



2016 Connection Ministries Workshop

Raising Awareness, Retaining and Recruiting Volunteers and Friends with Disabilities

The best way to raise awareness, and to retain and recruit volunteers, is to create multiple points of entry and give volunteers specific responsibilities.

Typical Roles

- ✓ Large group lesson teachers
- ✓ Music/worship leadership
- ✓ Class administrator(s); track class registration and rosters, attendance, facilitate the phone tree, coordinate events (see separate handout)
- ✓ Groups to supply, serve and provide hospitality for class

Additional Roles

- ✓ Small group discussion leaders
- ✓ Craft/game/lesson activity planner
- ✓ Prayer warriors. Solicit individual church member prayer and be present on the Sunday prayer list.
- ✓ Technology setup up and operation
- ✓ Donors in your church willing to support your ministry
- ✓ Photography; social media and congregation promotion
- ✓ Writer of promotional content
- ✓ Maintain social media content
- ✓ Make costumes
- ✓ Groups to provide food service for special class meals
- ✓ Chaperones or escorts to help friends with disabilities to and from class or special event

- ✓ Someone to coordinate sending cards (old Love Notes Program on a congregational level) to Friends, AND Friends sending cards to members of congregation
- ✓ Form a Friendship Class “Board” – include volunteers and parents to get their input about the class. Perhaps include participant with intellectual disability
- ✓ Provide transportation for Friends that cannot make it to class because of transportation issues
- ✓ Guest visitors to class (missionaries or visiting to role play as a Bible character)
- ✓ Offer puppet ministry
- Social Media
 - Facebook Page
 - ✓ Post to congregation’s Facebook page
 - ✓ Establish a page (group) for the class and invite church members to join
 - ✓ Engage the youth, they are great at social media
- Promotion
 - Create PowerPoint slides to publicize events for use in the sanctuary and fellowship areas.
 - Publicize events in the Sunday bulletin.
 - Connection Ministries can speak at your church; another great way to promote an event.
 - Use bulletin boards in your church to tell the story of your ministry and keep it fresh and up to date.
 - Share stories in the church newsletters, and e-newsletters.
 - Use local media (newspapers, etc)
 - Create a video with photos and short video clips throughout the year to edit into a 3-5 minute video. Put on YouTube and link with social media. Try to show on a Sunday and beginning of class year.
 - Reach out to Best Buddies clubs in schools
- Events are a great way to raise awareness and engage youth, and also introduce new friends with disabilities and their families to your ministry.
 - Invite class to church dinners and events.

- Plan class dinners and events, then invite congregation to help with food and to participate.
 - ✓ First class of season
 - ✓ Before Christmas break
 - ✓ Before Easter break
 - ✓ Last class of season
- Holiday and summer events that engage congregation with friends with disabilities, families and caregivers.
 - ✓ Class Christmas pageant
 - ✓ Prepare eggs for community Easter egg hunt
 - ✓ Summer Friendship Gathering – Invite entire congregation to the final evening worship service
 - ✓ Summer game night for entire congregation
 - ✓ Talent show
 - ✓ Service project with youth
 - ✓ Make a special effort to include the class whenever there is a special event at the church, if possible have performances done for the class as well
 - ✓ Bring your family to events
- Recruiting friends with disabilities.
 - Develop personal relationships with families and caregivers of friends with disabilities. Also build relationships with home supervisors and residential management staff. These relationships will network you into meeting new friends with disabilities.
 - Build relationships with service providers
 - Invite families and caregivers to participate in your class.
 - Take your ministry out of the classroom.
 - ✓ Visit their homes
 - ✓ Attend their events like Special Olympics
 - ✓ Do service projects for their homes
 - ✓ Colts parties after church
 - ✓ Engage youth in joint venture activities with class (also see service projects on page 7)

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All links are available on the Connection Ministries Website on the Curricula and Resources Tab; <http://connection-ministries.org/curricula-resources/>

