

EXCLUSIVE RESULTS: A revealing look at what you're worth (to your church)—and how you feel about it

2013

salary

survey

Regardless of vocation, one of the most fretted-over conversations in the professional world revolves around the topic of compensation. The discussion about getting paid what you're worth can be particularly difficult when you're a children's minister, because money talk doesn't always seem spiritual. And it's not the reason you got into this line of work!

The time, love, and continual effort you pour into leading kids and their families closer to Jesus is priceless—and there are likely many grateful families who'd pay you millions if they could! No one we surveyed is making a million! The good news is that according to our exclusive survey results, overall visibility, compensation, and benefits are on the upswing for professional children's ministers everywhere.

survey specs

Our 2013 survey was conducted through web outlets from 479 paid children's ministry professionals, most within the United States. This year's survey results reflect a 95 percent confidence and a sampling error range of +/- 4.5 percent.

Annual Earnings

Here's what paid children's ministers reported as their base compensation.

Of those surveyed, **43%** are full-time paid staff and **35%** are part-time paid staff.

	Full Time	Part Time
Less than \$10,000	1% (1%)	25% (27%)
\$10,000 to \$14,999	2% (1%)	25% (20%)
\$15,000 to \$19,999	3% (4%)	18% (23%)
\$20,000 to \$24,999	4% (6%)	15% (14%)
\$25,000 to \$29,999	7% (10%)	7% (8%)
\$30,000 to \$34,999	14% (15%)	6% (7%)
\$35,000 to \$39,999	18% (11%)	2% (3%)
\$40,000 to \$44,999	22% (15%)	(1%)
\$45,000 to \$49,999	12% (11%)	(1%)
\$50,000 to \$54,999	7% (8%)	
\$55,000 to \$59,999	4% (6%)	
\$60,000 to \$64,999	3% (4%)	
\$65,000 to \$69,999	2% (3%)	
\$70,000 or more	1% (6%)	

*(Red) = Percentage in 2008 Salary Survey

“Other staff members have been added at a competitive rate; children's compensation remains low.”

STAYING STEADY

The median full-time salary range remains where it was in 2008, at \$40,000 to \$44,999.

Areas of Responsibility

Paid staff noted their role includes responsibility over the following areas.

Nursery.....	83%
Preschool.....	92%
Elementary.....	94%
Preteen.....	62%
Junior High.....	18%
Senior High.....	13%
Family Ministry.....	35%



Serving in Other Ways

A solid 22% (down from an overwhelming 68% in 2008) of you reported carrying responsibilities that go beyond your areas of ministry.

Benefit Package

As supplements to salary or hourly pay, full-time and part-time paid staffers reported these added benefits:

Continuing education/training allowance	54% (36%)
Book and magazine allowance	50% (30%)
Personal/family health insurance	44% (36%)
Professional supplies allowance	44% (25%)
Pension/retirement contributions	40% (28%)
Contribution to Social Security payment	34% (23%)
Car/travel allowance	31% (21%)
Housing allowance	18% (21%)
Use of parsonage or church-provided residence	3% (3%)

*(Red) = Percentage in 2008

A BENEFICIAL CLIMB

Even though the median salary remained the same from 2008 to present, paid staffers saw a healthy increase in benefits. In 2008, only 36% were offered health insurance—now 44% can access this coverage. Allowances for continuing education and training have risen from 36% to 54%—so chase down those opportunities to learn! And, (sigh of relief for the future) paid staffers who could enjoy retirement contributions rose from 28% to 40%.

SABBATH REST

Days off are always nice; here's what paid staffers averaged for paid time off in 2013.

Personal days = 4
Paid Vacation Days = 12



Other benefits included bonuses throughout the year, funds to attend conferences, complimentary daycare or preschool, gym membership, flexible work hours, cell phones (or phone bill coverage), and laptops.

MINISTRY & Then Some ...

Paying the bills sometimes means another job. Significantly, 35% of you are bivocational, supplementing your income with a second job.

