

PARENTS NIGHT OUT

FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE STYLE



A M E R I C A ' S
KIDS BELONG™

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PARENTS NIGHT OUT FOSTER & ADOPTIVE STYLE

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WHAT?

WHAT IS A PARENTS NIGHT OUT FOR FOSTER & ADOPTIVE FAMILIES?

This Parents Night Out (PNO) is an opportunity for churches to love their neighbors by providing a night out to foster and adoptive families. Church members enjoy the satisfaction of serving, the families receive much-needed respite and encouragement, and the kids experience fun activities and a sense of belonging.

Parents drop off their foster/kinship*/adoptive children, along with their biological kids, at a church where trained volunteers are waiting to provide their kids with fun activities and a sense of belonging.

Parents can then take a “date night” or just a few hours of personal time thanks to these trusted, background-checked volunteers and a loving church family.

**Kinship care is a form of foster care that involves a relative or close family friend caring for a child in foster care.*

WHY?

WHY HOST A FOSTER/ADOPTIVE FRIENDLY PARENTS NIGHT OUT?

- **Rest and Rejuvenation for Foster & Adoptive Parents**

The most obvious benefit of a PNO is the rest provided to these important caregivers. Nationally, Did you up to 50% of foster parents quite after the first year. A lack of social support is the number one reason why parents stop fostering. To put it mildly, these events are extremely popular with families because the break is so needed and appreciated. To learn more about the importance of foster parent retention, read the America's Kids Belong article Why Retention of Foster Parents is Vital at faith.americaskidsbelong.org.

- **Connection for the Children**

Children in foster care do not usually get the opportunity to simply have fun with children from similar backgrounds. A well-done PNO is a safe, fun time for kids! It is also a positive interaction for kids in a faith-based environment.

- **Community Outreach**

This event can establish your church as one who cares about the families throughout your whole community!

- **Use of Facilities**

Often, church staff are looking for ways to use their buildings outside of weekend services. Churches are inherently ideal places to host these because they run the check in and caregiving process every weekend for church services.

- **Education about the Foster Care Crisis**

By hosting a PNO, you can provide your congregation a brief but direct way to be in community with children in foster care and their families. This can be a good way to expose people to an important community issue, but in a lower-commitment, but high impact experience for everyone.

HOW?

HOW TO LAUNCH A PNO FOR FOSTER FAMILIES

1. MAKE SURE IT'S POSSIBLE

- One church can do this or partner with other churches! If partnering with other churches, consider making this a quarterly opportunity and take turns hosting. Pre-scheduled times of respite are very appreciated and needed by foster and adoptive families. Plus, the more you do them, the bigger and better they will get!

2. CONNECT WITH FOSTER PARENTS & CHILD WELFARE

- Start by going to Foster or Adoptive Parents you already know in your church and community. Share this idea and plan with them. Ask them to connect you to child welfare if you don't have an existing relationship with them.
- Child welfare can get the word out to local foster parents and may have advice about safety and security. For tips on developing rapport with child welfare, see our article [Building Relationships with Child Welfare](#) at faith.americaskidsbelong.org.

HOW?

HOW TO LAUNCH A PNO FOR FOSTER FAMILIES

3. PLAN THE EVENT

A. PNOs are typically hosted on a Friday or Saturday evening from late afternoon to early evening.

- This timeframe generally allows kids who thrive on routine to keep with bedtime schedules.
- Depending on the size of your church, monthly or quarterly events are a good frequency.
- If you team up with other churches to recruit volunteers, you can keep the same processes and procedures and simply rotate which church hosts the actual event.

B. Establish Adult-To-Child Ratios.

- Check with your church child care policies first. You might also double check your state guidelines for adult to child ratios as well. [Childcare.gov](https://www.childcare.gov) offers guidance to ratios and group sizes. You should always have 2 adults present in a room of children (or 1 adult and 1 teen helper). No adult or teen helper should be by himself or herself with a child. AKB recommendations are in the table below. These ratios are typically more conservative than even some state requirements. It is important to recognize that many of these children come from hard places and would benefit from extra attention and social support. Having plenty of adult and teen helpers means you have plenty of oversight PLUS the opportunity for positive interaction and play with the children and families you are serving.

AGE	NUMBER OF CHILDREN	NUMBER OF ADULTS
Infant/toddlers under 24 months	2	1
Preschooler age 3-5	4	1
Elementary age 5-12	5	1
Teenagers age 12- 18	6	1

HOW?

cont.

