

Why are we making this transition from small group childcare being held at the church to the reimbursement plan?

- **To give leaders and small group participants more flexibility.** Groups can now meet on any day of the week at any time they wish - and are no longer limited to the Sunday/Tuesday evenings when childcare has been available at the church. This also provides better alternatives for families that live and groups that meet far away from the church (Imagine living in and participating in a group that meets in Camden Ridge or on the other side of Opelika. Offering childcare at the church actually becomes more of a barrier to these individuals.)
- **To provide a system of childcare that will accommodate Cornerstone's growth and the future growth of small groups.** If we were to double the number of small group (as we hope to) we would not be able to sustain the level of excellence, funding, space, etc. for childcare. The reimbursement system is one that will better support more people being involved in small groups as the church continues to grow. Our consulting with several other like-minded churches of similar size or larger confirmed this.
- **To be better stewards of Cornerstone's financial resources.** A common problem we experienced in staffing for childcare was that we were often overstaffed. The number of children expected was rarely the same as the number that actually showed up – often much less. For example, we would staff 6 workers for the expected needs when only 3 would end up being needed. The reimbursement system will allow the allocated resources to more precisely match the needs.
- **To save money.** This reimbursement system is intended for those people who otherwise would not be able to participate in a small group. It is our hope that families who do not need this financial support in order to participate in a small group will not take advantage of these resources. (Some may also choose to submit to be reimbursed only every other meeting or only at times needed.)
Going to this system will also eliminate other hidden employment costs that the church incurs with childcare staff (FICA and Unemployment Tax matching, background checks, cost/time of recruiting, screening, interviewing, etc.)
Overall we expect the reimbursement system to reduce costs and while this is not the dominant reason for this change it is a significant one.
- **To free up Cornerstone leadership from time in managing/coordinating childcare, allowing them to invest their time and energy in more meaningful ministry to our children.**

For all the above reasons it is important that we take this step as a church. I ask for your understanding and flexibility as we seek to be better stewards of the resources entrusted to us and move forward with our mission of leading people to know and serve Jesus.

Josh Agerton,
Pastor of Connections