Salary Breakdown

The most common salary ranges of paid children's ministers according to:

GENDER

	Full Time	Part Time
Male 	\$40,000 to \$44,999 (\$47,000)	Less than \$10,000 (\$12,500)
Female 	\$40,000 to \$44,999 (\$37,500)	\$10,000 to \$14,999 (\$17,500)

EDUCATION

	Full Time	Part Time
High School Grad	\$25,000 to \$29,999 (\$17,500)	\$10,000 and below (\$17,500)
Some College	\$35,000 to \$44,999 (\$32,500)	\$10,000 to \$14,999 (\$17,500)
College Grad	\$40,000 to \$44,999 (\$42,500)	Less than \$10,000 (\$17,500)
Some Grad School	\$45,000 to \$49,999 (\$42,500)	\$10,000 to \$19,999 (\$22,500)
Master's Degree	\$40,000 to \$44,999 (\$47,500)	Less than \$10,000 (\$17,500)
Ph.D.	\$35,000 to \$39,999 (\$47,500)	N/A (Less than \$10,000)

EXPERIENCE

	Full Time	Part Time
1 to 2 years	\$30,000 to \$34,999 (\$17,500)	Less than \$10,000 to \$14,999
3 to 5 years	\$40,000 to \$44,999 (\$27,500)	Less than \$10,000
6 to 9 years	\$35,000 to \$39,000 (\$32,500)	Less than \$10,000
10 to 15 years	\$40,000 to \$44,999 (\$32,500)	\$15,000 to \$19,999
16 to 20 years	\$40,000 to \$44,999 (\$47,500)	\$10,000 to \$19,999
20+ years	\$40,000 to \$44,999 (\$62,500)	\$20,000 to \$24,999

YEARS AT PRESENT CHURCH

	Full Time	Part Time
1 to 2 years	\$35,000 to \$39,999 (\$32,500)	\$10,000 to \$14,999
3 to 5 years	\$40,000 to \$44,999 (\$27,500)	Less than \$10,000
6 to 9 years	\$20,000 to \$24,999 (\$22,500)	\$20,000 to \$24,999
10 to 15 years	\$40,000 to \$44,999 (\$22,500)	\$15,000 to \$19,999
16 to 20 years	\$45,000 to \$45,999 (\$22,500)	\$10,000 to \$14,999
20+ years	\$35,000 to \$39,999 (\$22,500)	\$20,000 to \$24,999

CHURCH SIZE

	Full Time	Part Time
0 to 100	\$35,000 to \$39,999 (Less than \$10,000)	Less than \$10,000
101 to 200	\$30,000 to \$34,999 (\$12,500)	Less than \$10,000
201 to 300	\$35,000 to \$39,999 (\$17,500)	Less than \$10,000
301 to 400	\$35,000 to \$39,999 (\$32,500)	\$10,000 to \$14,999
401 to 500	\$35,000 to \$39,999 (\$32,500)	\$10,000 to \$14,999
501 to 1,000	\$40,000 to \$44,999 (\$32,500)	\$10,000 to \$14,999
1,001+	\$45,000 to \$49,999 (\$42,500)	\$10,000 to \$14,999

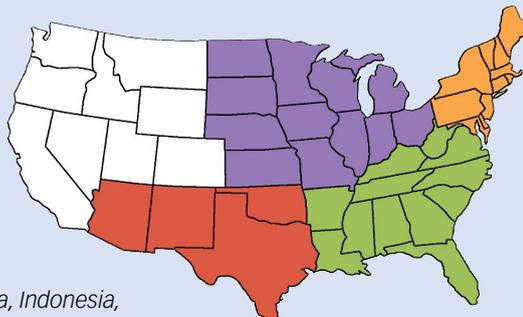
*(Red) = Median Salary in 2008

REGION

 Northeast	Less than \$10,000
 Southeast	\$40,000 to \$44,999
 Midwest	\$10,000 to \$34,999
 Southwest	\$40,000 to \$44,999
 West	\$10,000 to \$34,999

*Other Country \$10,000 to \$24,999

*Other countries included Australia, Canada, Indonesia, Kenya, Kuwait, South Africa, and the United Kingdom.



"I can afford to live like other church attendees because of my spouse's income."