HOW TO LAUNCH A PNO FOR FOSTER FAMILIES (continued)

- Keep in mind you will want to invite any biological children that the families have to make it a true “night out,” so include that number in your planning.
- Consider including stations or room changes to keep older children engaged and offer a change of scenery since PNOs are longer than your typical Sunday School hour. Churches are ideal locations for PNOs because they often have rooms, toys and age-appropriate games readily available.

C. Establish Security Measures

- Many churches already have a secure check in procedure for their children’s ministry. Use that procedure for this event as well. If your church does not have a check in procedure, it is critical that you develop one for this event. (i.e. Matching wristbands/nametags among the foster parents and the children). There must be no question about who is expected and allowed to check out the child and leave the building.
- You will want to collect the foster family’s name, contact information, emergency contact information, the names and ages of the kids they are dropping off, as well as any allergies. Have families pre-register for the event so check-in at PNO is a quicker, smoother process.

D. Provide Healthy Snacks

- Children and teens who have experienced trauma may be more sensitive to dehydration and low blood sugar levels. They may also experience food insecurity. Having water bottles and fruit or granola bars visibly available can ease insecurity and give volunteers a go-to solution for children experiencing a hard time

HOW?

cont.

HOW TO LAUNCH A PNO FOR FOSTER FAMILIES (continued)

4. PROMOTE THE EVENT

- A. Start by promoting it in your church to your foster families
- B. Ask your contact at your local child welfare office (and/or private agencies) to help you get the word out to their foster families.
- C. If your community has a clothing closet for foster and adoptive children, ask them to help you get the word out as well.

5. RECRUIT AND TRAIN VOLUNTEERS

- A. All volunteers must pass a background check before the event OR the church must have a completed check on record within the last 12 months.
- B. All volunteers must have some moderate training on working with children who have experienced trauma. A brief primer on trauma is included in our Volunteer Training Outline. We suggest at least an hour of training a week or two prior to the event and a 20 to 30-minute Volunteer Refresher and Prayer Time with volunteers prior to the PNO set up and arrival of children.
- C. All volunteers should be told not to take any photos of the children or to post on social media for the kids' privacy and protection. If you would like to have photographs of the event, have a volunteer photographer specifically assigned to take pictures. Have photos edited to blur facial features of all children or only use photographs where children's faces are not shown. Be very selective about what is shared and never use the name of children or families online without express permission from the foster or adoptive parents.

HOW?

cont.

HOW TO LAUNCH A PNO FOR FOSTER FAMILIES (continued)

6. ENCOURAGE PARENTS

- A. Consider purchasing gift cards to restaurants close to your church for the parents to use that evening or send families home with goodie bags with treats for the parents and activities for the kids.
- B. Ask for the parents' feedback a few days later to see how they enjoyed the evening and ask for suggestions on how to make the next event even better. A simple Google Form survey or Survey Monkey that you can email are easy ways to gain feedback.

FAQs

FOSTER/ADOPTIVE PARENTS NIGHT OUT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT AGES CAN WE INCLUDE?

- You can offer your PNO to any age, but many of the children in foster care and also adoptive families will have siblings. Their ages can, of course, be anywhere from birth to 18 years old. If you limit the evening to certain ages you will dramatically limit the families who can attend. If the parents have one child in the age range and another child who can't participate, the parents will not get a true "night out."

To get started, your church may only feel comfortable offering PNO for babies, toddlers and elementary children, but realize that foster parents may have been advised not to leave teens unsupervised until a significant amount of time and relationship has been formed. Consider involving your Church Youth Group in this event. Some teens from the youth group could participate with the younger kids while others could participate in a youth group game or movie night with the teens in foster care who have been registered to attend. Consider utilizing the people and places your church has already developed for ministry with teens.

CAN WE DO A PNO DURING THE DAY?

- Of course! Some churches choose to do a Saturday morning or afternoon. Just adjust the name to Parents Day Out.

HOW MUCH DOES A PNO COST THE CHURCH?

- That is up to your church, but costs typically range from \$5 to \$15 per child for food, decorations, giveaways, and supplies. PNO is a gift to foster and adoptive parents so if budget is of concern, consider partnering with a local business to sponsor the evening. You can also ask your church members donate snacks and games to cut down on costs. As we've discussed, it's invaluable to the parents!

FAQs

cont.

