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A Survey of State Convention Royal Ambassador Leaders

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Introduction

At the request of the Missions Education Team, a telephone survey of state convention Royal Ambassador (RA) leaders was conducted by Strategic Planning Support in April 1998. The goal of this survey was to identify the critical issues of the Royal Ambassador missions education program in local churches.

Royal Ambassadors is a program of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention, but was previously coordinated through the Brotherhood Commission. Royal Ambassadors was developed to provide missions education for boys in local Southern Baptist congregations. Currently, there are only about 5,000 congregations ordering RA materials; therefore, only 1 in 8 of all Southern Baptist congregations uses the missions education material created to support the program. Some relevant questions for this low usage rate focus upon cost, level of leadership involvement, and program complexity.

It was decided that conducting a mail survey of a sample of congregations would be too costly in both time and money. In order to achieve an acceptable number of responses from congregations using RA material, all Southern Baptist congregations would need to be surveyed.

The alternative approach taken to evaluate the Royal Ambassador program was to survey the leaders involved in supporting men's ministries in each state convention. This approach is more easily managed and a better response rate is achieved. The problem with this method is that the reality of the effectiveness of the RA program on a local congregation level may be different than the state RA leader's perception. However, it was felt that these leaders could give adequate information about the current state of RAs in their conventions.

The Missions Education Team provided a directory of state Brotherhood, Baptist Men's, and Men's Ministry leadership. Each state convention leader responsible for RAs participated in the survey, for a 100 percent response rate—a total of 40 respondents.

This survey not only examined the RA program in state conventions and local Southern Baptist churches, but also compared RAs to other popular programs offered by churches. Royal Ambassadors is a missions education and involvement program for boys ages 6 to 11, or grades 1 through 6. Other programs that were examined include: EZRA—a less complicated RA format; and MissionKids—a coeducational missions education program. RAs, EZRA, and MissionKids are all produced by NAMB.

Programs produced by other entities were also examined. Children in Action is a program sponsored by the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU). This program provides coeducational missions education material for grades 1 through 6. TeamKid is produced by LifeWay Christian Resources and is a discipleship program for children. Finally, an interdenominational group located in Illinois produces Awana. This material focuses on Bible memorization and creates church-based children's clubs.

Analysis

A series of questions was asked to probe the state RA leaders' perception of critical issues regarding missions education for boys. The survey instrument is found in appendix A. Some respondents did not answer all questions (primarily because they were new to the position and therefore declined to answer).

The first question attempted to identify what the state RA leaders viewed as the components necessary for conducting a successful Royal Ambassador program. All responses to this question are included in table 1, while figure 1 displays the percentage of respondents indicating a component is critical to the successful implementation of the RA program. Almost all RA leaders (95%) reported that studying missions was a critical component of RAs. Four out of 5 respondents (80%) said that hands-on mission projects were critical. These two elements are the heart of RAs. While not rated as critical, components that scored lower were still mostly regarded as "somewhat important." These components could best be described as support activities and not central to an RA program. The support items that scored highest were camping, sports, and crafts, respectively. These components could be construed as having secondary value and were seen as ways to reinforce mission learning.

All listed activities had some importance to the overall Royal Ambassador program and related directly to the primary elements of studying missions and hands-on mission projects. These two core components focus on the heart of RAs—learning and being on mission.

