



NURTURING FAITH

**WEEKDAY PRESCHOOLS AS A BRIDGE
FOR YOUNG FAMILIES**



HOW CAN WEEKDAY PRESCHOOL AND CHILDCARE PROGRAMS MINISTER TO YOUNG FAMILIES?

1. Young families are not making church a priority.
2. Young adults are less interested in Christianity than ever.
3. Young adults crave authentic community.
4. Young adults are searching for a sense of purpose.
5. Young parents are looking for high-quality experiences for their children.
6. Young families are looking for support and resources to be the best they can be.

HOW CAN THE CHURCH MEET THESE NEEDS?

1. These same young parents are bringing their children to our Christian weekday childcare and preschool programs.
2. We have an opportunity to build a faith foundation in children during the time of optimum brain development as we teach them each day.
3. We have the privilege of consistent “face time” with parents twice daily.
4. Families building relationships with other families leads to lasting friendships and another opportunity for spiritual conversations.

**WE’VE INCLUDED SIMPLE, PRACTICAL, CONNECTION-CENTERED
IDEAS FOR MINISTERING TO YOUNG FAMILIES BY BUILDING
AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS AT THEIR POINT OF NEED.**





SHORT & SWEET IDEAS – MAKE A BIG IMPRESSION IN A SMALL AMOUNT OF TIME

1. **First week of school** – Church staff holds doors and welcomes families into the building for the first few days! Make a GREAT first impression that says “Our church cares for your family and we’re glad you’re here!”
2. **Door Greeters** – Church staff makes an effort to hold the doors and greet families at the main drop-off times. This takes 10-15 minutes of your day. You could create a sign-up schedule for one person per door, pick a specific day of the week, or even just one day each month.

SPECIAL EVENTS – THE PERFECT TIME TO GIVE FAMILIES A LITTLE “FACE TIME” WITH CHURCH STAFF.

1. All **weekday program special events** include moments for church staff to participate in meaningful ways:
 - a. Senior Pastor prays and invites families to upcoming church events.
 - b. Church staff (ministerial and support staff) holds doors and greets families at arrival in order to make meaningful connections in the form of smiles, eye contact, and greeting.
 - c. Church staff (ministerial and support staff) serves families throughout the event – helping with strollers, serving food and drink, etc. Natural conversations will flow and build relationships.
2. All **church events** include an intentional invitation to weekday program families.
 - a. The pastor could record a short video specifically addressing weekday families and inviting them to the event.
 - b. Some events could be incentivized for weekday families – for example, fees could be discounted when using a specific code. This might encourage non-church members to attend an event.



INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP EVENTS WITH PARENTS

1. **Morning Mingle for Moms** – Female church staff members lead a short devotion and prayer gathering to help moms connect to each other immediately after drop-off. Friendships between church members and non-church members can be powerful connectors to the church. This would work great as a quarterly event.
2. **Pastries with the Pastor** – Senior Pastor, Discipleship Pastor, or other ministry staff are present to host a short devotion and prayer time with parents after drop-off. You're creating an opportunity for ministry staff to become familiar faces to school families. This is also a great opportunity for church members to connect with non-church members.

OTHER WEEKDAY IDEAS FOR CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES

1. Create a **Room Parent structure** where you intentionally choose church members as the Room Parent and empower them to build relationships with other parents:
 - a. Playground Playdates after school
 - b. Walking group that sets out from the church after drop-off
 - c. Book clubs or Bible studies or Game nights
 - d. Room Parents invite non-church members to church events – personal invitations are much more impactful than general invitations to everyone.
2. **Involve Senior Adults** in a card-writing ministry to weekday program families and staff.
 - a. Send cards for new babies, birthdays, deaths, and illnesses.
 - b. Send "I'm praying for you" cards just to let parents know that someone cares for them.
3. **Family Picnic** – The weekday program will coordinate a Family Picnic for school families and church staff will attend, participate in serving, and build relationships with families who are present.



WHAT ABOUT WEEKDAY PROGRAM STAFF? THEY NEED CONNECTION TOO!

1. Church staff could rotate leading a **devotion and prayer** time once each month.
2. Church staff hosts a “**back to school breakfast**” (or brunch or lunch) for weekday program staff the week they return to school.
3. Church staff or Senior Adults **write a note** of encouragement to each weekday staff member once each semester.

WHAT'S THE NEXT STEP?

Young families are looking for connection and a sense of community. What better place than the Church to find the only source of true connection and community - Jesus! How have you intentionally connected with the young families in your community? Is your weekday childcare and preschool program ministering to young families as well as the children in your care? How can we help you take the next step?

We'd love to cheer you on, pray for you, and share your ideas with other churches that are hoping to reach young families with the Gospel! And we want to celebrate what God is doing in your community. Connect with us on socials or via email at hello@earlychildhoodchristiannetwork.com.