FOSTER/ADOPTIVE PARENTS NIGHT OUT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (continued)

HOW OFTEN SHOULD A PNO BE OFFERED?

- Some churches offer it quarterly and others monthly (though not necessarily all 12 months. Typically, there is less interest during the summer months.)
- Four churches in a county in northern Colorado each do it once a quarter, covering the whole year!

HOW OFTEN SHOULD A PNO BE OFFERED?

- A basic church insurance policy should suffice for this event, but be sure to stay within the parameters of your church's policy when doing this or any event. *Please see a sample liability waiver attached to the end of this document.*

VOLUNTEERS

SAMPLE VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- **Coordinator(s)**
- **Registration/Check-In Volunteers**
- **Greeters**
- **Decorations**
- **Meal/Snack Coordinator**
- **Floater**
- **Food Prep/Clean Up Helpers**
- **Nursery Volunteers**
- **K-1 Volunteers**
- **2nd-3rd Volunteers**
- **4th-5th Volunteers**
- **Youth Coaches (if you include teens)**
- **Games Center Leaders (children's volunteers stay with their groups through all 3 rotations)**
- **Storytime/Marshmallow Center Leaders**
- **Craft/Lantern Center Leader**
- **Medical Center**
- **Security Volunteer**

VOLUNTEERS

SAMPLE VOLUNTEER TRAINING

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS PARENTS NIGHT OUT FOR FOSTER & ADOPTIVE PARENTS?

- A lack of social support is the number one reason why parents stop fostering. We want to help kids by helping foster and adoptive parents to stay healthy!
- Children in foster care do not usually get the opportunity to simply have fun with children from similar backgrounds. This will be a safe, fun time for kids!
- We want our community to know that we are a church who cares about foster care and adoption.
- We hope that this will teach all of us something about God's heart for children, for foster care and adoption.

The Goal: To Make Everyone Feel Welcome & Cared For

There will be many different types of families/parents. We want to show Christ's love to all.

IMPORTANT GUIDELINES TO HAVING FUN & BEING SAFE

Communication

- Conversations should stay at a basic level! Avoid topics about home life, parents, where they live, or go to school. Stay away from topics that are too personal.

Good topics of conversation include:

- What are you doing right now? That looks fun!
- What do you like to do for fun? What are some of your favorite games/hobbies/sports?
- What is your favorite snack/movie/cartoon character/color/season/kind of music?
- What is your favorite subject in school? What is your least favorite?
- What special talent do you have or what are you the best at doing?
- What grade are you in?

VOLUNTEERS

SAMPLE VOLUNTEER TRAINING (continued)

Do NOT ASK questions like the following:

- Is that your real mom/dad/sister/brother?
- Do you get to visit your parents?
- Do you like your foster parents?
- Why are you in foster care?
- Are you going to be adopted?
- What school do you go to?
- Where did you move from?
- How long have you been in foster care?

If a child says something that makes you wonder if you should report at some point during the night, see the PNO coordinator. Don't show shock or surprise. Don't further question the child. Just redirect the conversation in a casual way.

Confidentiality

Of course, do not share any information to people outside of PNO about who attended—parents or children. Do not share any type of information or topics of conversation involving children or parents on social media, either.

Physical Touch

- Because of their varied backgrounds, some may be overly “touchy” or may not want to be touched at all. If you feel that a touch initiated by the child is not appropriate, redirect to the current activity or if they want attention, you can suggest they sit beside you, if appropriate, during the activity.
- Let PNO point person know if inappropriate physical touch happens between two kids.

VOLUNTEERS

SAMPLE VOLUNTEER TRAINING (continued)

Behavior Problems

- It is best to redirect. Avoid saying “no” or “don’t do that.” Instead say, “Let’s get back to the activity” or “Why don’t we stand over here and do the activity?”
- Another option is for two adults to take the child for a short walk to get some space. “Let’s take a walk for a little bit. Then we’ll come back and join the others.”
- Review the trauma overview for more tips.

Bathroom Policies

- Two adults take one child to the bathroom. This is to protect you and the child. Have supervised and scheduled bathroom breaks/rotations.

Concerns About Children

- Any concerns about the children should be addressed to PNO coordinator. This includes things they say, bruises, behavior, etc. They will make the decision of whether or not to report it to Social Services.

Reaction to Children’s Comments

- Stay calm; don’t show surprise or alarm.
- Redirect conversations, if needed, like “How about we wait and talk about that when your fosterparents return?”

