

Early Childhood Development Ministry Evaluation Guide 201



SOJOURNERS
SojoAction



*For you created my
inmost being; you knit
me together in my
mother's womb. I praise
you because I am
fearfully and wonderfully
made.
- Psalm 139:13-16*

Taking Your Early Childhood Development Ministry to the Next Level

As you are well aware, a child's earliest years (ages 0-3) are critical in their development. These first few years offer us a window of opportunity to help shape the trajectory of a child's development, their future, their family's future and the future of our communities.

You and your congregation have taken amazing steps to take this opportunity and support young children and their families during this critical time. Congratulations! With this guide, you and your congregation will have the tools and resources to evaluate your current early childhood development offerings to make sure they're still working for your faith community, but also to help you take those supports to the next level.

This guide is designed to help you evaluate how your current ministries prioritize the well-being of our youngest members (children aged 0-3) and to support you as you create a plan to even better support them.

Sojourners invites you to embark on this vital journey of reflection and action as part of our commitment to early childhood development.

About This Guide

It's Specific - We included tailored strategies for impactful support from birth to age 3.

It's Practical - Learn about steps that you can take that reflect where you are in your ministry.

It Changes Lives - Use the guide to strengthen your community by giving every child a better start.

It's Our Calling - Demonstrate God's love through action, especially towards the youngest members of our faith community.



If this guide feels too advanced and you're more interested in starting or simple ways to expand your early childhood development ministry, check out our [Early Childhood Development Evaluation Guide 101](https://sojo.net/campaigns/ecd-clergy-toolkit) at <https://sojo.net/campaigns/ecd-clergy-toolkit>.

What's Inside

As faith leaders, you wield influence and authority that can initiate transformative change. But all change starts with understanding before action.

This guide will help you update an early childhood development ministry that works for your congregation.



We have a powerful potential in our youth, and we must have the courage to change old ideas and practices so that we may direct their power toward good ends.

- Mary McLeod Bethune



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Build your understanding of our biblical mandate to care for young children and their families.

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Prioritize ways your congregation can transform your early childhood education ministry.

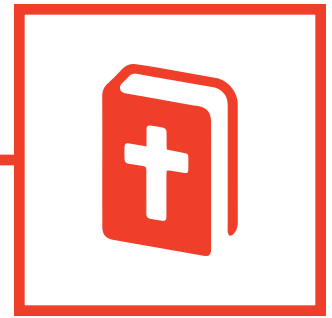
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Stay in touch with Sojourners for additional support and insights throughout your early childhood development ministry efforts.

Why Early Childhood Development Ministry?



A Foundation of Faith

As a pivotal leader in your community, you are in a unique position to build strong communities through your congregation – starting by supporting families and caregivers of children.

Scripture says all children are fearfully and wonderfully made. This sentiment echoes through biblical teachings, notably in Jesus’ instruction to support “the least of these,” and in the valorous actions of the Hebrew midwives, Shiphrah and Puah. Despite the pharaoh’s decree to kill all newborn Hebrew boys, these midwives feared God and chose to protect the babies, showcasing early and profound examples of community-based advocacy and care for the vulnerable.



Children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward.
- Psalm 127:3-5

The Lord calls us to end suffering and injustices. Yet, too often, because of structural injustices, children and their families in congregations like yours are left without the resources or support they need to build a strong foundation. Inspired by such figures and guided by the Holy Spirit, we must work together to create supportive environments, to tackle such injustices and to ensure that young children have what they need to develop and reach lifelong happiness and success.

You have already built an amazing start to supporting families and young children in your faith community. This guide will help you to elevate those supports so that you might reach more families.





Elevating Your Early Childhood Development Ministry 201

The Foundations of What Young Children Need

You are well aware that the earliest years are foundational for young children and can set the trajectory for a child's learning, health and behavior. Children in this age group, especially those living in poverty or from marginalized communities, face significant challenges that can impact their health, development and educational outcomes.



*Speak to your children
as if they are the wisest,
kindest, most beautiful
and magical humans
on earth, for what they
believe is what they will
become.
- Brooke Hampton*

As community leaders, we are uniquely positioned to positively influence this critical development phase.

Here, we've included a chart that provides a foundation of what families and young children need, along with several more advanced ideas for ways you can support these needs in your church community.

Here's the good news – we've included resources to help you evaluate your programs and to create a plan, too!

Identify your ministry priorities using the following evaluation resources – what's working and what areas you want to expand – and choose which approach your church community may take to support families and young children.



What Families and Young Children Need	What This May Look Like In Your Faith Community
<p>Safe and nurturing environments: spaces that are secure and emotionally supportive, fostering exploration and learning.</p>	<p>For example, in a faith community this could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare programs that have appropriately staffed classrooms (safe adult:child ratios). • Age-appropriate after-school programs for young children. • Vacation Bible camp held in a safe space for various age groups.
<p>Developmentally appropriate activities: tailored programs that cater to the developmental needs of infants and toddlers, promoting cognitive, motor language and social-emotional growth during this critical time of their lives.</p>	<p>For example, this may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing in local musicians who can foster child learning through song. • Having parents volunteer during nursery hours to read to children. • Creating baskets for new parents that provide infants and toddlers with developmentally appropriate toys, board books, clothing and/or formula. • Establishing a Free Little Library program with children’s books.
<p>Access to quality and affordable early education and childcare options: programs such as Early Head Start and other early childhood education programs that prepare children for school and help bridge disparities in academic achievement and health.</p>	<p>Faith community members can advocate for these kinds of programs and vote for policy leaders who support them.</p> <p>For example, you can talk with policy leaders (such as your mayor or council members) about why funding these programs is so important.</p> <p>Faith communities can also start their own childcare programs. (With certified childcare experts leading the programs.)</p>

What Families and Young Children Need	What This May Look Like In Your Faith Community
<p>Socio-economic and nutrition support: assistance in navigating community aid and providing education on financial literacy and nutrition to help families overcome poverty and ensure children’s physical and mental health.</p>	<p>For example, this may look like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing in experts to your congregation who can teach a course on financial literacy. • Partnering with local pediatricians who can speak to parents about the nutritional support that young children need at the different development stages.
<p>Family engagement: encouraging active participation by parents and families in their children’s lives, strengthening familial bonds and reflecting the congregation’s commitment to nurturing young families.</p>	<p>For example, this may look like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering events and activities through which families can spend time together and have healthy, positive experiences together. • Inviting child experts to teach a course on strengthening family bonds.
<p>Cultural and linguistic inclusion: programs that respect and celebrate the diversity of the community.</p>	<p>For example, this could include language development sessions for families and their young children, with teachers holding classes to build language and literacy skills.</p>
<p>Healthy parents: prioritize parent and caregiver health, alongside the health of infants and toddlers.</p>	<p>Healthcare programs that support Black and Brown mothers during and after pregnancy are particularly critical.</p> <p>For example, this could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering transportation to pre- and post-natal care visits. • Scheduling group meetings for pregnant families to share resources and support. <p>Faith community members and leaders can also advocate for these kinds of programs and vote for policy leaders who support these kinds of programs.</p>

If you are considering starting or expanding your childcare or preschool programs, it's important to note that your state may have its own standards, criteria and definitions for a quality early childhood environment or program. You can contact your local state agency for additional information and guidance on such criteria.

