instructor’s intellectual property rights and the Canadian Copyright Act. Students violating this agreement will be subject to disciplinary actions under the Code of Student Conduct.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. Students should check utoronto email regularly for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

Course Schedule

Pre-course Reading: Stafford, Wess. 2005. *Too Small to Ignore: Why Children are the Next Big Thing.* Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press.

Class/Day	Topic	Read before class
1 Monday	<p>Course Introduction</p> <p>Morning – Why focus on children? What is God’s heart for children?</p> <p>Afternoon – What does the Bible say about children?</p>	<p>Read and come prepared to discuss the book: Stafford, Wess. 2005. <i>Too Small to Ignore</i>. Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press.</p> <p>Bunge, Marcia. 2011. “Biblical Understandings of Children and Childhood: Resources for the Church and Mission Today.” In <i>Now and Next: A Compendium of Papers Presented at the Now and Next Theological Conference on Children, Nairobi, Kenya, March 9-12, 2011</i>, edited by Siga Arles, Dan Brewster, Chik-Bu Kok, Rosalind Tan, and Keith White, 15-34. Singapore: Compassion.</p>
2 Tuesday	<p>Morning – How does a child’s context affect their holistic development?</p> <p>Afternoon – How can we nurture hurting children and build resilience?</p>	<p>Ettekal, Andrea V., and Joseph L. Mahoney. 2017. “Ecological Systems Theory.” In <i>The SAGE Encyclopedia of Out-of-School Learning</i>, edited by Kylie Pepper, 239-241. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.</p>
3 Wednesday	<p>Morning – How does faith develop in children?</p> <p>Afternoon – How can families and churches help children grow in faith?</p>	<p>Holmes, Sarah E., Mimi Larson, and Sue Price. 2024 “Will the children have faith in the post-pandemic era? Investigating models of children’s faith formation in a world changed by pandemic experiences.” <i>Journal of Beliefs & Values</i>. March 2024: 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1080/13617672.2024.2320010.</p>
4 Thursday	<p>Morning – What ministry models help children’s faith development?</p>	TBA

	Afternoon – What can churches do to protect and safeguard children?	
5 Friday	<p>Morning – How can we empower children for ministry and mission?</p> <p>Afternoon – How do we approach evangelism with children?</p>	Budijanto, Bambang. 2013. "Children and Youth as Partners in Mission." In <i>Children & Youth as Partners in Mission</i> , edited by Dan Brewster and John Baxter Brown, 29-45. Penang: Compassion.

Select Bibliography Additional Recommended Books and Resources

- Allen, Holly Catterton. 2021. *Forming Resilient Children: The Role of Spiritual Formation for Healthy Development*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Anthony, Michael, ed. 2006. *Perspectives on Children's Spiritual Formation*. Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman.
- Arles, Siga, et. al. 2011. *Now and Next: A Compendium of Papers Presented at the Now and Next Consultation on Children in Nairobi, March, 2011*. Penang: Compassion.
- Beckwith, Ivy. 2004. *Postmodern Children's Ministry*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Brewster, Dan. 2011. *Child, Church, and Mission*. Rev. Ed. Penang: Compassion.
- Brewster, Dan. 2015. *Children and Childhood in the Bible Workbook*, 3rd Ed. Penang: Compassion.
- Brewster, Daniel and John Baxter-Brown, eds. 2014. *Children and Youth as Partners in Mission*. Penang: Compassion.
- Bunge, Marcia, ed. 2001. *The Child in Christian Thought*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Bunge, Marcia, ed. 2008. *The Child in the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Children Matter. 2017. *Faithfull Generation: Ten Foundations for Lifelong Faith Formation with Children in Families, Churches and Communities*. UK: Presence Books.
- Cupit, C. Glenn. 2005. *Perspectives on Children and Spirituality*. Central Coast/Bletchley: Scripture Union Australia/Scripture Union England and Wales.
- Ettekal, Andrea V., and Joseph L. Mahoney. 2017. "Ecological Systems Theory." In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Out-of-School Learning*, edited by Kylie Pepper, 239-241. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Foth, Sylvia. 2008. *Daddy, Are We There Yet? Mukilteo*, WA.: Kidzana Ministries.
- Greener, Susan Hayes. 2016. "Children-at-Risk and the Whole Gospel: Integral Mission 'To, For, and With' Vulnerable Agents of God." *Transformation* 33 (2): 159-170.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0265378816631256>.
- Gunnestad, Arve, and S'lungile Thwala. 2011. "Resilience and Religion in Children and Youth in Southern Africa." *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 16, no. 2 (May 2011): 169–185.
<https://doi:10.1080/1364436X.2011.580726>.
- Hay, David, and Rebecca Nye. 2006. *The Spirit of the Child*. Rev. ed. London, UK: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Holmes, Sarah E., Mimi Larson, and Sue Price. 2024. "Will the children have faith in the post-pandemic era? Investigating models of children's faith formation in a world changed by pandemic experiences." *Journal of Beliefs & Values*. March 2024: 1-17.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13617672.2024.2320010>.