VOLUNTEERS

SAMPLE VOLUNTEER TRAINING (continued)

Child Checkout

- Please keep the children in your watch and care until the check-out procedures are followed. Even if the child recognizes the adult(s) coming to get them, go and double check the numbers or system to insure the child is leaving with the adult that has permission to pick the child up. Do not worry about offending the adult. Foster parents are well aware of the importance of safety procedures on behalf of the children in their care.

Future Interactions

- If you see these kiddos in public in the future, please do not initiate with them or say anything that points out that you met them at an event for children in foster care. If they initiate, it's okay to respond, though!

Volunteers Under 18

- Volunteers under 18 cannot be left unsupervised with a child. You must have an adult present.

Personal Items

- Leave all personal items in a secure place.

Cell Phone & Cameras

- Keep cell phones out of site except for use in an emergency. Children may ask to use or play on a volunteer's phone. This should never be allowed. Volunteers should be fully present and keep their primary focus on the children, keeping phones out of site at all times.
- Do not take any photos of the children or post on social media for the kids' privacy and protection.

TRAUMA

TRAUMA OVERVIEW: CARING FOR CHILDREN FROM HARD PLACES

TRUE OR FALSE?

Children in foster care are there because of their own juvenile delinquency.

FALSE: Almost all children and teens enter foster care by no fault of their own. Instead they enter foster care because the adults in their lives cannot keep them safe or healthy and there may be an investigation of neglect or abuse.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Children in foster care can't see their birth parents.

FALSE: Foster care is meant to be temporary so that a family can get healthy and reunify. Most children and teens in foster care have visits with their birth parents or other biological family members while in foster care. The children and teens in your care may speak both negatively and positively about their birth parents and/or their foster parents. This is a confusing and difficult time for children. Realize their birth parents might not have been perfect, but they are their parents. If a child discusses their situation with you, be compassionate and empathetic, but do not take it upon yourself to take sides or try to help the child see the "reality" of his or her situation. Foster parents are trained on how to help children through this time.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Even infants who are in foster care or children adopted at birth by a loving, healthy family can struggle.

TRUE: Every single foster or adoption story, even if from birth, starts with significant loss. Infants, children and teens who have been placed in foster care or who have been adopted experienced loss of their biological family and so much more. This loss is traumatic and can result in various struggles, so extend compassion for all who have experienced foster care and/or adoption.

Trauma and loss are realities for children of all ages that have experienced foster care and adoption. Let's look at how trauma may impact children and how you can be mindful and helpful as you serve them.

TRAUMA

TRAUMA OVERVIEW: CARING FOR CHILDREN FROM HARD PLACES (continued)

1. WHAT IS TRAUMA?

Trauma is an actual or perceived experience in which powerful and dangerous stimuli overwhelm a child's capacity to regulate emotions. A frightening or dangerous event that threatens a child's life or safety. ([NCTSN Learning Center](#))

Sources of trauma may include but are certainly not limited to: separation from family, abuse, neglect, a stressful pregnancy and difficult birth, natural disaster, exposure to violence, sudden loss, and exposure to single events such as a car accident, a painful medical procedure, or early hospitalization.

2. WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TRAUMA & IT'S IMPACT

According to the National Survey of Children's Health, nearly 35 million children nationwide have experienced at least one or more types of serious childhood trauma. ([National Survey of Children's Health](#))

Trauma disrupts all aspects of typical development including brain development, the ability to learn new things, emotional regulation, attachment to caregivers, and relational connections. Brains in children who have experienced trauma, abuse or neglect are actually wired differently. Certain parts of the brain (like the amygdala at the base) may work too well, while the frontal lobe reacts slower. It's also been shown that the left side and the right side of the brain may not coordinate as well and overall body chemistry is altered.

The good news is that healing can happen. What wires together, fires together. New positive experiences can—over time—help the brain rewire and the body chemistry to regulate. It takes a lot of time and patience, but healing is possible.

