



Teaching Plan for Preschool Leaders and Teachers

I-6: A Six Lane Strategy Toward An Inviting Sunday School
Developed by Ann Edwards, Childhood Ministry Specialist; LifeWay Church Resources


Purpose: To equip and provide tools for preschool leaders and teachers to be intentional about creating an environment for inviting preschoolers and their families to Sunday School and worship.

Preparation

Room Setup: Create three semicircles for groups. Set up two tables for display of curriculum, Read to-Be Bible for Kids, and supplies needed for the activities in the session. Display posters on the wall or tabletop, depending on availability of wall space.

20 Play music as conferees arrive. Use one of the Music and More recordings from the age-group curriculum or sounds of traffic.

1. Make 3 copies of the Scripture passage, Matthew 25:35 HCSB (Item 1): "For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in." Cut apart the words to the Scripture verse and prepare to place one puzzle in each group. You may want to place them in an envelope or for file folder. Place the word INVITE on the folder or envelope. Locate three Holman Christian Study Bibles for the first activity.
2. Make copies of the following signs: FIRST IMPRESSIONS (Item 2), CARE ABOUT FAMILIES (Item 3), and RELATING TO FAMILIES (Item 4).
3. Locate several large tear sheets, 11-by-17 inch sheets, index cards, and permanent markers.
4. Prepare these in a bag with 11-by-17 inch colorful paper and colorful watercolor markers.
5. Prepare these four statements: Greet preschoolers and their families (Item 5), Teach preschoolers biblical truths (Item 6), Meet preschoolers learning needs (Item 7), and Create an environment for learning (Item 8).

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6. Locate a small toy dump truck, mini-van, racing car, and ambulance.
 7. Duplicate these handouts for each conferee: Identify Your Preschoolers (**Item 9**), My Ministry Chart (**Item 10**), Investing in People (**Item 11**).
 8. Locate 10 file folders of different colors. Label individual folders with a number (**1 through 10**). Include a sentence strip in each folder.
 9. Cut apart the word INVOLVE and the instructions. Place the word INVOLVE on the front of each envelope and the instructions inside each envelope (**Item 12, 13, 14**).

Procedures

Introduction (Frame 1)

BEGIN: “What will it take to create an environment in your preschool division where parents will want to invite others to Sunday School and worship?” Ask conferees to complete the Scripture puzzle in their group. Instruct them to use the Bible in their group to help them put the Scripture in the correct sequence. [5 min.] (**Frame 2, 3**)

Say: “Part of our discipleship is to serve others with the right motives. When we invite someone to church who does not know Christ as savior, we want to create an environment that encourages them to seek something beyond themselves. When a preschooler comes to church, we have an opportunity to partner with other teachers and leaders to minister and reach out to each family member. The Scripture you just put together implies that we do it with the love of Christ.”

Lane 1: Invigorate [45 minutes] (Frame 4)


1. Say: “You can invigorate your church by caring about people, making a positive first impression, and relating well to preschool families.” Encourage conferees to choose a sign (**Item 1, 2 or 3**). Ask them to write down five things they know about the topic area they chose. Provide tear sheets for conferees to record their answers. Add the following ideas to their compilation if conferees have not covered these:



- First Impressions – Offer a smile, extend your hand, make a personal introduction, engage the family in conversation, and give an invitation to a Bible study group. **(Frame 5)**
- Care About Families – Get to know who they are (names, etc., but do not too many questions), model a genuine caring attitude, be nurturing in your conversation, meet specific needs, and invite them to your home or out for coffee. **(Frame 6)**
- Relating to New Families – Provide a positive attitude about their family, listen and care about what they say, show respect for each family member, introduce them to others who have common interests, and invite them to a Sunday School fellowship. **(Frame 7)**

Conclude the activity by encouraging teachers and leaders to think about how they communicate an inviting culture at church.

