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Mini-Actors, Mega-Stages: Examining the Use of Theatre among Children and Youth in U.S. Evangelical Megachurches

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Abstract

How do children and youth first encounter the performing arts? While schools may stand out as an obvious answer, a recent study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education shows that the percentage of public schools offering theatre classes dropped at both the primary and secondary level from 2000-2010 (Brenchley). Yet, even as arts offerings experience a decline in some public schools, many students are being introduced to performance through another venue – the evangelical megachurch.

Since the birth of the church growth movement in the 1970s, megachurches (defined as Protestant congregations that average at least 2,000 weekly attendees) have integrated drama and stage technology into worship services as a way to maintain cultural relevance in their target communities. These tools have also impacted the way megachurches approach their ministry to children and teens.

In this dissertation, I seek to integrate research from the fields of evangelical performance and Theatre for Young Audiences to examine the way churches use theatre as a tool for discipleship and evangelism among their youngest attendees. By visiting evangelical megachurches, observing performances, and meeting with ministerial staff and arts educators from Christian arts programs around the U.S., I examine the way children function as both actors and audience members in weekly educational meetings, large-scale theatrical spectacles, children and youth drama teams, as well as church-based performing arts academies. Through these programs, children not only learn theology but also become active evangelists in spreading the message of faith to others.

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recreation. With regard to the development of social adaptation of the Orenburg population categories that was examined, mai We want our child to be intelligent, clever, and sharp, innit? Children are the Godsend gifts on the earth. Thus, their educational, ethical, and social developments are the priority of the family as well as the state. So, you can't deny the benefits of childhood education, the most important early childhood education. What is Early Childhood? If you want to distinguish the development phases of a child, you will find three broad stages. Early Childhood (birth to 8 years). Among these, early childhood is pretty much vital. This period is very crucial for a child's physical and mental development. It is the time when the blooming of the brain and growth of a toddler is at its peak. Concept of Early Childhood Education (ECE). Early Childhood Education is a branch of education theory.