

Connecting to the Weekday Ministry of Your Church

Church Ideas

- 1) Raising awareness at every turn will be the most effective way for the church to recognize and value the weekday ministry. Include the weekday ministry in every mention of the church's preschool and children's ministry of your church. The more the church hears from the church staff, especially the pastor, and sees them connecting with the preschool, the more likely the church will take ownership and recognize the preschool as an important ministry. Also, the more the preschool staff sees the commitment to them, the more likely they are to want to connect families to the church.
- 2) The pastor should meet with the director frequently. He should hear her heart and passion for this ministry and learn as much as he can about what the ministry is doing and any needs that they may have. He should make sure to meet the teaching staff, as well. He should make sure they know who he is and know his availability to them. He should regularly thank the director and staff for serving in this extension of ministry of the church. Other staff members should also introduce themselves to the weekday staff. Perhaps this could be done during the workdays before the school year begins. The childhood/preschool minister should have an ongoing relationship with the weekday director and should meet regularly to coordinate and discuss how the two ministries can work together and support each other.
- 3) At the beginning of the school year, have a time in the worship service on Sunday morning in which the weekday staff is recognized and the church prays for them. Have the weekday staff stand before the church, so that the congregation can see who and how many people are involved in this extension of ministry of your church. (Commissioning Service)
- 4) Ask church members to prepare a breakfast or lunch for the weekday staff. Have them write a note of appreciation to the staff or donate "goodies" to pass out to the staff. A note of thanks or encouragement from the pastor would be a great affirmation to the weekday staff. Saying thank you goes a long way to encourage someone, and makes them feel a part of something bigger!
- 5) Be intentional about inviting the preschool parents and families to church events. Vice versa, invite church members to preschool events to connect with the families. This takes ongoing communication and coordination between the childhood/preschool minister and the weekday director.
- 6) The pastor should ask to be included in any program or event that the weekday preschool has. At every event, he should be given an opportunity to introduce himself and invite the weekday families to the church. He should be visible to the staff and the parents and encourage other church staff to also be visible. He should encourage other staff members to connect with the preschool in some way. The childhood/preschool minister should also be in attendance and given an opportunity to address the parents and inform them of upcoming events.
- 7) Have a Sunday dedicated to the weekday ministry. Recognize the staff in worship, have the children sing, and highlight the weekday ministry. Have the weekday staff join with the preschool Sunday school teachers in teaching the children during Sunday school. This will help visiting "weekday children" feel comfortable in the classroom. Provide a time of fellowship or a lunch after worship for church members and weekday families to meet and greet each other. (Could be done as a Preschool Sunday)
- 8) Have Sunday school classes/small groups "adopt" a weekday classroom. They can pray for the teachers and families and possibly assist in the event of a special need (e.g. collect supplies like paper towel rolls; send a card upon birth of a baby, sickness or death of family member).
- 9) The childhood/preschool minister should become acquainted with the weekday staff and know their names.
- 10) As the childhood/preschool minister or church staff, place flowers in the sanctuary in honor of the weekday ministry and staff. This not only calls attention to the weekday preschool as a ministry of the church, but also shows support of and encouragement to the weekday staff.

Weekday Ministry Ideas

- 1) The weekday director should publicize any events, fundraisers or needs that the preschool may have in the church bulletin, newsletter or website.
- 2) The weekday education director should make a report at each quarterly conference to reiterate that the weekday preschool is another important ministry of the church.
- 3) During holidays, have the weekday preschool children make placemats for any meals that will be shared at the church. Also, invite the weekday preschool children to sing with or for a group that will be meeting, such as the senior adults, WMU, deacons, etc. See if there are opportunities to have the weekday preschool children sing at one of the special church events during the holidays. Parents will always come to hear their child sing, and this will get them in the church!
- 4) Have the weekday preschool make cards at Christmas and/or Valentines for shut-ins/nursing home, senior adults, or the pediatric ward at the local hospital. Post pictures on bulletin boards around the church of the children making and holding the cards. You can also submit a picture to the local newspaper. This can be done anytime during the year for any reason (give to senior adult Sunday school classes around Grandparents Day; give to church staff during pastor appreciation month; give to community helpers like fire fighters or police officers to thank them for their service; send to sick church members or shut-ins/nursing homes to let them know they aren't forgotten!)
- 5) The weekday director should invite church members to the preschool to read to the children or share about their occupation. Directors should provide an opportunity for church members to volunteer to serve as substitutes when a teacher is absent.
- 6) Have a designated "chapel" time each week or month with the older preschoolers. Enlist the church ministry staff to take turns leading this special time. It doesn't have to be long (5-15 minutes).
- 7) Have the weekday ministry participate in mission projects of the church (e.g. backpack buddies supplies, Operation Christmas Child boxes, food drive for church pantry, etc)
- 8) Include information on the church website about the preschool, including classes offered, hours of operation, contact information, etc. The preschool website should include information about the church, including times of worship, ministries, contact information, etc. Both websites should make it easy for anyone to find information about the ministries and who to contact for more information. Dual websites should not be viewed as competition for viewers or a power struggle, but as an additional opportunity to reach families.
- 9) Weekday ministry should intentionally invite selected church members to events so that they can meet and greet weekday families. Ask them to assist in the event so that they can become familiar faces and build relationships with weekday families.
- 10) Ask the church about establishing a scholarship fund to help families struggling to make tuition payments. The weekday ministry council should establish guidelines for how the funds will be distributed.
- 11) On the weekday education registration packets, be sure to ask parents if they would like to receive more information about the church. Refer the names and addresses of those who answer "yes" to a church leader (i.e. the childhood/preschool minister) so that they can send them information and follow up with them.
- 12) Invite the childhood/preschool minister to functions of the weekday ministry. This includes both weekday staff events and weekday family events.