Here are a few additional resources as you're expanding your understanding of what young children and their families need to thrive:

- [🔗 Early Learning and Development Guides](#)
- [🔗 Caring for Our Children: Standards and Resources](#)

When faith communities focus on these key areas, they are better positioned to support the holistic development of children aged 0-3 and their families in a way that is aligned to biblical teachings and fulfills a sacred duty to nurture the next generation.





Early Childhood Ministry: Comprehensive Best Practices Guide

Grounding change in best practices can significantly enhance your ministry's impact. Below are several actions that your church community can take to expand or elevate your existing early childhood development ministry.

Consider the following suggestions and adapt them to best suit the unique needs of your church community.



If these actions feel overwhelming for your faith community and where you are in your early childhood development ministry, please see our Early Childhood Development Ministry Guide 101 at <https://sojo.net/campaigns/ecd-clergy-toolkit>.

Medium Effort Initiatives Requiring Some Planning and Resources

Initiatives in this category involve a moderate level of planning and resource allocation. They are designed to offer more structured support to young families and require a commitment beyond the basics, but are still highly achievable for most churches.



Volunteer-Run Nursery

Set up a nursery room staffed by trained volunteers during services and major events – this would allow parents and caregivers to participate in church activities while their children are safely cared for.



Early Childhood Development Workshops

Offer workshops or seminars for parents and caregivers on topics relevant to the development of their young children, such as positive parenting, early literacy or spiritual formation at an early age.



Baby Item Exchange Program

Create a program where church members can donate, exchange or borrow baby items such as clothes, toys and furniture. This initiative helps alleviate some financial burden on new parents and promotes a sense of community sharing and support.



Community Playgroups

Host weekly or monthly playgroups for families with young children. Playgroups provide a space for children to engage in age-appropriate play and for parents and caregivers to build supportive networks within the church community. Focus on creating engaging, developmentally appropriate activities for children, promoting their social, cognitive and motor skills development through play. Playgroups can include structured activities and may involve more active participation and oversight by parents or caregivers.



Connect Families with Community Resources

Connect families with local resources to support the diverse needs of young families within the church. This practice involves creating a network of local services, including healthcare, educational programs and social services, and making this information readily available to parents and caregivers. The church can act as a bridge between families and these resources and ensure that parents and caregivers have the tools and support they need to thrive.



Plan a Black Maternal and Neonatal Health Awareness Sunday

Educate your congregation and community about the critical health disparities affecting Black mothers and infants by dedicating a Sunday worship service to this critical issue. This special service can include prayers for affected families, sermons highlighting healthcare equity's importance and guest speakers with expertise in maternal and neonatal health. This service is an opportunity to shed light on the disparities in maternal and neonatal outcomes, foster a dialogue within the community and explore ways the congregation can support efforts to improve health outcomes for Black families.

More Robust Initiatives Requiring a Longer-Term Investment

These best practices represent comprehensive, long-term commitments that may require significant resources, planning and community engagement. They aim to deeply integrate support for young families into the fabric of the church's ministry, with a focus on sustainable, impactful development and outreach.



Community Black Maternal Health Advocacy Series

Launch a Community Black Maternal Health Advocacy Series. This comprehensive initiative involves organizing events, including seminars led by healthcare experts, advocacy workshops and community forums, to educate, mobilize and empower the congregation and wider community. By partnering with medical professionals, maternal health advocates and local organizations, the series will raise awareness about the disparities in Black maternal health outcomes and provide actionable steps for advocacy and support.



Educational Opportunities

Offer a variety of classes throughout the year, such as financial literacy, Parenting 101, mental health awareness for new caregivers and first-time home buyers workshops. These classes can equip parents and caregivers with valuable skills and knowledge, fostering a more stable and nurturing environment. Engage congregation members to help plan and facilitate these classes, drawing on their expertise and willingness to serve the community.



Partnership with Childcare Professionals

Collaborate with local early childhood educators or child psychologists to provide consultations or regular check-ins for families and offer professional insights into children's emotional and cognitive development.



Partnership with Healthcare Providers

Establish partnerships with local healthcare providers to offer on-site prenatal care, postpartum check-ups and parenting classes at the church. This could include facilitating access to vaccinations, screenings and health counseling, ensuring comprehensive care for mothers and babies.



Health Awareness and Advocacy

Promote and support Black maternal and neonatal health through community-focused initiatives. Integrate these important topics into existing ministry events by having your health committee organize a fair for young families. Dedicate space in your church newsletter to health awareness and best practices. Additionally, engage your congregation in advocacy efforts by supporting campaigns like these Sojourners' initiatives: [Enhance the Child Tax Credit \(https://act.sojo.net/page/63128/action/1?ea.tracking.id=web\)](https://act.sojo.net/page/63128/action/1?ea.tracking.id=web) and [Flourishing Futures \(http://www.flourishingfuture.com/\)](http://www.flourishingfuture.com/).



Early Childhood Development Center

Churches could consider establishing an Early Childhood Development Center that provides high-quality childcare and early learning programs for children from infancy through preschool. Incorporating spiritual education alongside cognitive and physical development programs, such a center would support working parents and ensure children have a strong foundation for lifelong learning and faith.



Family Support Services

Implement a comprehensive family support or mutual aid network that includes pastoral care focused on the challenges of early parenthood, financial assistance for needy families with young children and referral services to community resources for additional support. For example, a church could create a family resource center that offers counseling services, parenting workshops and emergency financial aid. To fund these initiatives, churches can seek grant money from foundations and government programs dedicated to family and child welfare. By collaborating with grant writers and local professionals, churches can secure the necessary funding to hire qualified staff and offer robust support services, ensuring that young families receive the professional assistance they need.



Advocacy and Community Engagement

Engage in advocacy efforts for policies that support young families, such as parental leave, childcare subsidies and early childhood education. Organize community service projects focused on supporting children and families in need and connect with other faith communities to organize around issues that are crucial for young children and their caregivers.

**Sources for the guide include The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Zero to Three and the Christian Reformed Church.*



Implementing a Breastfeeding Room at Church

Creating a breastfeeding room in your church is a wonderful way to support nursing mothers and families with infants, promoting inclusivity and comfort for all church members. This initiative is a tangible way to demonstrate your church's commitment to supporting families and nurturing the bond between mothers and their infants. At the same time, you're sending a powerful message of acceptance and respect for the needs of all church members, fostering a stronger, more inclusive community.

