

C-Bridge Cycle Two-Shift Nine

Friend Day @Church & Parent Focus

Primary Objective

This activity uses Friend Day as a means of reaching families with children, with the gospel.

How This Can Help You Reach

Relationships are key to reaching people with the gospel. We all have them whether they be family, friends, or acquaintances. God has brought these people into our lives, and we are the only ones who have these sets of relationships. He chose us to reach them. Research shows that approximately eighty-six percent of all who are converted to Christ, do so through the influence of a family or friend. This is called Relationship Evangelism or Friendship Evangelism. Steve Parr. (2013). *Sunday School that Really Excels*.

Suggested Approach

Friend Day is a proven outreach campaign. It is a simple approach that focuses on a specific day in which the congregation invites their friends to attend Sunday School and church. Four weeks of presentation and promotion to the church, leading up to the special day, is involved. Friend Day is a special day that allows your church to:

- Honor the friends of their children.
- Introduce the friends of children to Jesus Christ.
- Welcome children and their families to church.
- Build relationships with children and their families.
- Reach out to the community with a focus on families.
- Demonstrate to your community the concern you have for families.
- Grow your children's ministry.

Key Steps for Preparation

- **Pray** – Ask children and their parents to pray about who they will invite to Friend Day.

- **Prepare** – Be ready, in all areas of your church, for a larger crowd.
- **Promote** – Provide the tools needed to help children and their parents invite their friends and make it a centerpiece to what the church is doing that day.
- **Preach** – It would be great if the sermon is sensitive to the children and their parents, and the gospel is presented and invitation extended.
- **Plan for Follow-Up** – Plan to connect with your guests the week after Friend Day. Make sure the Sunday after the special day is ready to receive those you have contacted. You can read more about this here: <https://gabaptistgroups.org/do-every-sunday-well/>.

Relationships begin with preschoolers. They get to know and love their friends while at church. These friendships often continue through their childhood years. So, how might one use Friend Day to reach children?

Ideas

In most cases, parents already know the friends of their children. Invite the preschooler, through his or her parents, as their child's guest for the day.

- Children can invite their friends from school and the neighborhood to be their friend on that day.
- Family are friends as well. Cousins are great to invite on Friend Day.
- Plan a sleepover for the children on Saturday night at your house, and bring them to church on Sunday.
- Plan an after-church activity that would include lunch for your children and their friends.
- Have a contest with prizes for those who bring the most friends.
- Have the children's classes compete in bringing the most friends to church, and award their efforts in the worship service.
- Organize carpools to get the children and their friends to church.
- Have all the children meet as a large group during Sunday School for special activities that focus on Friend Day.
- Use the special lessons provided for the children through the Friend Day materials (see below).
- Be ready for extra children with extra help and supplies.

Extra Mile Suggestions

- Utilize the church van or bus to get the children to church.
- Plan the after-church activity with lunch, but also include inflatables and a carnival-like atmosphere.
- Promote Friend Day with child-friendly, professionally-done flyers and other materials that children can distribute to their friends.
- Make a connection between children's worship and the adult worship service on that day.

Resources Available for Friend Day

<http://www.churchgrowth.org/product/friend-day/>

<https://www.evangelismcoach.org/6-steps-to-organize-an-invite-a-friend-day>