



Kids' Night Out

WHO

Kinship, foster and adoptive families, and a willing sponsor church.

Foster and Adoptive parents often face unique challenges as they provide loving and consistent care for children who've experienced severe trauma. Providing a night out where parents can catch their breath and find some grounding helps sustain them as they relentlessly pour into their children's lives. The best part is that the kids are having so much fun they don't realize the evening is also for their parents!

WHAT

This is a night out for kinship, foster, and adoptive parents, during which kids spend supervised time with members of a sponsoring church.

With the opportunity to care for kids, why not go out and offer some fun activities? This may look different depending on your budget, but with Pinterest and Family Time (famtime.com), there are so many opportunities to be creative! Here are just a couple of ideas: • Develop a 15–30-minute rotation of activities: Group game, Bible story, crafts, healthy snacks, etc. • Incorporate sensory-rich activities such as obstacle courses, making slime/play dough, as well as opportunities to sit in a big bean bag chair and play with fidgets. • Be mindful of dietary restrictions and avoid sugar when possible. • Find safe crafts and age-appropriate.

WHERE Does your church have a night or weekend day with available space in the multi-purpose room and Sunday School classrooms? Collaborating with another church to co-host a Kids Night Out can provide access to additional volunteers and resources. If there is an easily accessible Community Center in your area, that may be an option, too.

WHEN



A time that works for families and your church (Hint: it doesn't have to be a night out; it can be an afternoon out, too!)

Would you like your Kids' Night Out event to be a one-time event or a regular break for families monthly, bi-monthly, etc.? You'll need to consider how long you would like the event to last. Typically, 3-5 hours is the best amount of time due to restrictions for children in foster care, energy levels, and recruiting volunteers.

HOW

There are many logistics to consider when planning a Kids' Night Out Event!

Here are a few things to consider:

Volunteers - They will need background checks. If you're holding the event in a church, you must follow the church's policies regarding childcare. We recommend special training for volunteers regarding how caring for kids from hard places might look different. Project 1.27 can provide this trauma-informed training to your volunteers or point you to trusted resources. Depending on the size of your event, you may need A LOT of volunteers. Due to the required child-care ratios, if you have 100 kids, you will most likely need 60 volunteers!

Children served- What ages and how many children would be able to attend this event? Keep in mind that some children will need one-on-one aid. The number of volunteers you can recruit and train will, in part, determine the number of children who can be served. Keep in mind that kinship, foster, and adoptive parents need a break. Make this an event for ALL children in the family, not just those who have arrived through kinship, foster care, or adoption.

Registration- You will need forms to ensure that you receive the necessary parent and child information. Will the child need one-on-one care? Does the child have special needs, allergies, or a diagnosis that the caregivers need to be aware of? Since foster parents will often take in many siblings at once, make sure your registration forms have boxes for many children to be included! Waivers and Liability Releases are essential for parents to sign before dropping the kids off at the event.



Check-In/Out- It's imperative to have a system in place for secure checking in and checking the children out when parents return.

Cost - As you're planning the Kids' Night Out event, you may also consider whether or not there will be a charge for parents to help cover the event's costs. They may pay a flat fee or a fee per child.

This is just the tip of the Kids' Night Out iceberg! You may have other ideas and questions swirling around in your head. If so, please get in touch with Project 1.27 at info@project127.org to talk with one of our staff members about what this event might look like in your church.