Here's a step-by-step guide to setting up this essential space:



Assessment and Planning

Identify the Need: Conduct a quick survey or informal conversations with parents of young children to assess the demand for a breastfeeding room. Perhaps you've already heard about such a need from your church community members.

Find a Suitable Space: Choose a quiet, private area close to the main worship and gathering spaces. Ideally, this room should have an electrical outlet, comfortable seating and enough space for 1-2 adults and a few children to accommodate for larger families.



Designing the Room

Comfort and Privacy: Install comfortable seating (like a soft armchair) and ensure privacy with curtains and/or frosted glass. Include a door lock.

Amenities (optional): Equip the room with a small refrigerator for storing milk, a diaper-changing table and a sink or sanitizing station. Include a table or flat surface for diaper bags and personal items.

Ambiance (optional): Create a welcoming atmosphere with soft lighting, calming colors and gentle background music or a sound machine.



Accessibility and Availability

Signage: Mark the room with inclusive signage that is visible and understandable to all church members and visitors.

Communication: Announce the breastfeeding room's availability during services and in church communications (bulletins, emails, social media) so everyone knows about this new resource.



Feedback and Improvement

Solicit Feedback: After the room has been used for some time, ask for feedback from the users to see if any improvements or additional amenities would be helpful.

Continuous Improvement: Be prepared to make changes and upgrades to the room based on the feedback received to ensure it continues to meet the needs of nursing mothers and their infants.



Policy and Support

Develop a Policy: Establish a clear policy for using the breastfeeding room to ensure it remains a safe, clean and available space for those who need it.

Staff and Volunteer Training: Brief staff and volunteers on the importance of the breastfeeding room and how to support nursing mothers, including directions for accessing the room and understanding breastfeeding rights and needs.



These best practices are taken from these organizations:

- **World Health Organization (WHO):** Offers comprehensive guidelines on breastfeeding practices and creating supportive environments for nursing mothers.
- **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):** Provides recommendations on breastfeeding and the importance of support from community and public spaces.
- **La Leche League International:** Offers resources and support for breastfeeding mothers, including how communities can better support nursing mothers.
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):** Shares best practices and resources for breastfeeding support in community settings.



Evaluate Your Current Early Childhood Development Ministry Offerings

It is crucial to understand and evaluate how our ministries serve young children and their families in order to foster community growth and enrichment. The evaluation process outlined below focuses on identifying opportunities to create meaningful improvements that better meet the needs of young children and help them thrive.



Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.
- James Baldwin

Steps To Evaluate Your Ministry Offerings

➔ Step 1: Form a Diverse Team

- **Assemble** a team of leaders and volunteers passionate about serving young children and their families. Consider the group makeup so that you are ensuring diversity across insights and perspectives, such as:
 - Generations
 - Gender
 - Racial and ethnic backgrounds
 - Congregation involvement (e.g., those in leadership positions, those who may be less involved in the congregation, etc.)
 - Families and individuals (i.e., those who may directly benefit from programs that serve young children and those who may not directly benefit from such programs)
- Have your team **develop a set of norms** for evaluating your early childhood development ministry offerings.
 - The [Administration for Children and Families of the United States Department of Health and Human Services](#) offers a series of concepts that early childhood education providers use in their everyday routines. These tips may be helpful as your team thinks through what you'd like to see in your own early childhood development ministry.
 - The evaluation team should work to develop a basic understanding of early childhood development ministry best practices to help develop these norms.



To help with Step 1 of the evaluation process, we've included helpful tools below, starting on page 17! We're continuing with Step 2 of the full evaluation process on page 19.



STEP 1

Quick Checklist to Enhance Your Early Childhood Development Ministry

By systematically addressing each item on this checklist, churches can significantly improve the inclusivity and safety of their ministries for the youngest members of their congregations.



Purchase Developmentally Appropriate Toys

Ensure toys are engaging, safe and suitable for various developmental stages.



Conduct Safety Checks

Regularly inspect areas for young children to eliminate hazards and ensure a safe environment.



Implement Cleaning Procedures

Establish and follow thorough cleaning protocols for toys, surfaces and fabrics in children's areas.



Volunteer Background Checks

Complete comprehensive background checks for all volunteers and staff working with children before they begin working with children.



Safety Procedures with Children

Develop and communicate clear safety guidelines for emergencies, allergies and child drop-off/pickup.



Display Child-Friendly Decor

Use bright, engaging visuals in children's areas to create a welcoming and stimulating environment.



Child-Friendly Service Elements

Integrate service elements that cater to young children, such as children's messages, kid-friendly songs or activity bags.

**Sources for the checklist include The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Zero to Three and Safe Kids Worldwide.*



STEP 1

Early Childhood Development Ministry Safety and Security Checklist

If you're considering implementing or expanding a childcare or preschool program as part of your early childhood development ministry, or even if you're considering expanding care options offered during services, there are several essential factors to think through when it comes to the safety and security of young children. It's critical to recognize these factors, as maintaining children's safety and security must be the foundation for any care program.

Comprehensive Background Checks

- Ensure every volunteer, clergyperson and staff member undergoes a thorough background and criminal check.
- Cross-reference with the national sex offender database.
- Address any caution flags confidentially by discussing concerns directly with the person.
- Maintain checks in a secure location with limited access.

Stringent Check-In & Out Procedures

- Establish clear policies on who can check children in and out.
- Implement a permission policy for child pickup.
- Develop procedures for situations where adults other than the child's direct parent or caregiver are carrying out drop-off and/or pickup.

Well-Trained Volunteers

- Provide detailed, ongoing training on safety procedures.
- Encourage understanding and adherence to established safety guidelines.
- Foster a team of consistent, knowledgeable and trained volunteers.

Clear Plans & Procedures for Emergencies

- Create preemptive plans for various security breaches or emergencies.
- Develop clear action steps and prevention strategies.
- Make sure plans are easily accessible to all team members.
- Provide regular evaluation of volunteers and processes.

Vigilant Supervision

- Maintain awareness of everyone in the children's area and their role.
- Be proactive in spotting and addressing potential security weaknesses.
- Cultivate a team that shares a commitment to vigilance and safety.

**Sources for the checklist include The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Zero to Three and Safe Kids Worldwide.*



You can also reference the list of best practices around early childhood ministry on page 10 of this guide.

Find key definitions to clarify important terms like "Resource," "Stakeholder" and "SMART Goals" in the Appendix.

➔ Step 2: Make a List of How Your Congregation Currently Serves Children and Families

List all ministries and activities, and identify those that serve children ages 0-3 and their families.



