



Loving on the kids comes easy for Chelle; her hugs keep kids coming back for more. Chelle works with our memory verses and runs a discipleship program before service.

## The List

There is something at our indoor PowerLink sessions that we call “The List.” It is not a good thing to be on. You see there are a few nasty kids among those we work with at PowerLink. Some are girls, some are boys, but most of the tougher cases are older elementary and middle school kids. They are the ones where no matter what you do; they can cop an attitude in a second. You hear, “get your hands off me,” or “you can’t talk to me like that,” or they just give the “look”, also common in their repertoire.

Try as we might, some of these kids make “The List” and are targeted for a visit or a call to the home and possible removal from our services for a week or more. It has worked for the most part, but with all we offer in blessing them, we still struggle weekly with some of the hardcore kids. With all the love we show kids one could easily get a bit bitter at them for appearing to brush it off. Considering whom we are attempting to reach, you could say it goes with the territory. It still is frustrating as we try to make a connection into the lives of messed up kids.

Recently, I have had to ask the Lord to give me a heart of understanding and a passion to continue with some of the tougher cases. He is beginning to answer my request. I was reminded of the living conditions of many of the kids we work with. These are not orderly, sweet smelling, well maintained homes where these kids come from. Many are moving two to four times a year to keep out of reach of landlords and other authorities. Diets don’t consist of healthy choices, but the cheapest way to fill a belly. Some don’t have their own bed. A male figure in their lives, if present at all, is a sad role model. Some are in homes with more than one family, living with relatives, or even void of an adult because of work schedules or partying.

So when these kids show up at PowerLink what should my attitude be?

Some parents really struggle to make it and do the best they can on very limited resources. Yet, there are a lot of families who have lived in the age of entitlement long enough to know nothing else. Although my anger and frustration with it all may build at times, the children are still looking for love wherever they can find it. I find we need to constantly reload with compassion and be that source of love, Christ’s love, that so many of the kids need. I have to remind our workers what we are dealing with and the struggles these kids may have in their lives. Then, in turn, our workers have been good to remind me of the same thing!

While “The List” will continue to have its place, many times the best solution to nasty situations is to win them with the kind of love and forgiveness that can only come with Christ working in us and through us. Lord only knows I have deserved to be on “The List” a few times myself.

**Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32)**

One of the qualities all those who work with PowerLink have is a love for kids. It comes through loud and clear when we asked them why they like working with PowerLink.



It's fun. It's great working with the kids and feeding them and I know they're going away with a good meal and a smile on their face.  
  
(Marty heads up the kitchen crew)



I like working with the kids and seeing their smiling faces. There is never a time I'm not ready to come to PowerLink.  
  
(Virginia is one of our great cooks)



I enjoy the kids, the workers and working in the kitchen-it's been real rewarding. (Vicki)  
  
An important reason I help at PowerLink is to give these kids a male role model, which many do not have in their home setting. On top of that a Christian male role model...I also hope to instill in the kids the idea of a man as a teacher...I enjoy working with the kids and planting some good seed in their lives.  
  
(Vicki works with the kitchen crew and Glen is a great teacher)



I enjoy working with the kids. I do it out of obedience to God because He says we should spread the Good News and it's probably one of the simplest ways to evangelize. We need to get the kids when they are young and plant seeds so when they are older they won't depart from it.  
  
(Kevin refs basketball, teaches and is on PowerLink's board)



Like everyone I come for the kids. As a Christian I like to talk to the kids about Christ and show a positive example. Maybe they listen, some do, some don't, but at least we put the Word out there for them.  
  
(Pat has been a faithful basketball ref)

### Cuba Here We Come

The plan is to walk through an open door that gets us involved with children's ministry in Cuba in the next month. We will have to enter via Mexico. We appreciate your prayers for safety, wisdom, and visa access upon arrival. We will give you a report sometime in May!