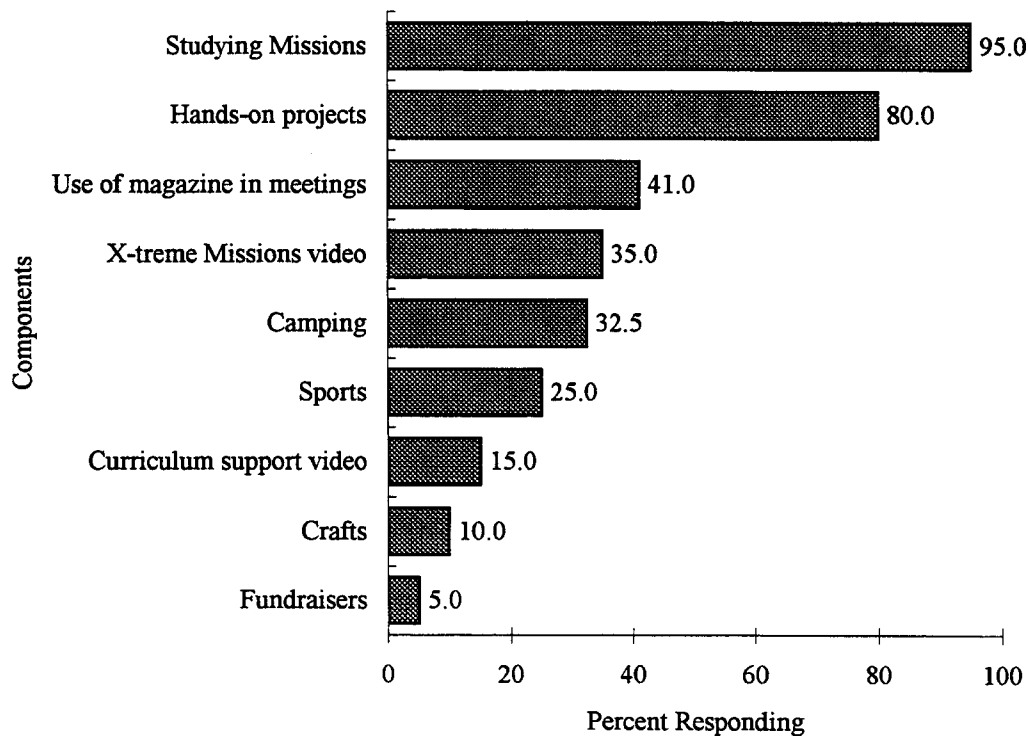


Figure 1—Components of Royal Ambassador Programs Rated as Critical.

One component that RA leaders were divided on was the use of fundraisers. Half of all RA leaders felt fundraisers were somewhat important; yet, a third of the leaders disagreed saying fundraisers were not very important (see table 1).

Table 1
Rating of the Components of Royal Ambassadors

Component	Critical	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Don't Know	Total
Number of Respondents					
Studying Missions	38	2	0	0	40
Use of <i>Lad</i> and <i>Crusader</i> magazines in meetings	16	19	2	2	39
Hands-on mission projects	32	7	0	1	40
Fundraisers	2	20	14	4	40
Crafts	4	34	2	0	40
X-treme Missions video	14	18	1	7	40
Curriculum support video	6	17	3	14	40
Camping	13	26	1	0	40
Sports	10	26	4	0	40
Percentage of Respondents					
Studying Missions	95.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Use of <i>Lad</i> and <i>Crusader</i> magazines in meetings	41.0	48.7	5.1	5.1	100.0
Hands-on mission projects	80.0	17.5	0.0	2.5	100.0
Fundraisers	5.0	50.0	35.0	10.0	100.0
Crafts	10.0	85.0	5.0	0.0	100.0
X-treme Missions video	35.0	45.0	2.5	17.5	100.0
Curriculum support video	15.0	42.5	7.5	35.0	100.0
Camping	32.5	65.0	2.5	0.0	100.0
Sports	25.0	65.0	10.0	0.0	100.0

Training is important for conducting a successful Royal Ambassador program. Since the Royal Ambassador programs in churches cannot exist without trained volunteer leaders, in question 2 the state leaders were asked to rate various training options as “critical,” “somewhat critical,” “not very important,” or “don’t know.” Responses to this question are included in table 2. Seven out of 10 leaders stressed the need for expense-paid training at NAMB.¹ The next most favored option, selected by over half of all RA leaders, was training modules provided by NAMB. The desire for a regional consultant (with partial expenses paid) at NAMB was the third most favored selection. Options for providing a free training video and simplifying the curriculum tied for fourth place.

¹ All leaders rated this item as either “critical” (70%) or “somewhat important” (30%).

Table 2**Rating of Training Related to Royal Ambassadors**

	Critical	Somewhat Critical	Not Very Important	Don't Know	Total
Number of Respondents					
Free training video produced by NAMB	21	14	0	5	40
Field-servicing by NAMB personnel	19	17	3	1	40
Regional training events led by NAMB personnel	12	20	7	0	39
Training for regional consultant at NAMB with partial expenses paid	22	15	2	1	40
Expense paid training at NAMB for state directors	28	12	0	0	40
Training modules provided free by NAMB	22	17	1	0	40
Simplified curriculum that requires little training	20	15	4	1	40
Percentage of Respondents					
Free training video produced by NAMB	52.5%	35.0%	0.0%	12.5%	100.0%
Field-servicing by NAMB personnel	47.5	42.5	7.5	2.5	100.0
Regional training events led by NAMB personnel	30.8	51.3	17.9	0.0	100.0
Training for regional consultant at NAMB with partial expenses paid	55.0	37.5	5.0	2.5	100.0
Expense paid training at NAMB for state directors	70.0	30.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Training modules provided free by NAMB	55.0	42.5	2.5	0.0	100.0
Simplified curriculum that requires little training	50.0	37.5	10.0	2.5	100.0

