

The Children's Ministry Scales of Health

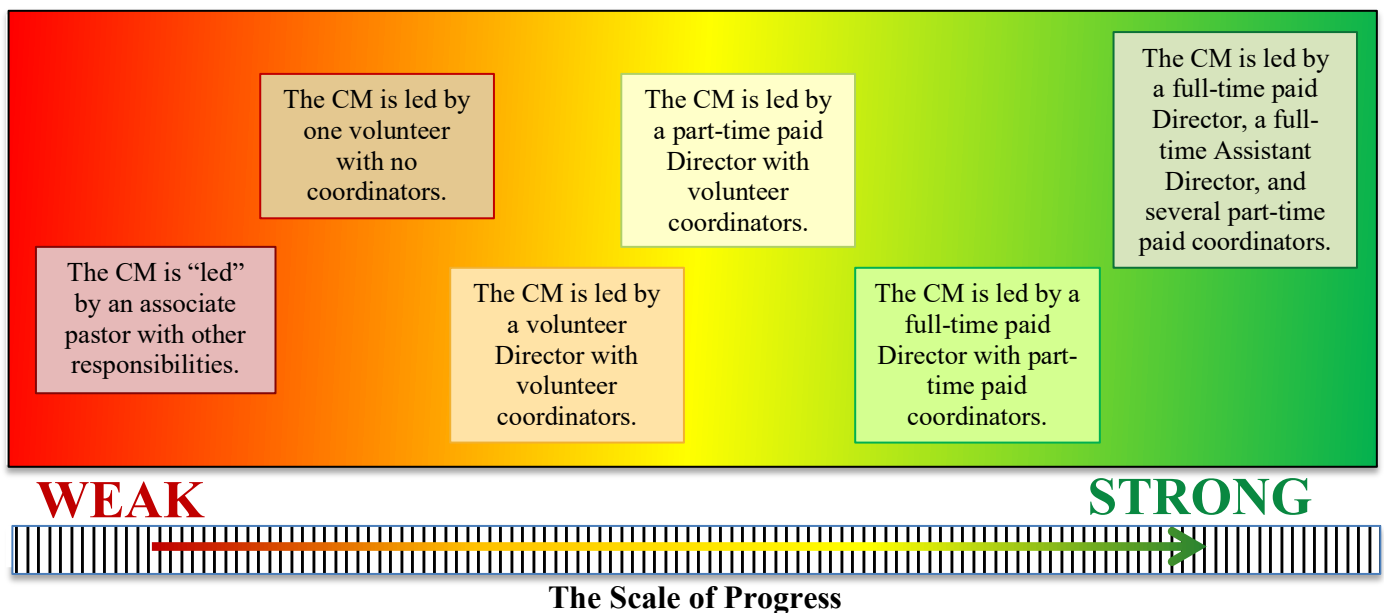
Steve Alley

A "healthy" children's ministry (CM) is built by the Lord working through passionate people who fulfill the CM vision through strong programs and a vibrant team of CM leaders and volunteers. A "healthy" CM is built over time. In the early stages of the ministry, there are few volunteers and only limited programs. As the church grows, the size of the CM team grows along with the number and variety of the programs. Here are some "Scales of Health" that can assist you in building and evaluating the CM "health."

CM Leadership

The most important factor in building the CM is the leadership. Throughout scripture, God blessed or cursed the kingdom of Israel or Judah based on the kings. If the king honored God and obeyed His commands and principles, then God blessed the kingdom. If the king didn't honor God, then they faced significant hardships and war. Who is leading the CM? Is he/she a faithful follower of Jesus?

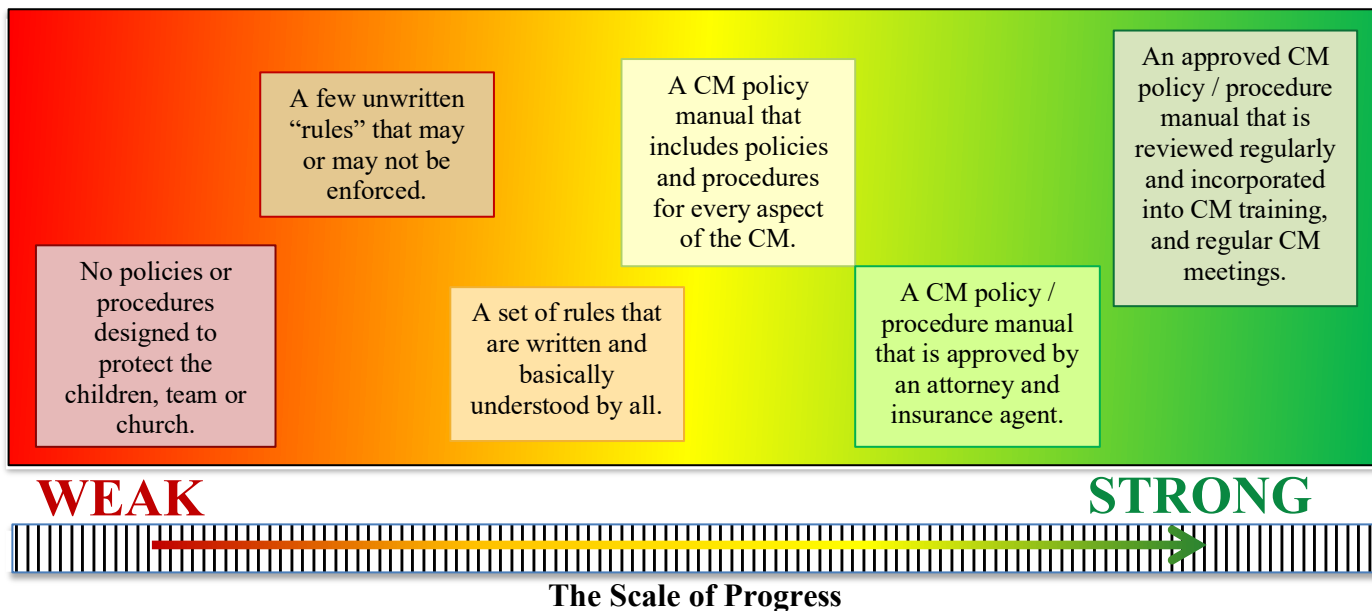
The growth of the CM leadership needs to stay in front of the size of the CM team. The CM team will "grow into" the size of the CM leadership. Many churches wait until they "need" to expand the CM leadership team before they actually do it. This is like waiting until you are burgled before you install a burglar alarm! Add some part-time pay and an Assistant Director BEFORE your current Director goes crazy or before your CM team starts "wilting" due to a lack of personal support.



