



Create a Welcoming Church Environment

Kinship, foster, and adoptive families have needs like any other family that attends your church. They want to feel welcomed and cared for. At the same time, because of the makeup of their families and possible trauma kids in their homes have experienced, there are some unique ways you can show love to this group of families.

Model sensitivity when discussing foster care, adoption, and the families involved. The word “orphan,” referring to adoption as “Plan B,” sermons about “rescuing children” and sometimes even singling out families as “superheroes” can be perceived very differently by children who are being fostered or were adopted.

Provide a family-room worship experience. This could be a video feed into a family-friendly room at church or a live stream of the service into their own family room.

Create a sensory room where children (and adults) with sensory disorders can worship and learn without anxiety-inducing distractions.

Train your team to be trauma-informed. Children and youth ministry staff can learn about the impacts of childhood trauma on the brain and how it impacts responses. Project 1.27 can provide training so that adults can respond appropriately and effectively when kids have trauma responses at church. **Provide a resource list** of books, blogs, podcasts, and videos to help others understand the impact of trauma, grief and loss.

Organize transportation for siblings to attend church services and activities when mom and dad need to remain home with a sibling.

Develop a foster and adoption ministry that goes beyond inspiring families to foster and adopt. Include things like respite care, support groups, mentoring, practical care, trauma-informed parenting strategies and counseling.

For more information and ideas on developing a foster and adoptive culture in your church, contact Project 1.27 at info@project127.org.