Questions 3 and 4 asked how complicated the classic RA program and the EZRA program were to conduct (see tables 3 and 4). Slightly more than half of the leaders (54.1%) thought the classic RA program was just right. The EZRA program, a simplified version of RAs geared to boys ages 6 through 11 years of age, had a higher approval among state RA leaders. This easy version of RAs was considered just right by more than 4 out of every 5 (84.8%) state RA leaders.

Table 3

Rating the Current Classic Royal Ambassador Program

Response	Number Responding	Percent Responding
Too Simple	1	2.7%
Just Right	19	51.4
Too Complex	17	45.9
Total Responding	37	

Table 4

Rating the Current EZRA Program

Response	Number Responding	Percent Responding
Too Simple	2	6.1%
Just Right	28	84.8
Too Complex	3	9.1
Total Responding	33	

The number of support materials created for use in an RA program has grown dramatically. These materials have also increased the costs associated with conducting RAs in the local church. Yet when asked about the costs of the program, three-fifths of the leaders stated that RAs is fairly priced (see table 5). However, one-fifth thought it was over priced while another one-fifth felt the program was a bargain.

With the long product line of support materials available to churches, it is not surprising that over two-thirds (67.6%) of respondents felt the level and amount of materials was satisfactory (see table 6). What is surprising is that 26.5 percent of the state RA leaders felt there were too few support materials available.

Table 5

Pricing of Current Royal Ambassador Program

Response	Number Responding	Percent Responding
Over Priced	7	19.4%
Fairly Priced	22	61.1
A Bargain	7	19.4
Total Responding	36	

Table 6

Number of Available Support Materials for Royal Ambassadors

Response	Number Responding	Percent Responding
Too Numerous	2	5.9%
Satisfactory	23	67.6
Too Few	9	26.5
Total Responding	34	

Respondents were asked to rate various support materials as to their relevance for RA programs being conducted by their churches (see table 7). The scale ranked the items as “critical,” “somewhat important,” or “do not use.” The items that were perceived as being the most critical were the awards—patches, pins, and certificates, respectively. While passports and shields were seen as being “somewhat important” by three-fifths of these leaders,² almost 60 percent (59.5%) said their churches did not use the motivational toys.

Table 7

Relevance of Various Royal Ambassador Materials

Material	Response			Total Responding
	Critical	Somewhat Important	Do Not Use	
Number of Respondents				
Motivational Toys	2	13	22	37
Passports and Shields	4	21	11	36
Patches	19	16	2	37
Pins	15	20	2	37
Certificates	13	19	5	37
Percentage of Respondents				
Motivational Toys	5.4%	35.1%	59.5%	100.0%
Passports and Shields	11.1	58.3	30.6	100.0
Patches	51.4	43.2	5.4	100.0
Pins	40.5	54.1	5.4	100.0
Certificates	35.1	51.4	13.5	100.0

² Only 11 percent felt these items were critical.

In question 8, the state RA leaders were asked to review a list of items that were of concern to missions education workers. Figure 2 graphs the percentage of respondents answering “yes” to any item where they have experienced difficulty. The top three areas of concern were recruiting workers, retaining workers, and training workers. These issues may be reflected in the fourth highest ranked answer—apathy toward missions education.

