



# REACHING OUT TO FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

MARCH 2021



DIocese of TRURO

DISCOVERING GOD'S KINGDOM  
GROWING THE CHURCH

# WHERE TO START

It's always best to start by thinking about why you want to do something and what you want to achieve.

Then look at what is available locally. Where are the gaps in provision?

- Talk to children/carers/parents at the lo-cal school to find out what their needs are and when would be the best time to run a group for the children? Would the adults like to be involved?
- Decide on a suitable warm safe venue with toilets, do a risk assessment.
- Decide who is available to help/run/co-ordinate/staff the session? Discover the gifts they can bring to the sessions. Who needs a DBS check?
- Are there any training needs? There is training available 'Core skills for Children's Workers' and 'Core skills for Family Ministry' as well as bespoke training.
- Decide what resources you need to buy and explore sources of funding.

- Decide on frequency of provision, costs, charging, hospitality, activities.
- Think about what opportunities you are providing for parents and carers to be involved in the faith development of their children. Keep them in touch with what you are doing and send activities home for the whole family to explore.
- Think about communication – how are you going to keep in touch with those attending? Email, Facebook, Twitter, website page – ask what they prefer.
- Build on relationships formed through baptism and links with church/school activities.
- Use Christingle/Crib and other family friendly services to maintain contact.



# PLANNING TO WORK WITH FAMILIES

**Be Intentional.** Make yourself a faith based group from the start.

**Be Inclusive.** Involve the whole family wherever possible.

**Be Prepared.** Send activities and ideas that can be explored by the family at home after each session.

**Be Flexible.** If one family asks about Baptism, explore the concept with the whole group. Could the baptism take place within Messy Church or toddler group?

**Think All Week.** We are encouraged to 'Grow the Church' but that doesn't mean just Sundays. In today's society,

Sundays are not always the best time for families.

**Think Motivation.** Is the intention/ expectation to see families in church on Sunday or can their group be their church?

**Think Church.** If you are expecting families to join you in church on Sunday, what are you offering? What needs to change? How different is it from their group experience?

**Think Social.** Arrange suitable opportunities for all the church groups to come together socially or in worship more than once a year!



# USEFUL RESOURCES

You will find a useful list of links to websites to visit on the **diocesan website** which may help your thinking, particularly about your mission, mission statement, exploring and formulating your vision and lots of practical ideas.

- The Care for the Family organisation produces a Good Practice Guide for parent and toddler group and practical ideas for those starting up a faith based adults, babies and children's group.
- Scripture Union produce a resource for toddler groups Bubbles available to download on their website;
- '1277' is an online ecumenical under fives support network for

church groups and can be found on Facebook and have their own website.

- 'Top Tips on Worshipping with under-5s: practical pointers for anyone working with children' Alison Dayer published Scripture Union 2011—a booklet big on practical advice, but small enough to digest over a cup of coffee!
- 'Pretty much everything you need to know about working with under 5s' Judith Wigley published Scripture Union 2009.
- Diddy Disciples offer worship and storytelling resources for babies, toddlers and young children.

Some session resources are available on loan from Church House.



## GET IN CONTACT

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