To help with Step 2 of the evaluation process, we've included some helpful tools below, starting on page 20! We're continuing with Step 3 of the full evaluation process on page 27.





Print this resource to help guide your own ministry evaluation process.

STEP 2

Early Childhood Development Ministry Decision Tree

Faith leaders, clergy and evaluation teams can use the decision tree on page 21 to help evaluate your early childhood development ministry, identify where adjustments or new programs might be needed, and simplify the decision-making process, enabling you to identify areas for improvement quickly.

Simplifying Prioritization

Our easy-to-use prioritization method allows you to determine which potential changes or new initiatives should be addressed first. This approach ensures that your efforts are concentrated where they can have the most significant impact.

Action Planning Made Easy

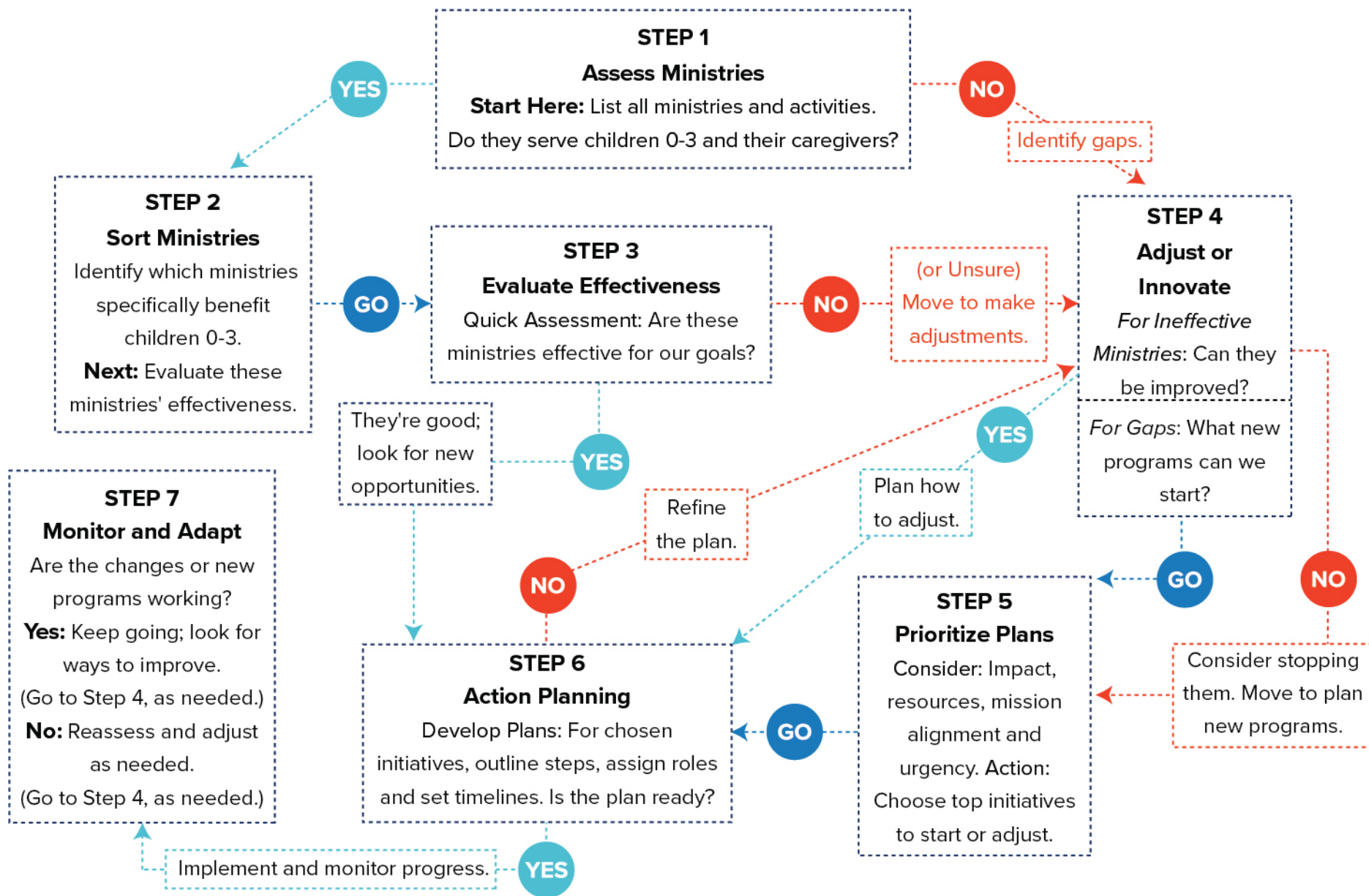
We've developed a checklist and a fillable template to assist you in turning your priorities into structured plans. These tools guide you through defining objectives, assigning responsibilities and setting timelines, ensuring every step towards implementation is clear and straightforward.





STEP 2

Early Childhood Development Ministry Decision Tree





STEP 2

How to Decide What to Pursue: An Assessment Tool

By prioritizing your ministry efforts, you can focus on what’s most impactful and urgent. We recognize that church leaders, like yourself, are busy. Prioritizing your efforts can make it easier for you to decide what to tackle immediately and what can wait, saving you time and resources.

List Initiatives

Write down the adjustments to existing ministries and any new program ideas identified as potential improvements or necessities from assessment tools.

Assess Each Initiative

For each listed initiative, assess its importance and urgency to the church's mission to support young children and their caregivers.

Assign a simple rating of High, Medium or Low to each initiative based on the following considerations:

- **High:** Initiatives that will significantly, positively impact children aged 0-3 and their caregivers, and are urgently needed.
- **Medium:** Important initiatives that are not urgent, but would benefit young families significantly.
- **Low:** Initiatives that would be nice, but are not critical or urgent.

Prioritize Based on Assessment

- **Immediate Focus:** Initiatives rated as High should be addressed first.
- **Next Steps:** Look to initiatives rated as Medium to plan for near-future implementation.
- **Long-Term Considerations:** Low-rated initiatives can be revisited later or when additional resources become available.

Example:	Early Childhood Program: High (Immediate focus)	New Parent Support Group: Medium (Next steps)	Updated Nursery Decor: Low (Long-term consideration)
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STEP 2 Creating a Work Plan to Bring Your Priorities to Life



This checklist is designed to guide church leadership in creating effective action plans for new programs or adjustments that support young children aged 0-3 and their caregivers.

This checklist provides a structured approach to action planning, ensuring clarity of purpose, accountability and effective monitoring throughout implementing new programs or adjustments within your church's ministry to young children and their caregivers.

1. Define Objectives

- Clearly state what the program or adjustment aims to achieve.
- Ensure objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART).