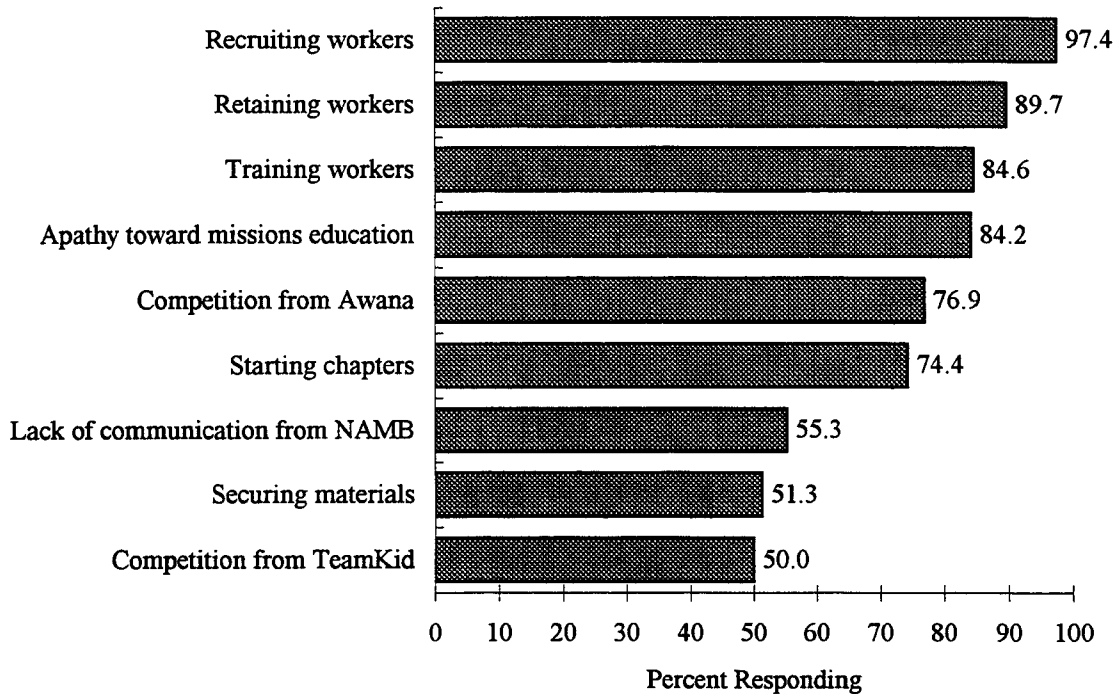


Figure 2—Problems Related to Conducting a Successful Royal Ambassador Program.

Table 8

Popularity of Various Expressions of Royal Ambassadors

Expression	Existing Churches		New Congregations	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Classic RAs	12	31.6%	2	6.3%
EZRA	4	10.5	15	46.9
An adaptation/variation	22	57.9	15	46.9

Table 8 shows the relative popularity of current expressions of RA programming used in local churches. While about a third (31.6%) of the existing churches in the states used the classic RA program, most new congregations (93.8%) were using EZRA—or an

adaptation of the two programs. Even among existing churches, an adaptation of the two programs was favored by nearly three-fifths of the congregations.

Table 9 examines the MissionKids level of success. MissionKids, a coeducational missions education program developed by NAMB, was compared to RAs, Children in Action, and Awana. About half (46.7%) of the respondents reported that MissionKids was doing as well as RAs. A full three-quarters (75%) of all respondents said MissionKids was fairing either better than or as well as Children in Action. However, almost three-fifths (57.1%) of these state RA leaders reported MissionKids was doing worse than Awana.

Table 9

MissionKids Success Compared to Other Children's Missions Education Programs

Program	Better Than	Same As	Worse Than
Number of Respondents			
RAs	7	14	9
Children in Action	7	8	5
Awana	4	8	16
Percentage of Respondents			
RAs	23.3%	46.7%	30.0%
Children in Action	35.0	40.0	25.0
Awana	14.3	28.6	57.1

State convention leaders were asked to prioritize missions education programs in their state by frequency of occurrence. Respondents were read a list of five mission programs and were asked to rank them from one to five, with one being most frequently used in the state and five being least frequently used. A score was assigned to each program based on the rankings supplied by each respondent. Programs ranked first were assigned a value of 4; those ranked second were assigned a value of 3; those ranked third, a 2; those ranked fourth, a 1; and those ranked fifth, a 0. These scores were totaled for all respondents and included in Figure 3. Overall, classic RAs was the most frequently used program in the various states for boys missions education. Following RAs were Awana, EZRA, Children in Action, and MissionKids. There is some discrepancy in the data between the two questions. The first question asked to compare MissionKids to other programs, including RAs. Half of state convention leaders said MissionKids was doing as well as RAs; but when given the opportunity to rank various programs, MissionKids was listed next to last in popularity. It seems most state RA leaders have a difficult time distinguishing between programs like Children in Action and MissionKids.