TRAUMA

TRAUMA OVERVIEW: CARING FOR CHILDREN FROM HARD PLACES (continued)

1. TRAUMA MAY LOOK LIKE: (NCTSN)

Hyperactivity or Hypervigilance	Increased medical problems
Problems with boundaries	Oppositional behavior
Self-destructive behavior	Difficulties with focusing or attention regulation
Sleep disturbances	Social isolation
Poor motor skills	Flat affect or shut down state of being
Anger and/or aggression	Reenactment of past trauma experiences
Altered perception of reality	Overly clingy or withdrawn

1. HOW TO BE MINDFUL WHILE CARING FOR A CHILD THAT MAY HAVE EXPERIENCED TRAUMA

Having Empathy is Key. Does the pain of others break your heart? Before we can step into the pain of a child and truly care for him/her, perhaps we can first honor their pain and empathize with them by being brokenhearted for their hurt. How would you describe the posture of your heart when you see the impacts of a child's trauma through their behavior, attitudes, words, fears, etc.? Consider the pain they may have experienced that contributed to such survival skills.

Practicing Empathy. Do you know how to simply be with a child or youth who is hurting rather than trying to fix or understand their entire story? Think about your responses and how you might be able to practice empathy and not jump to seeking a solution. When there is trauma in a child's story, empathy is crucial to building trust and experiencing safety.

The Power of Presence. Have you ever asked yourself how others experience you? What do your facial expressions or body language communicate to a child? Do you bring a warm and safe demeanor or do you appear absent and aloof? Each of these elements contributes to the presence you bring and could make all the difference while trying to connect with a child from a hard place.

TRAUMA

TRAUMA OVERVIEW: CARING FOR CHILDREN FROM HARD PLACES (continued)

Meeting Needs. Whether providing a glass of water or snack, a safe physical environment for a child to rest, physical activity, or a tangible solution to a problem - meeting needs within the appropriate relational context helps build trust and disarms fear!

Be Curious & Compassionate When It Comes to Behaviors. When you see curious or problematic behaviors, be mindful of the child or teen's probable exposure to some sort of trauma or the grief and loss they might be experiencing. Before asking "What's wrong with him/her?" ask yourself, "What might he/she need?"

Think to yourself, "I wonder what happened to them that may be causing this behavior?" rather than getting frustrated or angry. Do not take their behavior personally and do not excuse bad behavior, but use a gentle, yet firm tone to stop behaviors and redirect.

5. HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Beyond giving foster and adoptive parents time for respite, the goal is to help children to experience the following truths:

- **You are seen**
- **You are known**
- **You are precious**
- **You belong**
- **You are lovable**

TRAUMA

TRAUMA OVERVIEW: CARING FOR CHILDREN FROM HARD PLACES (continued)

6. WHAT OTHER RESOURCES ARE THERE?

Check out these excellent videos as examples of adult/child interactions and building compassion for children from hard places.

- The IDEAL Response: www.youtube.com/watch?v=cuDH85R3rtc
- Trust Based Relational Intervention: www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWScSJKjn1A
- Children from Hard Places: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qe-BkHUVGQ4&t=248s
- Toxic Stress and the Brain: www.youtube.com/watch?v=LTcFTpGve4g

HOW TO: 11 PRACTICAL STEPS FOR DEALING WITH TRAUMA IN THE MOMENT

Here are some simple - although not always easy - things you can do when those moments arise. Go over this information with volunteers right before the PNO event begins.

Remember the Big Picture. The best path to appropriate behavior is to heal the heart and rewire the brain. This long-term view is most important, not simply getting them to obey in that moment. Connecting relationally improves the chances of getting compliant behaviors!

Have Drinks & Snacks Available. Children and teens who have experienced trauma may be more sensitive to dehydration and low blood sugar levels. Be prepared to offer a drink of water or get a snack with a child if they are experiencing a difficult or stressful situation—even if their own negative behavior induced the stress.

Give Clear Expectations. Communicating expectations ahead of time is an important way to give children who have experienced trauma a chance to anticipate changes. The experiences that caused their trauma likely made them feel helpless and out of control. Giving children a sense of security and certainty is an important step toward healing their brains.

Give a Little Control. Sometimes a child will feel a need to exert control, because he or she is not in control of anything else in their life. Playing a game of Simon Says or Red Light/Green Light and letting the child be the leader can give them a sense of power and felt safety.

TRAUMA

TRAUMA OVERVIEW: CARING FOR CHILDREN FROM HARD PLACES (continued)

Give Time for Transitions. So often, transitions are hard for a child with trauma. Schedule changes or movement to a new activity can cause the fight or flight response to kick in, especially if they are in the middle of something they enjoy. Example: Johnny, we are going to play with these toys for 5 more minutes and then put them back on the shelf. Often it is helpful to have the child repeat it back to you. Example: What are we going to do in five minutes? Child: Put the toys on the shelf. Yes!

