

Kids Cycle Two-Shift Twelve

Fall Festival Family Outreach

Primary Objective

Plan and implement a seasonal outreach event that will appeal to families with elementary age children.

How This Can Help You Reach Kids

A fall festival family outreach event is a great way for churches to attract young families. By providing this type of family outreach, churches give both kids and parents a safe and secure environment in which to enjoy themselves.

During the fall, many families are looking for fun, free activities. The church can provide such an event by hosting a fall festival, trunk-or-treat, harvest festival, or whatever the church would like to call the event. If the promotion, registration, and follow-up are done well, a church can find families who do not attend church and develop or continue the connections with the family.

Suggested Strategy

When promoting this event, churches can use social media, targeted emails, flyer distribution, and free community advertising. Offering prizes or other incentives for children to bring friends is another way to promote and increase event attendance. This can be done by offering door prizes for families and/or giving bands for children to wear before they can participate in the games. No matter which way registration is handled, be sure to get the names of everyone in the family, address, phone number, email, and ages of the children. When families register, give them a packet of information about your church, which includes ministry activities for all ages.

Be sure the fall festival is “done well.” This means that there are greeters at entrances, volunteers at each station, safety measures have been taken, plenty of candy or prizes are on hand, and music is being played. Also, have members at the event whose primary task is to engage and connect with new families and others who make sure that everything (including restrooms) is kept clean. Offer some type of snack or light meal for families to enjoy. Some options for activities are face painting, toss games, art activities, pumpkin putt-putt, guessing games, photo opportunities, and rented giant inflatables. Many churches prefer to have a trunk-or-treat format, where church members open and decorate their trunks and give out

candy and prizes as the kids come to their vehicle. For more ideas, go to [fall outreach event](#) on the Kids Groups and Faith Development Pinterest boards. If your church would like to offer additional activities, consider renting additional giant inflatables, having a petting zoo, or offer hay mazes. You may also want to have a live band, whether it's the church praise band or a local Christian band you employ. Another great idea is to offer prizes that can be accepted by children with allergies.

A few days after the fall festival send a card or email to families thanking them for attending your event or send a copy of a picture you made at the photo booth. Invite the children and their families to attend your Sunday and Wednesday services and other family ministry opportunities. Follow up the first contact with a phone call from a staff member, children's leader, or another key leader in the church. Send an invitation to the family for Christmas events that will be held at the church.

Key Steps for Preparation

- Schedule the event on your church calendar
- Enlist a planning team (promotion, volunteer enlistment, registration, supply acquisition, safety, set-up and clean-up, music, and follow-up)
- Determine how many and what activities to provide
- Rent or reserve large items (giant inflatables)
- Promote the event
- Enlist volunteers for activities and to warmly greet and engage your guests
- Encourage candy & prize donations
- Gather needed supplies and games
- Set up and implement the plans for the event
- Clean up
- Follow-up

Alternative Ideas

- Rent out a skating rink or trampoline park and invite the community
- Fall cook-out with a fishing contest
- Partner with a school or community event by hosting a booth or tent with activities. Help your booth stand out by encouraging sign-ups for door prizes or free children's camp experiences.