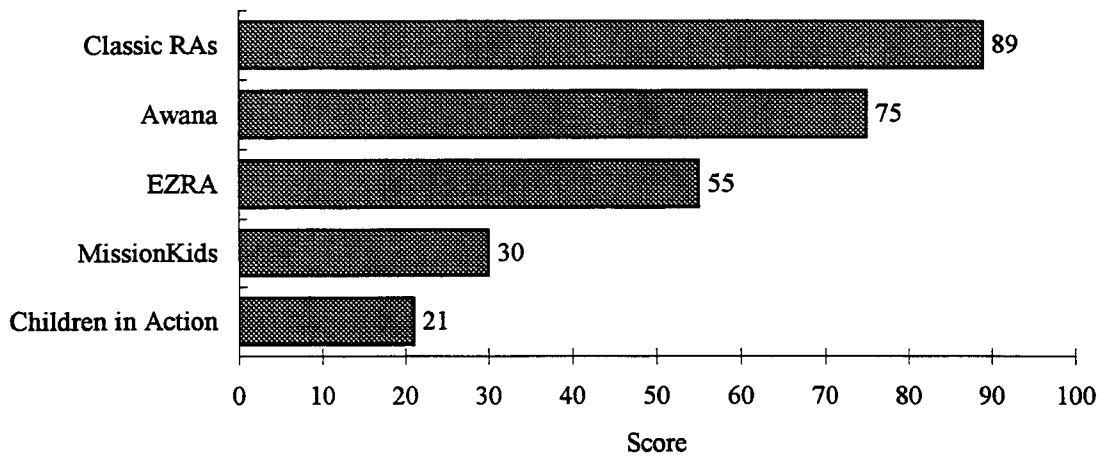


Figure 3—Ranking of Various Children’s Programs in Churches.

Even though RAs was the most widely used program, state leaders acknowledged that Awana had a strong following. While the trend to have RAs is encouraging, competing programs have diluted its impact and have become substitutes for a primary missions education program for boys.

Respondents were asked a series of questions about Internet access, customer service, associational training, and enlargement campaigns. Responses to three of these questions are included in table 10. RA leaders were asked whether they had access to the World Wide Web. By an overwhelming margin (85%) they did have access. The Internet may be a very good communication tool for these leaders, and can be used to inform them about resources and training events.

Table 10

State Royal Ambassador Leaders' Communications

	Yes		No		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Access to World Wide Web	34	85.0%	6	15.0%	40
Difficulty with Customer Service	19	51.4	18	48.6	37
Training with Associations	25	65.8	13	34.2	38

Respondents were asked whether their churches experienced difficulties with customer service when ordering missions education materials. About half of the respondents reported their churches had difficulty with customer service. This difficulty may stem from the fact that the churches were not aware that all missions materials are to be ordered from LifeWay Christian Resources. Hopefully, the customer service problems will be resolved as more churches become aware of this centralized ordering.

State RA leaders were asked whether they had conducted training with the associational missions educators in their state. About two-thirds of the state RA leaders reported they had done so. Evidently they are trying to communicate with constituents in their state conventions.

The last of these four miscellaneous questions queried about the date of their most recent enlargement campaign. It is disturbing to note that only 9 of the 40 respondents had even conducted an enlargement campaign. Of those that were conducted, all were within the past year except one.

Another area of concern is half of all state RA leaders were not involved in the RA program at their church (see figure 4). In fact, most reported that the church they attend does not have an active RA program. Only slightly less than one-quarter of these state RA leaders were “very involved” in RAs in their own home church. Two-thirds of the leaders who had conducted an enlargement campaign were also “very involved” in RAs in their home church.

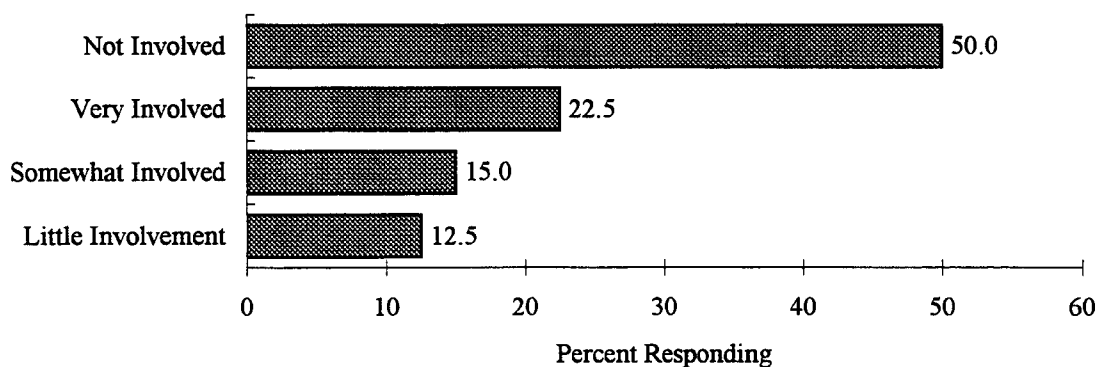


Figure 4 — State Royal Ambassador Leaders Level of Involvement in Their Home Church.