2. Discuss the WOW Factor. Say: “The WOW factor is what attracts families and children to your ministry, (a great place to enjoy Bible teaching). How does your church make an impression on those that come to your church, specifically the preschool ministry? Ask conferees to locate the colorful paper and colorful markers on a table nearby. Instruct them to take several sheets for group members. Encourage conferees to draw pictures depicting those WOW Factors. Give examples as conferees begin. **(Frame 8 & 9)**
28. Discuss what each conferee has drawn. Be intentional to encourage conferees to develop a list of what they need to attempt first in each of their churches and to create a plan that will work for them.
3. Say, “Let’s invigorate the way we minister to preschoolers and their families. When we are driving to a particular location, we usually have a standard route to take. We think we know the closest route to get there, but is it the closest or best route? Just because it’s the way we have always gone, doesn’t mean it’s the best. Consider this for your preschool division: Just because we have always done ministry this way, doesn’t mean it’s the only or best way to do ministry. Take a look at how you accomplish the following: **(Frame 10)**
 - Greet preschoolers’ and their families. **(Frame 11)**
 - Teach preschoolers’ biblical truths. **(Frame 12)**
 - Meet preschoolers’ learning needs. **(Frame 13)**
 - Create an environment for learning.” **(Frame 14)**



Create a group-to-group exchange by forming four groups. Give each group a topic from those mentioned above. Ask each group to gather as much information about what it would take to accomplish these successfully. The conferees may use any of the resources on the display tables (age group curriculum leader guides, leader packs, and learner guides, *Music and More CDs*, *Teaching Preschoolers: First Steps Toward Faith*) to gather their information. Ask them to create a presentation on each of the topics. Each group must answer these questions within their presentation:

- What is needed to accomplish this part of the ministry?
- Who needs to be involved in this process?
- What steps will you take to accomplish this ministry?


As conferees wrap up their discussions, lead them in determining those things they are doing now that may not be necessary after their discoveries in the activity.

4. Now that we have completed the “invigorate” portion of this conference, let’s pray and ask God to invigorate us as we continue to keep near to Him and seek His direction in our ministry and life. **(Frame 15)**

Lane 2: Incorporate [35 minutes] (Frame 16)

5. Let’s incorporate what we know God is leading us to do. Let’s evaluate what we already know about our ministry and the direction we are headed. In the previous activity we explored four areas: Greet preschoolers’ and their families, Teach preschoolers’ biblical truths, Meet preschoolers’ learning needs, and Create an environment for learning. All of these things help us reach those people to whom we extend ourselves. They help us create the culture we want to have in order to invite preschoolers and their family.
6. Say: “Remain in your group and complete the following activity. As a group answer these questions: **(Frame 17)**”
 - What kind of people are we good at reaching?
 - Where do they live?
 - What can we do to reach them?”

Distribute the toy vehicles (dump truck, van, racing car, and ambulance). Instruct conferees to use this vehicle to describe their reaching methods. Allow some time to formulate their list. Discuss their answers.



Create a new list in the large group. Ask: “What will it take to implement these ideas in your church?” Provide these suggestions to get them started: **(Frame 18)**

- organize to reach families. **(Frame 19)**
- create a budget for extra materials to share with parents (*HomeLife, ParentLife, BabyLife, etc.*).

7. When we are driving, we always wish for good driving weather. We might even check the visibility. Say: “Do those who come to your church have good visibility? Is it easy to navigate the halls and know what to do or where to go? Let’s take a field trip in our mind. Gather with the people from your church. If you are the only one from your church, find with a partner and tell each other how parents navigate the parking lot, entrances, restrooms, and hallways to get to their child’s room at church.” **(Frame 20)**

Offer conferees a sheet of paper to diagram their path for parents from the car to their child’s room. Say: “Discuss with each other this question: “what could we do to make the path better for parents and more visible for visitors?” When conferees finish, ask questions such as; what were obstacles, what were concerns for preschoolers, and what works in your church setting? Lead conferees in a discussion on eliminating these barriers. **(Frame 21)**

Lane 3: Intercede [10 minutes] (Frame 22)

