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I was in the bottom paddock of Kallara trying to play a night-owl's game and they were just not getting it. There were a couple kids set on ruining it for everyone. I was frayed and frazzled.

It was the last night of kid's camp and I'd been burning the candle at both ends. An incident had disrupted us on day one and I couldn't relax back into camp. I had had enough.

I stopped all attempt at fun and marched those kids up for bed. Luckily Kallara has a long driveway. As they timidly followed me up to bed, I knew this was a crummy way to end camp. There were also a number for which this was their last night on their last kid's camp.

Quick change of plans. They had five minutes to be ready for bed then meet me in the west wing. We would try chats. Chats is something we do with the youth. You give them a topic and let them share their ideas and concerns on that topic. It is a chance to learn how to share and listen to opinions respectfully, be vulnerable and learn from one's peers. I didn't know if it would even work with a group this young.

In 15 years of running chats this is the best one I have had. Every one of those kids actively listened and supported their peers. They were vulnerable, authentically sharing what made them angry, what they felt they needed in their live and what was bring them great concern.

And when they turned the last question back on me I told them sometimes I wonder if I'm wasting my time doing children's ministries for a dwindling church where most congregations don't have children associated let alone provide ministries and opportunities for discipleship formation. They took it very seriously. They stared me down and they declared that it mattered to each of them. The church and the ministry it provided to them matter to them.

This month's Herald focuses on these ministries, those to and for kids. It includes some of the ministries that are taking place like the book drive *Books!!!* by Kass Unger, and *Victoria Kids Church* by Emma Ghazarian.

The article by Wendy Ballard explains the sacrament that celebrates the Blessing of Children and I interview Apostle Janné Grover who addresses why spiritual formation is important for children and youth. She shares how congregations can support families and what caregivers can do outside of a church context. Finally we have included a game *The Gratefulness Game* thrown in for a little fun. I hope you enjoy reading!

Kass