Two open-ended questions were asked of the state RA leaders. From the first, “What is your vision for RAs and/or children’s missions education in your state?” two paramount issues emerged: (1) these leaders had a strong desire to have more of their churches participating in children’s missions education, and (2) they wanted missions education to move toward more experiential learning. Although other issues were present, the focus centered upon the two presented here (see appendix B for verbatim responses).

The second open-ended question asked “Is there anything you would like to tell us concerning missions education for boys in your state?” Concerns raised by the state leaders were the poor communication by NAMB during the past year and the difficulty ordering materials due to changes in that system (see appendix C for verbatim responses). With many competing programs and new materials being developed, some of the leaders seemed overwhelmed. As one leader stated: “Several churches have moved to Awana because of all the changes and lack of materials! Church staff are not knowledgeable about the RA program and/or children’s missions. We are very frustrated about not having ‘current’ materials! We have printed our own materials independently from NAMB. There is a great urgency for promotional information (like EZRA, Mission Kids). We have nothing to put in their hands right now from NAMB.” According to these leaders, simplicity and communication may be the key in revitalizing RAs among Southern Baptist churches.

Conclusion

Has Royal Ambassadors fallen out of favor among Southern Baptist congregations? Maybe so. Certainly the original program has suffered in recent years. However, the intent—missions education for boys—continues to be a priority, although perhaps misplaced.

There are two questions that need to be asked: (1) Has missions education for boys been unintentionally de-emphasized due to the urgent priority of other tasks? (2) How can churches best be served so they can provide quality missions education? Answers to both questions may begin to expose the heart of the problem related not only to lack of missions education for boys in local churches, but also other educational areas where the local church may have difficulty.

According to the survey, RA leaders are not as involved with the program as they should be. Most of them have multiple roles to fill and other priorities consume the bulk of their time. In state conventions where the RA program was the primary (or often the only) task assigned to the leader, the program seems to be flourishing. As fewer churches start or even maintain their current RA chapters, the problem will only become more acute. With fewer churches involved, there is less emphasis by state and national leaders on continued support, and less emphasis means fewer resources and lower levels of participation. The problem becomes exacerbated.

This scenario is also played out on the local-church level. Easy answers to the diminished role for RA chapters in local churches are hard to find. It first must be understood that maintaining RA chapters is a small component of a church's overall ministry. RAs should focus itself on strengthening boys to be on-mission Christians. Helping boys through conducting hands-on mission projects and nurturing them to be the next generation of on-mission leaders in our churches, should be a priority. Churches need to be involved in any process that attempts to modify or strengthen the role of RAs. Without input from local churches the program may continually be modified or rejected by those same local churches and, therefore, the program loses its effectiveness.

As you read the comments of state RA leaders in the appendix, a sense of the magnitude of the problem begins to unfold. For some, missions education for boys is their heart cry. For others, RAs may have become another item that divides their time and energy. The need for having some form of missions education should not be burdensome. Since missions is our passion as Southern Baptists, then effective missions education should fuel that passion. The reality remains, an investment needs to be made now in order to prepare on mission leaders for tomorrows on mission church.

Appendix A

State RA Leaders Survey

Hello, my name is _____. I serve in Strategic Planning Support at the North American Mission Board. We are conducting a survey of State Convention leaders who are responsible for the RA program. The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete and your responses will be confidential. Is this a good time for you or should I call back later (ask for a date and time)? Good, let's begin.

1. I will read a list and ask that you rate these components of RAs using the following responses—critical, somewhat important, not very important, or don't know.

	Critical	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Don't Know
Studying missions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of <i>Lad</i> and <i>Crusader</i> magazines in meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hands-on mission projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fundraisers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crafts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
X-treme Missions video	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum support video	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Camping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Again, I will ask you to rate the following aspects of training to you as a state leader using critical, somewhat important, very important, or don't know.