Lesson Effectiveness

Lesson preparation

- You should be well prepared for teaching your lesson.
 - Consider using a curriculum that provides a simplified Bible text, visuals, application and activities.
 - If you cannot afford a curriculum, find donors in your church that will help with the cost.
 - With a curriculum you will still need to invest time in preparation.
- Work through the Bible text for yourself.
 - What is the text teaching you?
 - What is the central truth in the text?
- What does the group need to learn from the text?
 - List your goals for the study.
 - How should the study influence the students?
 - The lesson needs to be relevant to their lives. How can you apply it to them?
- Plan out the lesson.
 - Plan a learning or object lesson to start the class.
 - Gather visual aids (i.e. PowerPoint images, posters, objects, Biblical visitor, costumes etc.)
 - Let volunteers know ahead of time what lessons are for the upcoming weeks so they can mentally prepare.
 - Crafts should reinforce a lesson (it is okay if it is a simple project that gets thrown away).
- You are a facilitator.
 - Use questions to engage the group.
 - Phrase questions so they are not too open-ended but have more than a simple yes or no answer.

- If a question is answered with a yes or no, then dig deeper and ask why.
- If you are handing out Bibles for your class, consider using the NIRV which is a simplified text. Be sure to use a large print Bible.
 - [Use large print Bibles - NIRV](#)
 - [Have Youth Group do fundraiser for Bibles](#)
- Use simplified terms; not theological terms with complex definitions
- Summarize the lesson in short simple statements, but remember, you are talking with adults not children
- Does your lesson point to the Gospel; the love of Jesus?
 - Old and new testament should point to Jesus and the Good News.
 - The lesson needs to do more than tell a story, it needs to convey the Good News and have application to the group. Will the lesson you prepared accomplish this goal?

Visual Aids and Audio/Visual Equipment

- Projected images with PowerPoint/Keynote will provide large enhanced images for your class.
 - Projector (under \$300), projection screen (under \$200), laptop or tablet (iPad under \$400) will be needed, but the cost has come down considerably over the years.
 - Free Bible Images, <http://www.freebibleimages.org/>
- Microphone and sound equipment are important for soft spoken teachers.
- You can use posters. They do need to be as large as possible.
 - A Beka Book Flash-ACard; <https://www.abeka.com/AbekaOnline/Search.aspx?for=Flash-ACard>
- Illustrated Bible story books
 - The Story Bible; <https://www.cph.org/p-18257-the-story-bible.aspx>
 - The Easter Story; <https://www.cph.org/p-18520-the-easter-story-drawn-directly-from-the-bible.aspx>
 - The Christmas Story; <https://www.cph.org/p-18447-the-christmas-story-drawn-directly-from-the-bible.aspx>

- Drama
 - Biblical visitor can come and tell the story from his/her perspective
 - Have friends with disabilities act out the story in costume. Use a narrator for telling the story instead of asking the person in costume to repeat the story lines. (Many do not read, so a narrator works best)
- Costumes
 - Open front eliminates the need to pull garment over the head, speeds up changing in and out of costume.
 - Oversize costumes to fit all sizes
 - Use wrinkle free fabrics, drapery or upholstery fabric work well
 - Use long rectangle pieces of material for sashes
 - Ropes for belts and to tie off sashes
 - Establish close relationships
 - Be sure to engage the group that does not get in costume for drama
- Puppets
- Small groups for discussion, prayer and fellowship
 - 2-3 volunteers with 3-5 friends with disabilities
 - A good time for lesson activity or craft
 - Volunteer companions plan small group time
 - Establishes close relationships
- Object Lessons, activities and crafts
 - Follow the Connection Ministries Pinterest Board, “Connection Ministries Craft Ideas”
https://www.pinterest.com/eoyer77/connection-ministries-craft-ideas/?fb_ref=312367061563096079%3A31602a97cdf060fd1a31
 - Share your ideas with photos and we will post them to the Pinterest board.
 - Use object lessons to illustrate concepts as part of large lesson
 - Activities and crafts can be part of small group time
 - You can Google “Bible Object Lessons”
 - Pinterest has ideas