- Kinnaman, David, and Mark Matlock. 2019. *Faith for Exiles: Five Ways for a New Generation to Follow Jesus in Digital Babylon*. Ada, MI: Baker.
- Kjesbo, Denise Muir, Shelley Henning, and Luz Galvez de Figueroa. 2024. *Partnering Church and Home: Discipleship for the Next Generation*. St. Paul, MN: Bethel Seminary.
- Kozhuharov, Valentin. 2016. *Child, Church and Mission: Inter-Christian Perspectives. An Orthodox Contribution to Global Christian Exploration of Church, Child and Mission*. WTL Publications.
- Larson, Mimi L., and Robert J. Keeley, eds. 2020. *Bridging Theory and Practice in Children's Spirituality: New Directions for Education, Ministry, and Discipleship*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Lovaglia, Dan. 2016. *Relational Children's Ministry: Turning Kid-Influencers into Lifelong Disciple Makers*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- MacDonald, Melissa. 2024. *Discipling World Changers*. Nesbit, MS: Endgame Press.
- May, Scottie, Beth Posterski, Catherine Stonehouse, and Linda Cannell. 2005. *Children Matter*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- McConnell, Douglas, Jennifer Orona, and Paul Stockley. 2007. *Understanding God's Heart for Children*. Colorado Springs, CO: Authentic.
- McCrindle, Mark, Ashley Fell, and Sam Buckerfield. 2021. *Generation Alpha: Understanding Our Children and Helping Them Thrive*. Headline.
- Nelson, Brittany. 2023. *Time to Update: 7 Areas to Integrate Digital Discipleship into your Children's Ministry Strategy*. Deeper KidMin.
- Nye, Rebecca. 2014. *Children's Spirituality: What It is and Why it Matters*. London, UK: Church House Publishing.
- Parsley, Ross. 2012. *Messy Church: A Multigenerational Mission for God's Family*. Colorado Springs, CO: DC Cook.
- Powell, Kara, and Chap Clark. 2011. *Sticky Faith: Everyday Ideas to Build Lasting Faith in Your Kids*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Segura-April, Desiree, Susan Hayes Greener, Dave Scott, Nicolas Panotto, and Menchit Wong. 2014. "Mission with Children at Risk." LOP 66. Quito: Lausanne Consultation on Children at Risk. <https://lausanne.org/occasional-paper/mission-children-risk-lop-66#post-108213-endnote-%20ref-58>
- Stafford, Wess, and Dean Merrill. 2005. *Too Small to Ignore: Why the Least of These Matters Most*. Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press.
- Stonehouse, Catherine. 1998. *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Stonehouse, Catherine, and Scottie May. 2010. *Listening to Children on the Spiritual Journey: Guidance for Those Who Teach and Nurture*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Tan, Rosalind, Nativity A. Petallar, and Lucy A. Hefford, eds. 2022. *God's Heart for Children: Practical Theology from Global Perspectives*. Carlisle, UK: Langham Global Library.
- Turner, Robin, and Trevecca Okholm, eds. 2023. *Children's Ministry and the Spiritual Child*. Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press.
- Twenge, Jean M. 2017. *iGen: Why Today's Super Connected kids are Growing up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy—and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood*. New York, Simon & Schuster.
- Westerhoff, John H. 2000. *Will our Children have Faith?* Toronto, ON: Morehouse Publishing.
- Zuck, Roy B. 2012. *Precious in His Sight*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.