	Critical	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Don't Know
Free training video produced by NAMB	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Field-servicing by NAMB personnel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regional training events led by NAMB personnel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training for regional consultant at NAMB with partial expenses paid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expense paid training at NAMB for state directors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training modules provided free by NAMB	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Simplified curriculum that requires little training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. In your opinion is the current classic RA program:

too simple just right too complex

4. In your opinion is the current EZRA method:

too simple just right too complex

5. In your opinion is the current RA program:

over priced fairly priced a bargain

6. Are support materials for RAs (e.g., books, brochures):

too numerous satisfactory too few

7. Please rate the relevance of these materials to the RA programs of churches in your state:

	Critical	Somewhat Important	Do Not Use
Motivational toys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Passports and Shields	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Patches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pins	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certificates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. I have a list of items where most missions education workers have encountered problems. Please respond yes or no. Have you experienced difficulty with:

	Yes	No
Recruiting workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retaining workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Starting chapters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Competition from Awana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of communication from NAMB	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Securing materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Apathy toward missions education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Competition from TeamKid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Which of the following expressions of RAs do you believe is the most popular in your state among existing churches?

Classic RAs
 EZRA
 An adaptation/variation of Classic RAs or EZRA

10. Which of the following expressions of RAs do you believe is the most popular in your state for new congregations:

- Classic RAs
EZRA
An adaptation/variation of Classic RAs or EZRA

11. How is MissionKids faring in your state, as compared to:

- | | Better | Same | Worse |
|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| RAs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Children in Action | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Awana | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

12. I will read you a list of childrens missions education programs. Please indicate which one is the most frequently used in your state. (Repeat the list) Of the four remaining programs which is the next most used? (Number the items with 1 being the most frequently used and 5 being the most infrequently used).

- _____ MissionKids
_____ Children in Action
_____ Awana
_____ Classic RAs
_____ Ezra

13. Do you have personal access to the World Wide Web (Internet)?

- Yes No

14. Have churches with missions education programs experienced any difficulty with customer service when they order materials?

- Yes No

15. Have you conducted training with the association missions educators in your state (not WMU)?

- Yes No

16. What was the date of your last enlargement campaign?

_____ (year)

17. Please rate your level of involvement in RAs in your home church.

- Very involved Somewhat involved Little involvement Not involved

18. What is your vision for RAs and/or children's missions education in your state?

19. Is there anything you would like to tell us concerning missions education for boys in your state?

Appendix B

Question 18: What is your vision for RAs and/or children's missions education in your state?

Time to update what we are—negative connotation to RA program. Need hands-on missions education to involve the kids.

Encourage every Baptist church to provide missions education for young men. I believe in gender specific groups.

Try to start 10 new chapters in 1998. We have 130 churches with 10–12 chapters currently.

It needs promotion but is growing.

Involve men in boys missions education—stressing hands-on and small groups.

Get more churches involved and stress missions to children.

Get as many churches as possible to get involved.

Preparation for involvement in disaster relief, partnership missions and ministry projects. Hands-on very popular and effective!

Make it so that the boys are challenged to go into the communities and minister.

Based on helping the churches and what is best for each individual church. Some are traditional and many are not. Our leadership doesn't have a history of missions education so we focus on educating them.

Increase RA program with more chapters and concentrate on missions education.

Develop a communication network on the Internet so people are not alone in this. Knowing you are part of a large group helps tremendously.

Mostly respond to requests of churches.

Take EZRA or Mission Kids and make it a club with uniforms etc.

Trying to enlarge missions education.

Open new chapter in each church (80 churches and 5 have programs).

I pray to God that Southern Baptists don't leave the mission emphasis. We are losing our roots if we continue our trend. Our programs need to be stressed not watered down. We

need to call people back to missions like it used to be. Don't stress numbers. Make a more challenging program and don't water it down.

God called me to this mission. We need to continue to increase in numbers in children and leaders.

Hope to continue to teach missions education and get support from our national agency. The future is in RAs/children's missions.

For every boy to have a personal opportunity to know and recognize the importance of missions and that each boy will have the opportunity to know Jesus Christ and to personally know a missionary.

I work closely with the WMU leader and we are planning a Challenger camp this summer. Competition is from Centrifuge and thus we only have 8–10 kids participating usually.

High tech and visually stimulating missions education (on-line) and coeducational.

Let the children know what missions is about, making them aware of what God can do in their lives. By adulthood they will comprehend the importance of missions and be ready for a call to missions.

To provide a greater number of trainers and provide a better model for training. Also, to create enthusiasm about RAs and missions education.

I am not concerned with the name of the program, just the mission emphasis. Would like the children to have a "missions heart".

Get a new staff person to fulfill this role. Right now we are very short handed, we have had a lot of staff resignations.

