

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS GUIDE

This guide is for parents who want to serve and lead a family discipleship group. It shares practices from experienced leaders to help you build a successful and healthy group dynamic.

PREP & PLANNING

- Invite an **older couple** to participate in your group whose further along in the parenting journey.
- **Don't give homework!** Most parents won't have time to do it.
- Making dinner for everyone can be exhausting. **Invite people to bring snacks or lead a potluck-style gathering.** Feel free to gather **without** offering a meal.
- Partner with your church leadership to help find **reliable childcare**.

RECRUITMENT

- Meet in sync with your **church's small group calendar** so you can more easily recruit families.
- Let families know you'll have childcare and you'll only meet **twice a month**.
- **Be intentional** about welcoming single parents, foster parents, grandparents raising grandchildren, and parents from diverse ethnic and social backgrounds.

GROUP STRUCTURE

- Limit your band group to **8 people**. When your group becomes too big, it's more difficult to create connection.
- **Meet in a space where the kids can play and not interrupt the gathering time.** We've seen the best success when parents meet at church, park, or a larger space that can accommodate children and teens.
- If you can, **avoid meeting during the holiday season**. It's hard to gather families leading up to Thanksgiving and Christmas.

GROUP FACILITATION

- Lead an **intro meeting** to vision cast and set expectations.
- **Be vulnerable.** The most impactful band groups have leaders who lead into deep vulnerability and openly share about their own struggles and failures as a parent.
- **Go first** - During your first meeting, be the first to respond to the questions so others don't feel the pressure or weight of going first.
- Have a **time limit** when people share so everyone gets a turn (8-10 minutes each).
- **Always start and end with prayer.** Inviting the Holy Spirit to come and guide your time is absolutely essential.

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QUESTIONS ASKED AT GROUPS

- How are you really doing?
- What are your struggles and successes as a parent?
- How might the Holy Spirit and Scriptures be speaking to you about the spiritual needs of you and your family?
- Have you sinned against your child in word, action, or deed?
- What feels hidden or shameful around your parenting?