5. Determine Resources Needed

- List the resources (materials, funds, volunteers) required for each action.
- Plan how to acquire necessary resources.

2. List Key Actions

- Identify the steps needed to achieve each objective.
- Break down larger tasks into manageable actions.

6. Communication Plan

- Decide how progress updates will be communicated and how often.
- Identify who needs to be informed about the plan and its progress (team members, congregation, community).

3. Assign Responsible Persons

- Assign each key action to a specific person or team.
- Ensure each person understands their responsibilities and expectations.

7. Monitor Progress

- Schedule regular check-ins to review progress towards objectives.
- Adjust the plan as needed based on feedback and unforeseen challenges.

4. Set Timelines

- Establish deadlines for each key action.
- Allow for realistic timeframes that consider the availability and capacity of involved persons.

8. Evaluate and Reflect

- Upon completion, evaluate the action plan's success in meeting its objectives.
- Reflect on what worked well and areas for improvement for future planning.



STEP 2 Action Plan Template for Church Ministries

This template structures the planning process, making it easier for church leadership to define, organize and execute new programs or adjustments. The template can be adapted to fit various ministry initiatives and contexts and is designed to facilitate clear communication, responsibility allocation and systematic progress monitoring, contributing to the successful implementation of church ministry objectives.

Program/Adjustments Title: _____

Date: _____ **Coordinator:** _____

Objectives		
Objective	Description	Due Date
[Write your main goal or objective]	[Briefly describe the objective]	[MM/DD/YYYY]

Communication Plan		
<p>How will updates be communicated? [Email, meetings, etc.]</p>	<p>Frequency of updates: [e.g., weekly, monthly]</p>	<p>Stakeholders to be informed: [List stakeholders]</p>
Monitoring Progress		
<p>Check-in Dates: [List scheduled dates for progress review.]</p>	<p>Adjustment Plan: [Outline steps for making changes based on progress.]</p>	
Evaluation and Reflection		
<p>Success Measures: [How will the success of the program/adjustment be evaluated?]</p>	<p>Post-Implementation Review Date: [MM/DD/YYYY]</p>	<p>Notes for Improvement: [Space for notes on what worked, what didn't and potential improvements.]</p>

➔ Step 3: Conduct Observations and Gather Feedback

Step 3, Part 1: Evaluation Team Observations: Have the evaluation team assess programs by observing children’s engagement, the appropriateness of activities and the quality of interactions between leaders and children.



To help with Step 3, Part 1 of the evaluation process, we’ve included some helpful tools below, starting on page 28! We’re continuing with Step 4 of the full evaluation process on page 44.





STEP 3 PART 1

Ministry Observation Form

This form offers a template to help you observe, document and reflect on your current programs. When you have these observations, you are better positioned to lay the groundwork for a more nurturing, effective ministry that better serves your youngest community members and their families.

Date of Observation: _____ **Program/Activity Being Observed:** _____

Observer Name: _____ **Age Group of Children** (if applicable): _____

Please follow these guidelines as you complete the observation form.

- 1. Check the Appropriate Box:** For each section (Engagement and Participation, Activity Appropriateness, Interaction Quality, Environment and Materials), please assess the observed situation and check the box that best represents your evaluation based on the provided scale from 0 to 5.
- 2. Provide Specific Examples:** In the comments section of each category, include specific examples or detailed observations that support your score. This could include descriptions of activities, types of interactions you noticed or how children responded to different aspects of the program.
- 3. Suggest Follow-Up Actions:** Based on your observations, suggest potential follow-up actions that could address any issues identified or enhance the program. Your insights about possible improvements are incredibly helpful.
- 4. Reflective Questions:** If certain observations raise questions or if there are areas that require deeper reflection by the ministry team, please include these questions in your comments. Questions that provoke thought about your practices can lead to meaningful discussions and impactful changes.
- 5. Be Constructive:** Remember, this evaluation aims to support and enrich your ministry's offerings for young children and their families. Approach this task with a constructive mindset, aiming to identify strengths and growth opportunities.

1. Engagement and Participation

How engaged are the children in the activities? (Consider their focus, enthusiasm and interaction with the activity.)

0: Not engaged	1: Rarely engaged	2: Sometimes engaged	3: Often engaged	4: Fully engaged and interactive
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments on children's engagement (include specific examples): _____

2. Activity Appropriateness

Are the activities suitable for the children's developmental stages? (Consider if the activities support age-appropriate motor skills, language development, cognitive growth and social-emotional learning.)

0: No, not suitable	1: Rarely suitable	2: Sometimes suitable	3: Often suitable	4: Perfectly suitable for age
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments on activity suitability (note observed activities and developmental appropriateness): _____

3. Interaction Quality

Quality of interaction between leaders/caregivers and children: Assess the responsiveness, warmth and encouragement the leaders/caregivers provide.

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| 0: Needs significant improvement | 1: Inconsistent quality | 2: Satisfactory, but could improve | 3: Good, supportive interactions | 4: Exceptionally supportive and engaging |
|---|--------------------------------|---|---|---|

Comments on interactions (provide examples of interactions): _____

4. Environment and Materials

Is the environment clean, safe, inviting and conducive to learning?

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|--|
| 0: No, not at all | 1: Minimally | 2: Somewhat | 3: Mostly | 4: Exceptionally well-prepared and inviting |
|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|--|

Are the materials and toys appropriate and engaging?

- | | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------|--|--|
| 0: Inappropriate and unengaging | 1: Rarely appropriate or engaging | 2: Sometimes appropriate | 3: Often appropriate and engaging | 4: Perfectly matched to developmental needs and interests |
|--|--|---------------------------------|--|--|

Comments on environment and materials (mention specific materials used and their suitability): _____

Overall Score: _____ (Add up the scores from each section).

General Comments/Recommendations for Improvement:

Interpreting Your Scores: Planning for Improvements

(Total Score Ranges: 0-20)

- **17-20: Excelling** - Your ministry is outstanding in supporting young children’s developmental needs. Keep sharing your practices and continuously adapt to the growing needs of the children.
- **13-16: Doing Well, With Room for Growth** - Your program shows strong support with areas to enhance. Identify lower-scoring sections for targeted improvements.
- **9-12: Moderate Support** - Some foundational support is present, but focused efforts are needed to meet developmental needs better. Prioritize areas with lower scores for improvement.
- **5-8: Needs Immediate Attention** - Essential areas of support for children’s development are lacking. Review and implement changes urgently.
- **0-4: Critical Improvement Needed** - Significant enhancements are necessary to create a supportive, nurturing environment for children. Consider comprehensive program adjustments and seek additional training or resources.

