

# KidMin Toolbin equips leaders to build strong kids ministry

*By Megan Young*  
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Formerly a training event for Vacation Bible School leaders, KidMin Toolbin gathered more than 40 children's ministry leaders, teachers, and workers for a new retreat that expanded to include all aspects of children's ministry.

The two-day event, held at Garaywa Camp and Conference Center in Clinton from March 8-9, aimed to train participants in the essential children's ministry tools of leadership, learning, and love.

Comparing leadership to the drive of a hammer and screwdriver, Angie Boydstun, preschool/children's consultant in the discipleship/Sunday School department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, encouraged participants to consider their purpose and mission in ministry.

"So what's your drive? What's your leadership? What is the ministry that God calls you to? What are you leading others to do?" Boydstun asked during the opening session. "Whether they serve with you in children's ministry or they're somebody that you need to be mentoring in children's ministry, you are a leader.

"Often I hear people who serve in churches say, 'Oh, I'm not a teacher, I'm just a helper.' There's a lot of great help that you can give. But if you stand before kids, you are a leader. Leadership is influence. You have the greatest group in the world to influence."

To properly build and develop that leadership, Boydstun used pliers and a wrench to emphasize the importance of children's

ministry workers tightening their qualifications through ongoing education.



Jennifer Howell leads a VBS crafts breakout session during KidMin Toolbin at Garaywa Camp and Conference Center in Clinton.

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Referencing 1 Corinthians 13, Boydston then used a power sander to illustrate the vital role of love in smoothing out the rough edges of serving in children’s ministry so that strong relationships can be built.

“But love hopes that one day we’re going to have the opportunity to reach into those lives of kids and families that are difficult to reach, that are difficult sometimes to love, that are difficult to serve,” Boydston said. “But scripture tells us if we’ll smooth off those edges, then we can believe all things, bear all things, hope all things, we can endure all things like that.”

To develop these essential tools of children’s ministry, attendees were provided with a wide selection of breakout sessions including “Engaging Kids with the Word,” “Keeping Our Ministries Safe and Secure,” “Parent Connections,” “Sharing the Gospel in KidMin,” and “Today’s Kids and the Issues They Face.”

Children’s ministry workers interested in VBS training were also provided with breakout sessions focused on LifeWay’s Breaker Rock Beach.

Combining VBS training with general children’s ministry training in the new KidMin Toolbin retreat was well received by participants.

Connie Gregory, a children’s ministry worker at North Morton Church in Morton, has attended the VBS training for multiple

years. Recently appointed VBS director at her church, she was thankful for the additional children's ministry trainings available to guide her in her new leadership position.

"That helps a lot because sometimes it can be tough when you have a child that'll ask you a certain question, and you've got to pop off something really quickly off the top of your head," Gregory said. "These sessions help with that and give you the tools to do that."

KidMin Toolbin not only equips leaders with the training and tools needed to serve in children's ministry but also helps build relationships and support among fellow ministry workers across Mississippi.

"I hope they took away some knowledge, but I hope they took away some new relationships. It's fun to watch," Boydstun said. "Those guys meeting one another and interacting and meeting the conference leaders who are experienced children's ministers and getting their contact info and saying they'll call them, email them later. So I think we accomplished that."