For men to play a mentor role in the lives of boys with emphasis on finding a place in God's world by using missionaries as examples. Adults model an active Christian walk to the boys and they see how to live themselves. The boys will see that they can make a difference in the world.

More churches involved—hard with small churches, which is what we mostly have.

More hands-on mission projects.

That every church will be aware of and recognize benefits of missions education. More missions education groups will be started for all ages. That men and boys will become more engulfed in missions education.

It is a critical area that needs attention. We are hoping to get an elected man to challenge the churches to improve children's missions.

Would like to see it expand. Each church should use what works for them. We must start out missions education when they are young.

Would like it taught in every church.

To develop a missions education ministry that will include both men and boys that will involve them in both local, national and international missions. Tie it together with WMU to make a seamless missions program.

That every church would get involved in missions education.

To expand the programs.

If we don't have missions education for our children we won't have missionaries. We have a generation of young adults that haven't gone through missions education and thus are suffering the consequences now through their lack of giving and leadership.

For every church with five or more boys to have a missions education or RA program. Also make sure every leader is trained and records are kept accurately.

Like to see a prominent place restored for children's missions education. Install this in as many churches as possible.

Appendix C

Question 19: Is there anything you would like to tell us concerning missions education for boys in your state?

In attempting to order materials through the Sunday School Board, they would not give me a discount because I was obtaining material for a specific church. I would like to see regional RA congresses out in the West. This will increase the national and international awareness of the boys.

The materials produced by NAMB concern the leaders because NAMB is seldom producing gender specific materials anymore. We do not want to see everything go co-ed. We are 90% Classic RAs in our state. When items presented are co-ed we have to decide how to modify our existing programs for co-ed without destroying our established gender specific programs. If we had advance notice of such changes it would help.

Anything with "missions" attached to it are doing better. The key on the Southern Baptist children's ministry in publications needs to be user-friendly (e.g. eye appealing, simplified lesson plan for both the students and teachers).

Co-ed would work better.

Do not like Sunday School Board handling materials. Don't want co-ed programs.

Several churches have moved to Awana because of all the changes and lack of materials! Church staff are not knowledgeable about the RA program and/or children's missions. We are very frustrated about not having "current" materials! We have printed our own materials independently from NAMB. There is a great urgency for promotional information (like EZRA, Mission Kids). We have nothing to put in their hands right now from NAMB.

Rumors say RAs has died but we are trying hard to reeducate people. Need to promote this strongly, especially with the 90th anniversary. Patches were too expensive and are out too late. We ordered our own for under \$1.00 instead of \$2.00 each from the Sunday School Board. Standards should be higher for awards. At Dallas Baptist University only 8 students out of 20 knew what the Cooperative Program was.

Need Spanish material. Make it easier for the leaders in each church and for the children to have Spanish materials instead of a translator.

Communication poor within the last year.

Need RA videos on chapter organization. Put camp craft for RAs back together. Need weekend camp out ideas (through NAMB) as possibilities for churches.

More Awana programs, but EZRA or Mission Kids chosen for missions.

Awana is extremely popular in Illinois, I am trying to push EZRA. Cannot make NAMB meeting, please send data on the results of this survey to me.

Simplify the leaders book. Break down the RA materials into components. Each church is different. EZRA teaching module for RAs works well. The shields etc. don't work well.

Really found the leadership magazines to be helpful and easy to understand.

Wish that the *Crusaders* magazine had the same format as the *Challenger* (e.g. pullout teaching materials and pupils book).

I need to get an update from NAMB what the program is, what is offered. I tried to call to set up training for our association.

We need effective communications between NAMB, associations and churches. Some awareness of available resources needs to be advertised.

I need help training leaders and setting up new programs. I need to know when someone from my state, Arkansas, asks for help and resources.

NAMB is on the right track.

Where do you obtain "Getting Steps"? The invitations to NAMB meetings are received too late and some things are in competition with other important meetings. Event names are changed and we don't know what they use to be and it is confusing (e.g. organization names changed and former classes offered at meetings).

We have increased the amount of Bible use but we need more (e.g. Scripture memorizing increased, this will help with competition from Awana). We need to stress understanding and applying Scripture.

Missions Education needs to be a part of every church and supported by NAMB. There must be a change in the way materials are ordered. Go back to the way it used to be. We must have a renewed visibility for children's missions (e.g. newspaper).

We want simple programs and co-ed programs because we have so many small churches. We emphasize Mission Kids.