8. Distribute the handout Identify Your Preschoolers **(Item 9)**. Ask conferees to write down the names of the children in their class in the sentence that best fits their description. Say: “It is important to know the children you teach. You will be better prepared to meet their needs. Your prayer ministry is more effective when you know the children and their families. **(Frame 23 & 24)**
9. Distribute the handout My Ministry Chart **(Item 10)**. Ask conferees to determine why such a chart can begin to enhance their ministry efforts? **(Frame 25)**



Lane 4: Invest [10 minutes] (Frame 26)

10. Instruct conferees to think of people they know who were/are true leaders. Encourage conferees to jot down the qualities they possess. Ask: "If you could possess one of their qualities, what would it be and why would you want that quality?" Encourage conferees by telling them that they all possess qualities God finds important. God equips those people whom He calls to ministry. Say: "The qualities we possess may encourage others to take leadership positions. Invest in the lives of others."

(Frame 27, 28, & 29)

Continue: "When we invest in others, we have faith in them.

Faith is belief in action." Distribute the handout Investing in People (Item 11). **(Frame 30)**

Believe in them before they succeed. (Frame 31)

Emphasize their strengths. (Frame 32)

List their past successes. (Frame 33)

Instill confidence when they fail. (Frame 34)

Experience some wins together. (Frame 35)

Visualize their future success. (Frame 36)

Expect a new level of living. (Frame 37)


State: "Following are some qualities that are encouraging to others: **(Frame 38)**

- Integrity
- Nurturing spirit
- Faith in others
- Listener"

Ask conferees: "Whom can you invest in today?"

Lane 5 – Invite [10 minutes] (Frame 39)

11. Ask conferees to take a number between 1 and 10. If there are more than 10 conferees, ask them to work as partners. If there are fewer than 10 conferees, use only 5 numbers. Instruct conferees to come up with 10 reasons families should bring their children to Sunday School. Provide sentence strips for conferees to record their reason. Discuss their reasons. Ask this question in evaluation of their reasons: "Do these reasons help people connect with others?" **(Frame 40)**



Say: "Let's consider these steps for connecting with people:
(Frame 41)

- Don't take people for granted. (Frame 42)
- Possess a make-a-difference mind-set.
- Initiate a friendship. (Frame 43)
- Look for common ground.
- Recognize and respect differences in personality. (Frame 44)
- Communicate from the heart.
- Share common experiences. (Frame 45)
- Once connected, move forward."

Read this quote. David Francis, in *A Six-Lane Strategy Toward an Inviting Sunday School*, found a quote from a discussion thread among ministers: "Right now I view evangelism as sensitive and timely invitation into a place where there is known hospitality and where there is the possibility of finding what one is looking for. It is a dependence on the Holy Spirit to touch the spirits of persons near to us, and on the Holy spirit's ability to move us to invite them in a welcoming, open, generous, and hospitable way." This captures the study of an inviting church. Your preschool division will want to create an environment where people want to bring their children. (Frame 46)

Lane 6 – Involve [10 minutes] (Frame 47)

12. Say: "According to your GPS, it is time to exit and become involved. Let's look back over what we have tried to do. We looked at what it takes to invigorate our church, incorporate new people, intercede for those we reach, invest in the lives of children and families, and invite and connect with those we want to reach. Now let's think about involving people to get the work done."

Place envelopes around the room with the word INVOLVE written across the top. Form three groups. Ask conferences to get up from their chairs and look for an envelope. Encourage them to read the instructions found inside and work together to accomplish the task.



- Create a “to do” list for ministering to the children in your department. **(Frame 48)**
- Develop an outreach event that will encourage new and expectant parents. **(Frame 49)**
- Plan a training event for teachers designed to equip them for visitation and ministry. **(Frame 50)**

13. In closing, encourage conferees by saying: “We always accomplish more by working as a team. The leader of your team may be a childhood staff person, preschool division director, or a Sunday School director.” You work together to create an environment where people want to bring their children. When leaders empower their team, they are not only influencing their team but the people they will influence. **(Frame 51 & 52)**

14. Pray with conferees about the next step they will take to make their Sunday School an inviting one. **(Frame 53)**

