

# **Creating and Implementing Multiple Care Ministries: A Prototype for the Local Church**

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A Pentecostal Pedagogy of care that is aimed at Leadership Development begins with a paradigm that caring is central to the worldview and lifestyle of all believers. Too often care ministry is relegated to the sidelines. Our Biblical teachings call for participation in God's heart for our communities, the marginalized, and the nations that are foundational and integrated into our discipleship.

This seminar will address the development of the various ministries on the Care Campus in Sevierville, Tennessee. You will learn about the Smoky Mountain Children's Home, Iris B. Vest Widows Ministry Center, Operation Compassion Warehouse, and Foster Family Care.

## **I. Smoky Mountain Children's Home**

- A. Mission: The mission of the Smoky Mountain Children's Home is to provide residential care for dependent neglected and other at-risk children and youth between the ages of five and seventeen. Our goal is to provide hope and healing for children and their families by helping them to cope with the ever-increasing pressures of our society, to help children express their concerns in constructive ways, to work toward reunification of the family, and to provide foster care and adoption services when needed.
- B. History:
  - 1. The Church of God Orphanage was birthed in 1920 as response to a serious need brought about by the influenza epidemic of 1918.
  - 2. A. J. Tomlinson and W. F. Bryant were keeping children in their home.
  - 3. Letha Dally was the first child taken into the orphanage.
  - 4. The Church of God Orphanage officially began December 17, 1920.
- C. Must change to meet current needs:
  - 1. Adapt to the changing times
  - 2. Plan for future opportunities.
  - 3. Prepare staff to expect and embrace change.
  - 4. Give them the tools to address the changes.
- D. Be willing to expand your ministry:

1. Benevolent ministries create a desire to expand to help in other ways.
  2. Look for ministries that will compliment your foundational ministry.
  3. Expansion of SMCH to create Care Campus.
    - a. Just For Kids Learning Center
    - b. Widows Ministry Center
    - c. Foster Family Care
    - d. Operation Compassion Warehouse
- E. Spiritual covering is essential:
1. Church must be involved in benevolent ministries.
  2. Must continually be addressed by the church.
    - a. SMCH staff is involved at Parkway church.
    - b. Attempting to become more organized in recruiting and training church volunteers.
    - c. Identify needs to congregation.
  3. We are developing strategies to address the spiritual needs more directly

## **II. Iris B. Vest Widows Ministry Center**

- A. Mission: The Widows Ministry Center is committed to the scriptural mandate of honoring and caring for the widow while serving as a resource and template for other ministries through practical teaching on how to find, minister, and empower the widow.
- B. Birthing of a Ministry:
1. Began as a dream—the envisioning of women and children walking hand in hand on the campus of the Smoky Mountain Children’s Home—a match made in heaven.
  2. Nine years later—The Church of God, major donors, and private foundations helped finance this new concept in ministry.
  3. Because there was no other prototype or ministry of this kind in the United States, it became a day-by-day journey with the Lord.
  4. The Widows Ministry Center was completed in 2003.
- C. The Center:
1. On the campus of the Smoky Mountain Children’s Home.
  2. Forty-one suites available to widows.
  3. It is a lovely edifice including a chapel, dining room, beauty salon, six common areas, exercise room, and laundry facilities.
  4. Two respite rooms are available for widows in acute distress.
- D. The Widows:
1. The widows at this center qualify in several different ways.
    - a. First and foremost ... widow in distress.
    - b. Church of God minister’s wife.
    - c. Church of God member’s wife.

- d. Missionary widows
  - e. Widows who have spent their lives in ministry
  - 2. Independent living facility.
  - 3. Ability to pay basis—no widow is turned away due to finances.
- E. Ministries on Campus:
- 1. Cottage grandmothers—intercessors for the children, house parents, and foster parents.
  - 2. Tutoring—every school day the widows are committed to spending the afternoon with their student—results are astounding.
  - 3. Soup kitchen—widows help serve weekly in the soup kitchen on campus for the hungry in Sevierville.
  - 4. Projects for SMCH - Campbell soup labels, mending of bears, etc.
  - 5. Corporate prayer meeting weekly for the campus and their needs.
  - 6. Widows spend time at the Day Care on campus with the children.
  - 7. Spontaneous time with the children, being on the same campus ... this makes it possible.
- F. Training:
- The campus finds itself working together to train interns, new ministry leaders, and ministers in this new, exciting concept of care ministries.

### **III. Operation Compassion Warehouse**

- A. Educate, Educate, Educate!!!
- 1. Discover the need of your particular neighborhood.
  - 2. Who is in need?
  - 3. What is already being done?
  - 4. Who is already meeting these needs?
  - 5. How can my group help?
- B. Do not reinvent the wheel.
- 1. Find local ministries that are already working in benevolence.
  - 2. Partner with those with experience.
  - 3. Offer to let them use your facility.
  - 4. Encourage your members to get involved outside your church in other civic organizations.
  - 5. If there is a need in your community that is not being met start a new work.
- C. Network:
- 1. Thru your involvement in other civic groups, community organizations, and other churches.
  - 2. Community events.
  - 3. Fundraisers.
  - 4. Do not isolate yourselves to **Us and Ours!!**

5. Get yourself, your group, or your church involved in the community outside the walls of your building.

#### **IV. Foster Family Care**

- A. A need in every community:
  1. Mandated by scripture.
  2. The resources are in the church.
  3. Will provide income into church families.
- B. Multiple Ministries:
  1. Requires stewardship.
  2. Requires sacrifice.
  3. Requires solidarity.
- C. Multiple Care Ministry Strategy:
  1. Check out your priorities.
  2. Expand your horizons.
  3. Take inventory of what you have.
  4. Prayerfully research possibilities.
  5. Make a substantial and sustainable commitment.
  6. Remember to follow up, and evaluate.