- When role playing, be sure to explain this is an act, it is not real
- Have a regular time to spotlight Friends and the things they are involved in.
- “Ministry with;” What does it mean? Webster defines “ministry” as tending to the wants and needs of others
 - How can we create opportunities for our friends with disabilities to minister?
 - Service projects
 - Give them opportunity to pray
- Take a Collection each week, let them decide where \$\$\$ goes.
- Pick a missionary family, local mission, or overseas mission but keep them engaged in where money is going and how it is used. If missionary visits church, have them also visit the class.
- Take on a joint venture with youth or other groups in the church
 - Health kits for homeless
 - Shoe Box supplies
 - Back packs with school supplies
 - homeless shelter, etc.
 - Engage the youth with project.
 - Use Thrivent Action Team Grant (250) to buy supplies
- Just like youth have a “Youth Sunday”, have a Sunday where class gets involved as ushers, music, testimonies, etc.
- Bible game night for review – Google search each category. Games can be printed or played online
 - Memory verse puzzles; <https://fervr.net/youth-group/16-games-and-ideas-to-help-memorise-the-bible>
 - Crossword puzzles; <https://fervr.net/youth-group/16-games-and-ideas-to-help-memorise-the-bible>
 - Word search; <https://fervr.net/youth-group/16-games-and-ideas-to-help-memorise-the-bible>
 - Bible jeopardy online; <http://www.christianity.com/trivia/jeopardy/categories/>
 - Bible trivia online; <http://quiz.christiansunite.com/>
- Have a 15 minute social time before class

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Administration

Each class should have a person(s) gifted for administration. It is important to track class registration, rosters, attendance, facilitate the phone tree when class is cancelled, and coordinate events

- Send invitations to participants at the beginning of the season, encourage families, caregivers, and staff to participate
- Record attendance and give awards for individuals with # of classes attended
- Make phone calls when a class is cancelled for weather
- Coordinate volunteers involved in a class event
- Work with Connection Ministries to maintain accurate class roster with contact information for volunteers and friends with disabilities, as well as caregivers/families/staff
- [Verify all volunteers and friends with disabilities have completed an application and that the background screens were completed when due](#)

Congregations partnering with connection Ministries will register their ministry participants by completing an application. Connection Ministries will support these congregations with the following services;

- Process applications, record data in a database and provide copies of applications to each congregation. No data will be shared with other organization.
- Provide criminal background screens and review the Indiana sexual offender registry for all volunteers interacting with friends with disabilities
- Confidentially provide information on any negative results from criminal background screens and review the Indiana sexual offender registry
 - Families with members who have disabilities have assurance volunteers have been properly screened for criminal background history at no cost to the congregation or volunteer.
 - Volunteers have protection from the legal expense that occurs from a false accusation of abuse or sexual misconduct.

- Volunteers can review their criminal background history verifying accuracy of records maintained with consumer reporting agencies
- Review the Indiana sexual offender registry for all participating friends with disabilities
- Provide electronic and hard copy rosters to each congregation with all recorded contact information for all friends with disabilities, families and volunteers making it easy to pass along class cancellations, invitations to special events or share valuable information.
- Provide electronic rosters with dietary restrictions are needed for groups serving snacks or hosting meal events.
- Track the date of last liability and photo release. Liability release on the application covers both the congregation and Connection Ministries.
- Connection Ministries provides congregations with supplemental liability coverage available for disability ministry.
- It will be important that everyone complete the application to protect against both liability and discrimination.
- “Safe Haven, A Church’s Responsibility to Prevent Abuse” By the Christian Law Association will be made available to all congregations at no cost. Connection Ministries “strongly” encourage you to read this document!
 - Learn how to prevent situations before they occur! Learn how to keep documents in the event of a litigating situation, and learn the proper response to accusations.
 - The new Connection Ministries application is simple, front of one side of sheet of paper.
 - Be diligent in getting applications returned. You are as strong as your weakest link.
 - If ALL volunteers do not fill out an application giving background screen approval, and only new volunteers are asked, you may face a discrimination charge.
 - You **should not** use photo’s, videos, etc. of anyone who will not sign a photo release