Provide Sensory Stimulation. If a child in your care simply can't be still, try giving him Velcro, slime or a toy that enables him to listen and learn experientially. There is plenty of research that shows how kiddos brains are better able to regulate and learn when they are able to move their bodies! Another sensory tool is GUM! Offering a piece of sugar free gum to children over 5 years old can offer a needed distraction, reduce anxiety, or fulfill a sensory need.

Time IN Versus Time OUT. Children who have hindered attachments or relational connections are highly sensitive to messages of distance or abandonment. Rather than sending a child away to figure out their behavior, try bringing them closer to help regulate their emotions and behaviors with a time in. Kids may need extra help getting back on track and sending them away will not bring understanding of their behaviors or an ability to make better choices in the future.

Recognize the Power of a Redo. Children from difficult beginnings learn better when they are able to have a redo. It helps rewire the brain rather than just treat the symptom behavior. Redo's allow our kids to not just hear the right behavior but practice it. Eventually, the appropriate behaviors become more like "muscle memory"! Here's what a redo might look like. Child: I want a water bottle! Adult: I hear you. How about we redo that? Can you ask for the water bottle?

Identify Feelings & Use Words. Give a struggling child space to identify their own feelings and encourage them to use words. Ask the child, "What are you feeling? What do you need?" Offering a listening ear might reveal what the child is experiencing and a way to help them. Rather than reacting to emotions, teach kids to use their words to express emotions, seek connection, and get their needs met.

Be Playful! Play is central to a child's well-being. Play can disarm fear and build connection. Shared laughter is a bonding agent! Whenever possible use playful language and attitude even when teaching or even correcting a child's behavior.

SAMPLE

Schedule for K-5th grade

THEME: Camp Fun For Kids

3:00 PM: Volunteers sign in and get a shirt/nametag, get training reminders & pray

3:45 PM: Doors open. Everyone to their spot! Kids will start arriving.

3:45 PM: PNO volunteers available to greet Kids and take to the snack station

Preschool and nursery children go straight to their rooms.

K-1st

2nd-3rd

4th-5th

Will all go to snack station in lobby of church where they will make a snack bag for their families to take home and their own snack to eat

K-1st, 2nd-3rd, and 4th-5th will all rotate through the following 3 stations:

1. Games 2. Marshmallow Center 3. Lantern Making

4:30 PM: K-1s: Games

2nd-3rd: Marshmallow Center

4th-5th: Lantern Making

5:00 PM: K-1s: Marshmallow Center

2nd-3rd: Lantern Making

4th-5th: Games

5:30 PM: K-1s: Lantern Making

2nd-3rd: Games

4th-5th: Marshmallow Center

6:00 PM: Grab a dinner plate

6:00 PM: Color after eating dinner; Book read/story time to the kids

7:00 PM: Parent pick up

7:20 PM: Debrief; takeaways, thank volunteers; Pray for kids and families

7:45 PM: Volunteers relieved of duty

SAMPLE

Elementary Activities

THEME: Welcome to CAMP FUN FOR KIDS!

Decorate the welcome area and kid areas with a fun, camping theme!

GAME TIME

Build the Tent (also known as Ready Spaghetti)

Supplies: Uncooked spaghetti noodles and empty 12 oz. soda pop cans and tables.

Teams of two people move empty soda pop cans with only an uncooked spaghetti noodle. Using only the mouth, noodle is strung through the tab of can to the other player. The team must then move the can(s) to another table, making a pyramid/tent of cans. See example video of game being played at <https://bit.ly/2J8sshL>

Stick to it (also known as Sticky Balls)

Supplies: Marbles and double-sided tape and tables.

Players must roll 5 marbles across a table to stick on the double-sided tape. Variations: marshmallows, ping pong balls, etc. See example video at <https://bit.ly/3D4Sbms>

Time 4 Fun (also known as Baby Rattle)

Supplies: Empty 2-liter soda bottles, gum balls, duct tape

Fill an empty 2-liter plastic soda bottle half way with gumballs. Attach another empty soda bottle to the top of the bottle filled with gumballs- forming an hourglass. Players must compete to see who can move the gumballs to the other bottle the fastest. See example video at <https://bit.ly/2HkSjkU>

Additional ideas: Camping Bingo, Giant Jenga, Frisbee Toss into Laundry Baskets

SAMPLE

Elementary Activities (continued)

STORY TIME WITH MARSHMALLOW CENTER

Stargazing

Let's talk about the stars! God made the stars and stargazing is one of the most fun things to do when camping. Help the kids learn about stars and then make them! You can read books about creation, the stars, or watch this quick, fun video by SciShow Kids about constellations <https://bit.ly/3CCxX21>

Star-making Marshmallow Center

Supplies: Marshmallows & toothpicks

Have the kids create their own stars with marshmallows and toothpicks or create constellation formations. Additional option: challenge kids to build a tent with their toothpicks/marshmallows, or create letters to form their initials

CRAFT TIME LANTERN MAKING

Supplies: Empty water bottles, white glue, small paint brushes, tissue paper, glow sticks, pipe cleaners, hole punch, scissors.

