

Not too long after Ann and I joined Grace, a friend asked us to help with a parent's night out (scary for a newly married guy with no kids yet). Our friend really needed the help - so we said yes. I figured I could be crowd control and Ann (the teacher) would do the hard part. When we got there, we found out we would be working in two different classrooms. I was terrified! I had no idea how to deal with little kids. I mean, I was the fun uncle to a 3 and 5 year old, but there were other "real grownups" there when I played that role. Funniest part of the night was when I asked the kids what kind of dogs they had – expecting them to tell me all about their Labs, poodles or mutts and we could spend a good deal of time discussing it. Of course, I got “Brown dog”, “Black dog”, “we have a white kitty” in about 10 seconds. I made it to the end of the night and none of the eight or so 4-year-olds ran away or were severely injured (although we did have lots of tears when a finger got pinched by the elevator door :) “*Mr Braaaad*” learned a lot that night and actually kind of enjoyed it and I guess God knew what he was doing as 20 years later I am still in children's ministry. I still smile and feel a special tingle when I hear “*Mr. Braaad*” - especially when a kid recognizes me away from church. I am amazed that some of the kiddos I have taught are grown up now! Each year I think about hanging it up but then a new crop of kids come along that I can fall in love with. I think about Jesus saying the kingdom of God belongs to the children and figure I can do it one more year.

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