CM Policies / Procedures

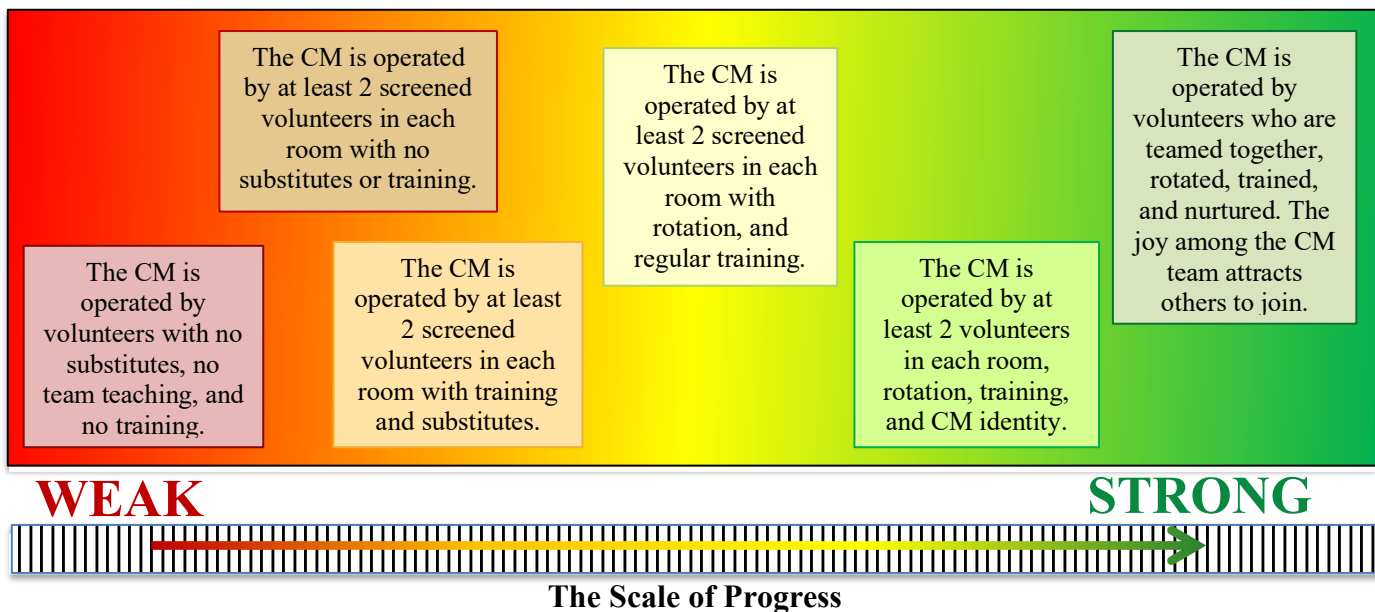
In today's divisive, suit-happy world, you need to do all you can to protect the CM, the CM team, yourself, the senior pastor, and the entire church against the enemy! The enemy is all about causing division and destroying ministries. The enemy is especially focused on what the Church does for the children!

Having strong, protective policies and procedures is much like putting up walls around your home or garden. If you value what goes on in the ministry, you must prevent anything that would damage or destroy it. Policies and procedures protect the ministry from outside and inside threats. Are your children safe?



CM Team

Those who serve on the CM team carry the ministry! In the beginning, there is a desperation that demands someone to "care for the kids." This is important, but the CM shouldn't stay in that "desperate" zone! Building the CM team requires screening, support, training, supplies, and loads of encouragement! The ultimate goal is to have a CM team that recruits for itself! This is like a great restaurant that doesn't have to advertise because the food and service are so good that the patrons tell their friends and family!



CM Programs

A “healthy” children’s ministry (CM) includes just the right balance of programs. This “balance” is made up of the type of programs (large group / small group) and the number of programs. A balanced, healthy CM includes a variety of programs with a balance of fun, interaction, high and low energy, and a strong spiritual/biblical foundation.

A “healthy” CM needs a strong number of screened, trained CM team members. With only a “skeleton crew” of a few volunteers, the CM can only offer large group/multi-age programs. The larger your CM team becomes, the more variety you can offer in your CM programs.