Next Steps:

- 1. Review and Reflect:** Analyze comments and scores to understand your program’s strengths and weaknesses.
- 2. Set Priorities:** Identify key areas for immediate and long-term improvements.
- 3. Develop a Plan:** Outline actionable steps for addressing identified priorities.
- 4. Implement Changes:** Start with high-priority areas, ensuring changes are developmentally appropriate.
- 5. Monitor and Adjust:** Review the impact of changes regularly and adjust as necessary to continue meeting children’s developmental needs.

**Sources for the form include The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Zero to Three, Ministry-To-Children.*

➔ Step 3: Conduct Observations and Gather Feedback

Step 3, Part 2: Parent and Caregiver Insights: Collect insights from parents and caregivers through surveys, informal conversations and interviews.



To help with Step 3, Part 2 of the evaluation process, we've included helpful tools below, starting on page 33! We're continuing with Step 4 of the full evaluation process on page 44.





STEP 3 PART 2

Sample Congregant Survey for Caregivers of Children Aged 0-3

Below, you will find a sample survey that you can share with parents and caregivers of young children aged 0-3 to gain additional insights regarding their early childhood development needs.

Introduction

We are committed to supporting families with young children in our church community. Your feedback is invaluable in helping us understand how we can best meet your needs. Please take a few moments to complete this short survey.

Basic Information

How many children aged 0-3 do you have? _____

Have you attended any church programs or services with your child(ren)? Yes No

Church Services and Programs

Are you aware of our church's programs and services for children aged 0-3 and their families? Yes No

If yes, which programs or services have you participated in? _____

Needs and Preferences

What are your most important factors when considering church programs for your child(ren)? (Check all that apply.)

Safety and Security Educational Content Social Interaction for Children Support Networks for Parents

Spiritual Development Other (please specify): _____

Accessibility

How easily can you and your child(ren) participate in our church's programs and services?

Very Easily Somewhat Easily Neutral Somewhat Difficult Very Difficult

If you find it difficult, what are the main barriers? (Check all that apply.)

Schedule/Timing Conflicts Lack of Information Physical Accessibility of the Church Feeling Unwelcome or Uncomfortable Other (please specify): _____

Desired Improvements

What improvements or new services would you like to see in our church for families with children aged 0-3?

Volunteering and Community

Would you like to volunteer to support programs for young children and their families? Yes No Maybe

What kind of support is missing for families with young children in our community? _____

➔ Step 3: Conduct Observations and Gather Feedback

Step 3, Part 3: Leadership Feedback: Involve senior spiritual leadership in reflecting on aligning ministry efforts to nurture young children.



To help with Step 3, Part 3 of the evaluation process, we've included a helpful tool below, starting on page 37! We're continuing with Step 4 of the full evaluation process on page 44.





Print this resource to help guide your own ministry evaluation process.

STEP 3 PART 3

Early Childhood Development Ministry Evaluation Tool

This tool is designed to help you critically assess how your ministry currently supports young children and their families in order to plan for the future.

Please choose the score that best represents your current practices for each statement. We encourage you to provide specific examples or observations in the 'Additional Notes and Actions' section to help illustrate your scores and suggest potential actions for improvement.

Your thoughtful reflection and honesty are crucial for making meaningful changes in our ministry.

1. Representation in Church Planning

When planning church events and services, do we consistently consider the specific needs and experiences of families with children aged 0-3?

0: Never

1: Rarely

2: Sometimes

3: Often

4: Always



2. Resource Allocation

Have we allocated a suitable portion of our budget and physical space to create a welcoming and appropriate environment for infants and toddlers and their caregivers?

0: Not at all

1: Insufficiently

2: Adequately

3: More than adequately

4: Exceptionally well



3. Program Development

Do we have dedicated programs and activities designed to engage and support the spiritual, educational, emotional and physical development of children aged 0-3?

0: None	1: A few	2: Some	3: Many	4: A comprehensive range
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Caregiver Support

What measures have we implemented to support caregivers within the church community?

0: No measures	1: Occasional support	2: Regular support	3: Extensive support	4: Full-fledged programs
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Feedback and Involvement

How regularly do we solicit and act upon feedback from parents and caregivers of children aged 0-3?

0: Never	1: Rarely	2: Sometimes	3: Often	4: Always
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Outreach

In what ways does our church actively reach out and connect with families in the community, providing supportive services and hospitality?

0: Not actively reaching out	1: Limited outreach	2: Moderate outreach	3: Significant outreach	4: Extensive and ongoing outreach
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Interpreting Your Scores

(Total Score Range: 0-28)

24-28: Exceptional Leadership in Early

Childhood Ministry - Your church is at the forefront of early childhood ministry, with a strong commitment to young families evident in all areas. Continue innovating and sharing your practices with others. Still, remain open to feedback for continuous improvement.

17-23: Strong and Supportive Environment for Young Families

- Your church provides a supportive and engaging environment for young families, though there are areas where you can further enhance your programs and outreach. Focus on the lower-scoring areas for targeted improvements.

10-16: Moderate Engagement with Young Families

- While your church has made strides

in supporting young families, several areas need focused attention and development. Consider strategic planning sessions to address these gaps and enhance your ministry's impact.

4-9: Emerging Awareness and Involvement

- Your church is beginning to recognize the importance of catering to young families, but needs substantial improvements. Engage in a comprehensive review to identify effective strategies for inclusive growth.

0-3: Immediate Reevaluation and Action

Needed - A score in this range indicates a critical need to reevaluate your church's approach to supporting young families. Immediate, concerted efforts are required to become more inclusive and supportive.

Next Steps

- 1. Detailed Review:** Assess individual scores to pinpoint specific strengths and weaknesses.
- 2. Strategic Planning:** Prioritize areas with lower scores for improvement and set realistic goals.
- 3. Engage the Community:** Involve parents, caregivers and church members in the planning process to ensure diverse perspectives and needs are considered.
- 4. Allocate Resources:** Reassess budget and space allocation to support program development and outreach efforts better.
- 5. Implement and Monitor:** Roll out targeted changes and regularly monitor their effectiveness, adjusting strategies as needed.

Recommendation

Your scores reflect how well your church integrates and supports the needs of families with young children. Use these insights as a springboard for discussion and planning, ensuring that your church not only welcomes but also cherishes and nurtures its youngest members and their families.



STEP 3 PART 3

Reference Sheet for Ministry Evaluation Tool

This reference sheet provides examples for each score within the evaluation areas of the Ministry Evaluation Tool. These scenarios aim to illustrate specific instances or practices that could correspond to different scores, assisting you in making more informed and accurate assessments.



Representation in Church Planning

Always: We ensure a service or accommodation specifically for families with young children, like a quiet feeding area during services for every church event.

Often: Most church events include considerations for young families, such as early service times to align with nap schedules, though not all events are fully accommodating.

Sometimes: Some church events and services consider the needs of young families, but it is not a consistent practice across all planning efforts.