NOTES ON EDUCATION

Children's ministers are a smart bunch. Check out these quick stats:

- 17% hold a degree in children's ministry.
- 50% attend a formal children's ministry training event once a year—up from about 30% in 2008.
- 75% say their church pays for their formal children's ministry training.

CHURCH DEMOGRAPHICS

Here's a sampling of where paid staffers serve:

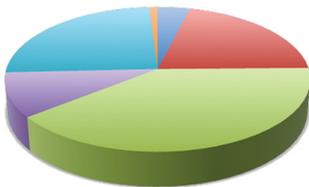
- 67% come from churches with a total weekend attendance of 500 or fewer; 33% have attendance of 501 or more.
- 60% serve in suburban areas; 22% serve in rural areas, and the remaining 18% serve in urban ministries.

Here's the average salary by region from 2008:

New England	\$22,500
Mid Atlantic	\$17,500
East North Central	\$22,500
West North Central	\$32,500
South Atlantic	\$27,500
East South Central	\$32,500
West South Central	\$22,500
Mountain	\$22,500
Pacific	\$22,500

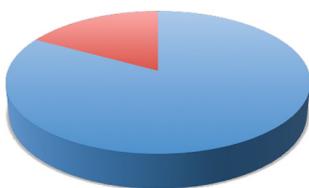
Paid Staff in a Snapshot

Here's a look at the overall demographics of the people who participated in our survey.



EDUCATION

High School Grad.....	4%
Some College	21%
College Grad.....	40%
Some Grad School.....	10%
Master's Degree.....	25%
Ph.D.....	less than 1%



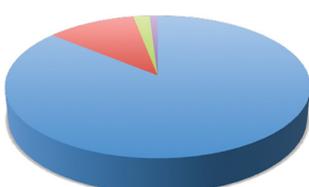
GENDER

Female.....	83%
Male	17%



AGE

Under 25.....	4%
25 to 35	22%
36 to 45	28%
46 to 55	32%
56 to 65	13%
66 and up	1%



MARITAL STATUS

Married.....	86%
Never Married and Single.....	11%
Divorced and Single	2%
Widowed and Single.....	1%

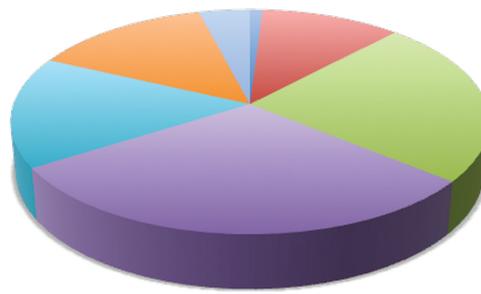
Your Time

We asked paid staff how many hours they work in an average week.

1 to 10	4%
10 to 19	9%
20 to 29	22%
30 to 39	17%
40 to 49	33%
50 to 59	13%
60 to 69	2%
70+	less than 1%

Kids' Attendance

Here's what participants said their weekly attendance reflects.



1 to 10.....	1%	100 to 200.....	16%
11 to 25.....	11%	200 to 500.....	14%
26 to 49.....	24%	More than 500 .	4%
51 to 100.....	30%		

Now That You Mention It...

Your candid answers to our questions on some touchy topics.

Q: Have you been compensated fairly this year?

A: Yes 79% (up from 2008's 64%)
No 21%

Q: Can you afford to live the average lifestyle of an average member of your congregation?

A: Yes 61%
No 39%

Q: Did you get a raise this year?

A: Yes 51%
No 49%

Q: Have you asked for a raise this year?

A: Yes 11%
No 89%

Q: Would you ever turn down a children's ministry position because of salary?

A: Yes 55% (a giant increase from 2008's 14%)
No 45%

"[I'd like to] be compensated the same as the male associate pastors. To be compensated for my education, training, and experience."

"Knowing each child is learning more about Jesus is compensation."

"At my age, I'm debating about getting out of ministry since there isn't retirement and family medical...At some point reality and common sense take over. I don't want to retire with a pat on the back and a can of cat food."

"I could probably earn more elsewhere, but I like the fact that our church puts more money back into the community."

need a raise?

For advice on approaching a compensation conversation, go to Web Exclusives at childrensministry.com.