Prep Ahead of Time

Cut the top off the empty water bottles and punch two holes across from each other at the top (so with the kids you can make a handle using the pipe cleaner).

SAMPLE

Elementary Activities (continued)

With the kids:

1. Have kids cut shapes out of the colored tissue paper.
2. Glue the tissue paper to the water bottle by painting the water bottle with glue, then sticking the tissue paper to it.
3. Add a pipe cleaner handle to the bottle.
4. Add a glow stick!

Option: Give kids a second glow stick to take home and light up again at night.

This idea comes from the Newbury Town Library. You can find their complete instructions with pictures here: <http://ntlyouthservices.blogspot.com/2013/04/how-to-make-lantern.html>

FUTURE PNO THEMES & ACTIVITIES:

Prep Ahead of Time

Vacation Bible School Curriculum—Look through your church’s previous VBS materials for theme and activity ideas! VBS is created for groups of children and often includes everything from snacks to games to crafts.

Bring in Local Artists or Studios—Look for innovative partners, like your local pottery painting or artists. Have artists create in front of the kids and then let kids create their own artwork to take home.

Sports Camp Theme—Partner with local sports teams (high school or older) or YMCA to bring fun sport-camp type activities. Follow same volunteer protocols and policy for every person attending.

Therapy/Sensory Services—Contact local occupational or physical therapist to create a sensory rich environment, teaching kids about emotional regulation and create cool down kits.



SAMPLE VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Date:

Full Name:

Address:

Birthdate:

Sex:

Phone:

Email Address:

Do you have previous training or background dealing with abused, neglected or abandoned children or youth? Yes No

Please Describe

Do you have previous experience working with children or teens?

Please Describe

Tell us a little bit about yourself – what are 2 strengths and 2 weaknesses

Please describe why you wish to be a volunteer for PNO

Have you ever been arrested for a criminal offense? Yes No

Have you ever been arrested for sexual misconduct? Yes No

Have you ever been convicted of sexual misconduct? Yes No

Have you ever taken drugs other than prescription? Yes No

Please PNO that a background check, an interview and { hours} of training are necessary to volunteer for any PNO volunteer position

If you answered "yes" to any of the above

Please Explain

SAMPLE REGISTRATION FORM

PARENT INFORMATION

Child 1:

Child 2:

Child 3:

Child 4:

Anything else important that we should know:

Questions? Contact [name] at email address or phone number (Please let [name] know if you need to cancel your registration)

SAMPLE

PARENTS NIGHT OUT WAIVER

Child(ren's) Name(s): _____

Special Events:

I understand that the child/children named above will be participating in games, crafts and special activities. I understand that during this period my child/children may take part in activities such as: games, crafts, snack and other activities consistent with the purposes of the program.

Release of Liability:

I release _____ (Name of church), its ministers, leaders, employees, volunteers and agents from any claim that my child may have or that I may have against them as a result of injury or illness incurred during the course of participation in the activities. This release of liability shall include (without limitation) any claims of negligence. This release of liability is also intended to cover all claims that members of the child's or my family or estate, heirs, representative or assigns may have against _____ (Name of church), or its ministers, leaders, employees, volunteers, or agents.

First Aid and Emergency Medical Treatment:

I recognize that there may be occasions where the child named above, may be in need of first aid or emergency medical treatment as a result of an accident, illness or other health condition or injury. I do hereby give permission for agents of "Parents Night Out" to seek and secure any needed medical treatment for the child named above. After securing the proper medical treatment, agents for "Parents Night Out" will immediately contact the parent/guardian and the human services contact at {phone number}.

I represent that I am the parent/guardian of the children named above, who are under 18 years of age. I have read the above Permission/Waiver Form and am fully familiar with the contents thereof.

Signature of Legal Guardian

Date