Rarely: Church event planning rarely considers the specific needs of families with young children.

Never: The needs and experiences of families with young children are not considered when planning church events and services.



Resource Allocation

Exceptionally well: A significant portion of our budget and space is dedicated to creating a welcoming and fully equipped environment for infants and toddlers.

More than adequately: We allocate many resources to young families, though some areas could benefit from additional support.

Adequately: Resources are allocated to support young families, but the allocation often falls short of creating a fully welcoming environment.

Insufficiently: There is minimal allocation of budget and space for the needs of young families, with clear gaps in support.

Not at all: No specific budget or space is allocated for the needs of infants, toddlers and their caregivers.



Program Development

A comprehensive range: Our church offers a wide variety of programs specifically designed for the developmental stages of children aged 0-3, including weekly playgroups, parent-and-toddler classes and family counseling services.

Many: Several dedicated programs and activities are available, but they may not cover all aspects of spiritual, emotional and physical development.

Some: A few programs are developed with young children in mind, though they are limited in scope and frequency.

A few: One or two programs are available, but they are infrequent and not comprehensive in their support of young children's development.

None: No dedicated programs or activities are designed for children aged 0-3 and their families.



Caregiver Support

Full-fledged programs: Our church offers comprehensive support programs for caregivers, including regular workshops, support groups and individual counseling services, ensuring they feel supported both spiritually and practically.

Extensive support: We consistently support caregivers through monthly meetings, occasional seminars and a dedicated pastoral care team for family support.

Regular support: Caregivers receive some support, such as an occasional seminar or access to a resource library, but these efforts are not comprehensive or regularly scheduled.

Occasional support: Support for caregivers is sporadic and limited, often reactive to specific situations rather than part of a structured program.

No measures: No specific measures are in place to support caregivers within the church community.



Feedback and Involvement

Always: Our church has established systems for regularly soliciting feedback from parents and caregivers, such as quarterly surveys and feedback forums, and actively involves them in planning children's programs.

Often: Feedback is requested after specific events or programs and is generally considered in future planning, though not systematically integrated into all areas of ministry.

Sometimes: We occasionally ask for feedback through informal conversations or after major events, but there is no formal process for incorporating this feedback into planning.

Rarely: Feedback from parents and caregivers is seldom sought and rarely acted upon.

Never: There is no effort to solicit feedback from parents and caregivers about the children's ministry.



Outreach

Extensive and ongoing outreach: Our church actively reaches out to families in the community through targeted programs, partnerships with local organizations and community events designed to welcome and support young families.

Significant outreach: There are regular outreach efforts, such as community playdates and informational sessions for local families, though these could be expanded to reach more diverse groups.

Moderate outreach: Some outreach initiatives exist, but they are limited in scope and frequency, often focusing on families already connected to the church community.

Limited outreach: Outreach to families is minimal and often incidental, without a strategic plan or dedicated resources.

Not actively reaching out: The church does not engage in outreach to connect with families in the community.



Hospitality

Exceptionally welcoming: Our church environment is specifically designed to be welcoming and accommodating to young families. This may include clear signage, family-friendly facilities and greeters trained to assist families with young children.

Very welcoming: Young families feel welcome through designated areas and services, although some aspects of the church environment could be improved for greater accessibility.

Moderately welcoming: The church tries to welcome young families, but these efforts are not consistently applied or well-communicated to visitors.

Slightly welcoming: There are few intentional efforts to make young families feel welcome, and the environment may present barriers to full participation.

Not welcoming: The church does not have measures to ensure that young families feel welcomed or accommodated.

**Sources for the tool include The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Zero to Three, and Sustainable Children's Ministry: From Last-Minute Scrambling to Long-Term Solutions by Mark DeVries and Annette Safstrom.*

➔ Step 4: Analyze

Analyze Findings: Review observations and feedback to pinpoint strengths and areas needing improvement.

➔ Step 5: Create a Plan

We've included resources and tips below.

➔ Step 6: Update the Plan as Needed

Once you've started new programs or updated existing programs, be sure to check in with parents and caregivers to see how they're working for them!

- For example, you could share a yearly survey, asking your congregation for feedback. (There are great free resources, such as Google Forms or SurveyMonkey, that you can use to create these surveys and feedback opportunities.)
- You could also lead conversations once or twice a year to get feedback.

By focusing on these actionable steps, your faith community can create an environment where the youngest members are given the attention and support they need to flourish.



Create an Early Childhood Development Ministry Action Plan



Create Your Congregation's Plan

Congratulations on making it this far! So far, we've looked at:

- Why supporting early childhood development is a foundational mission to our faith;
- The various elements that support early childhood development; and
- How your congregation currently supports young children and families.

Now, it's time to develop a plan to create or accelerate your early childhood development ministry.

When creating your action plan, refer back to your evaluation and the answers you uncovered. Recall which programs you identified in your evaluation phase that you want to address.

Sort your programs based on their overall evaluation score and keep in mind things like your community's needs, your congregation's capacity and the resources available. At this time, you can ask yourselves once more with each program:



Now is the accepted time, not tomorrow, not some more convenient season. It is today that our best work can be done and not some future day or future year.
- William Edward Burghardt Du Bois

1. Should we adjust or innovate?

For each of your ministry programs, ask the following questions to help guide your course of action: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is our current ministry program effective?• Is it reaching who it needs to reach?• Is it achieving the intended impact?• Can this current program be improved?	If so: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What adjustments need to be made?• Are these adjustments feasible? Do we have the resources and capacity to make these adjustments?
	If not: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the impact of suspending the program?• Are there other community programs that offer these services that we can direct our faith community to?• What do we hope a new program can accomplish that is currently lacking in our faith community?

2. Where should we start taking action?

- Recall from your evaluation phase, the goals of your early childhood development ministry, the goals you've set and the resources and capacity available. Prioritize your programs based on these insights.
 - From your top programs:
 - outline action steps, making sure that your program reflects early childhood development best practices and standards (resources above);
 - assign roles; and
 - set timelines.
 - When your team has approved the plan, implement it and refine and adjust it as needed.
 - Consider setting regular benchmarks for additional evaluations and refinements as needed.
-



Appendix

The resources offered in the Appendix provide additional tools, articles and research that can support the evaluation, planning and execution of your child-focused ministry initiatives. From enhancing early childhood development to addressing Black maternal and neonatal health disparities, this directory provides additional insights and practical knowledge to further enrich your ministry's impact on young families.



Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you.

- Matthew 7:7-11

Definitions

Action Planning

Creating detailed plans for implementing priority adjustments or new programs, including specific actions, responsibilities, timelines and resources.

Adjustments

Modifications to existing ministries or activities to enhance effectiveness or alignment with young children's and their caregivers' needs.

Alignment with Church Mission

How well a ministry or program supports the overarching goals and values of the church.

Caregivers

Individuals caring for children, such as parents, guardians, family members or childcare providers, within the church or community.

Effectiveness

The extent to which a ministry or activity meets its objectives, particularly in supporting young children's developmental, spiritual and emotional needs.

Feasibility

Given available resources and volunteer support, the ease and practicality of implementing a new program or adjustment.

Impact Potential

The expected benefit or positive change a ministry or program will have on young children and their caregivers.

Ministries

Organized church activities or programs to serve the congregation and community in spiritual, educational or practical support.

Monitor and Evaluate

Continuous review of changes or new programs to assess their effectiveness, impact and alignment with objectives.

New Program Needs

Gaps in current offerings that, if addressed, could enhance support for the development and well-being of children aged 0-3 and their caregivers.

Objective

A specific, measurable goal aimed to be achieved within a set timeframe, serving as a clear target for ministry activities.

SMART Goals

A framework for setting clear, achievable objectives. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound. Goals defined using this criteria ensure that objectives are well-defined and attainable, with a clear evaluation plan.

- **Specific:** The goal is clearly defined and precise.
- **Measurable:** The goal has criteria for measuring progress and success.
- **Achievable:** The goal is realistic and attainable with available resources.
- **Relevant:** The goal aligns with the broader mission and objectives of the church.
- **Time-bound:** The goal has a clearly defined timeline for achievement.

Stakeholder

Anyone interested in or impacted by a church's ministries, including congregation members, leadership, volunteers, families and the wider community.

Success Measures

Criteria for evaluating a ministry's programs' effectiveness. This

may include quantitative data like attendance and qualitative feedback like participant satisfaction.

Urgency

The immediate need or priority level for implementing a new program or making adjustments, often based on the critical needs of young children and their families.

Black Maternal and Neonatal Health Resources

Summaries and resources are provided to illuminate the disparities in health outcomes for Black mothers and their babies and strategies to reduce these disparities. These resources cover statistics, contributing factors and strategies for improving maternal and neonatal health within Black communities. Understanding these challenges is essential for developing ministry initiatives that effectively support and advocate for the health and well-being of all families.

- [Addressing America's Black Maternal Health Crisis, National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda](#)
- [Black Maternal Mortality, CDC](#)
- [Infant Mortality and African Americans, OMH](#)
- [US Neonatal Death Rate Oct 2023, CDC](#)
- [Doula Support Improves Maternal and Child Health Outcomes, Patient and Family Engagement, nichq.org](#)
- [If Christians Want to 'Choose Life,' Let's Talk About Black Maternal Mortality, Sojourners](#)
- [ECE Breastfeeding Fact Sheet](#)
- [Online Support Groups, Shades of Blue](#)

Early Childhood Development Resources

Summaries or links to resources on key developmental milestones for children aged 0-3, emphasizing physical, cognitive and emotional growth. This foundational knowledge supports all other aspects of ministry planning.

- [Developmental Milestones, CDC](#)
- [Supporting Language and Literacy Skills from 0-12 Months, ZERO TO THREE](#)
- [Storytelling in the First Three Years, ZERO TO THREE](#)
- [An Essential Support for Pregnant Women, Infants and Toddlers, Early Head Start](#)
- [Early Learning Toolkit, NBCDI Conference](#)
- [State of Babies Yearbook 2023, ZERO TO THREE](#)

Creating Child-Friendly Spaces Resources

Practical resources and checklists for designing engaging environments within the church. This includes considerations for breastfeeding spaces, nurseries, daycare areas and childproofing.

- [How to Make Your Church Nursery Attractive to Visitors, ministryspark.com](#)
- [The Solution To Unused Church Space Might Be Toddlers, Sojourners](#)
- [Creating a Mother-Friendly Environment for your Faith-Based Organization, Natural Nutrition](#)
- [Creating a High-Quality Church Nursery, Jolene Roehlkepartain \(Vibrant Faith Ministries, Faith Formation Learning Exchange.net\)](#)
- [The Procure Guide to Opening a Church Daycare, Procure](#)
- [Quality Practices for Early Care and Education, Child Care Aware® of America](#)

Child Safety Resources

Resources to help churches maintain a safe environment for all children through safety checklists, volunteer screening and safety training.

- Start with Your Insurance Provider: Contact your insurance provider to see if there are specific guidelines in your policy that you should follow. See Church Mutual Insurance's resource for churches to self-inspect for all safety considerations.
 - [Self-Inspection Safety Checklist for Worship Centers and Related Facilities](#)
- Emergency Information Form: Collect vital health and contact information.
 - [Example Emergency Information Form for Children](#)
- Volunteer Screening and Training: These are examples of companies that perform background checks for churches. This is not an endorsement of these companies.
 - *Background Checks: Essential for all volunteers.*
 - [Volunteer Background Checks, Protect My Ministry](#)
 - [Church Background Checks for Volunteers and Workers](#)
 - *Safety Training: Equip volunteers with child safety skills.*
 - [Child Safety Training for Abuse and Prevention, Protect My Ministry](#)

Spiritual Development for Young Children Resources

Suggestions or curriculum ideas for introducing young children to faith in engaging and age-appropriate ways.

- [Fat Cat Big Theology for Little Kids](#)
- [Art, Music, and Other Forms of Expression to Incorporate into your Preschool Curriculum, tryplayground.com](#)
- [50 Ways to Strengthen Ministry with Children, Lewis Center for Church Leadership of Wesley Theological Seminary](#)

Parental Resources

Resources to support parents and caregivers, including establishing a parent support group.

- [Black Church Food Security Network](#)
- [Financial Assistance for Families, Childcare.gov](#)
- [Children's Health Insurance Program \(CHIP\), Medicaid](#)
- [Mutual Aid's Radical Christian Roots, Sojourners](#)
- [Black Maternal Health Omnibus Act, Sojourners](#)
- [Choosing Quality Childcare on Short Notice, Child Care Aware® of America](#)

Use these resources as a springboard for refining your ministry's approach to childcare, ensuring every young family feels valued and supported within your faith community.



Sojourners Support

Faith communities play a crucial role in championing equitable health outcomes and supporting young families, especially in communities of color. By leveraging our trusted positions, ***we can educate, advocate and extend beyond spiritual guidance to practical support, ensuring all families have access to necessary care.***

We encourage involvement in the broader initiatives that Sojourners – through SojoAction – is implementing to secure the futures of young children. ***Join SojoAction at <https://act.sojo.net/page/65895/survey/1> to stay connected and to continue to partner to make the world that God intends for all God’s children.***



*The way to right wrongs
is to turn the light of
truth upon them.*

- Ida B. Wells



SOJOURNERS
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www.sojo.net