



Building Sustainable Ministries . . . One Church at a Time

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THE FALL KICK OFF EVENT

PURPOSE: The Fall Kick-Off is an event that draws children, youth and their parents to the church for a celebration of the upcoming school year's children's/youth programs.

The purpose of the event is:

- To pass out the information families need about the year's trips and programs.
- To give youth an opportunity to sign up at a discounted price for trips and other events that require early registration.
- To put important dates for the year on the calendar.
- To introduce all the staff/volunteer members to families.
- To give the youth minister a setting in which to cast the vision for the direction of the next youth calendar year.
- To have fun together as a church family!

Families should leave the Fall Kick-Off not only informed and excited about being a part of the programming, they should leave feeling like they received way more than they expected. The attention to detail given to the event will create an atmosphere that leaves everyone excited about being involved!

TEAM MEMBERS: It takes a committed team to make an event like the Fall Kick Off happen successfully. Because so many details need to come together for the party, the team usually has members with all kinds of gifts and strengths!

FALL KICK OFF JOB DESCRIPTIONS:

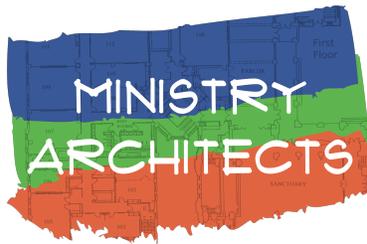
FALL KICK OFF CHAIR: The Fall Kick-Off Chair meets with the leaders to grasp a vision for the purpose of the Fall Kick-Off and to get clarity on the theme throughout the program, into the coming school year. The Chair remains the connection between the CM/YM leadership throughout the planning. The Chair is also responsible for helping recruit volunteers to fill the positions listed below and will work closely with them before and during the Kick-Off weekend. The Chair is available as much as possible to help Kick-Off needs, and is present as a resource as the other crews pull the event together. The Chair keeps everyone organized and on-task, and with the help of the staff, comes up with deadlines by which invitations should go out and by which the details should come together. The Chair also keeps a running list of volunteers and their positions so that the staff will know whom to thank after the event.

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DECORATION CHAIR: Works with the Fall Kick-Off Chair to create the theme of the event by decorating the venue in ways that will make guests feel a sense of “Wow!” as they walk into the meeting space. The decoration chair should get a clear sense of the budget and should communicate with leadership about how much of it needs to be reserved for program needs and food. Also, the decoration chair will pull together a team of people who can work before the Kick-Off to create whatever decorations they may need to transform the Kick-Off space. The decoration chair will need to communicate with the leadership about when the space will be available for set up to decorate. Also the decoration chair may come up with fun hat or costume ideas to identify both the leadership.

SET UP CREW: The decoration chair works with the Fall Kick-Off Chair to pull a team of people together to prepare the venue the day of or day before the event. The set up crew usually commits to being available whenever the times for set up are determined.

CLEAN UP CREW: Though the Kick-Off Leaders may feel free to suggest at the end of the program that any available hands to clean up would be appreciated, a crew of about 5 people commits prior to the event to staying until the space looks “normal” again. Responsibilities usually include putting up tables and chairs, throwing away trash, and cleaning up decorations.

INVITATIONS CHAIR: Responsible for creatively inviting families to attend the Fall Kick-Off. The invitations should be engaging and catch the eye of the recipient. The invitations chair will communicate with the Fall Kick-Off Chair to make sure that the theme of the event is reflected in the invitation and to make sure the invitations contain accurate details including time, date, place, and purpose of the Fall Kick-Off event. If signing youth up for trips, please remember to ask families to bring calendars and checkbooks.

FOOD CHAIR: Responsible for the snacks and drinks at the event. The food chair makes the phone calls/store runs necessary to insure that there is food at the party for guests to enjoy. The chair may build a team of volunteers if he or she feels it necessary. The Fall Kick-Off Chair will communicate the vision and needs for the food to the chair at least two weeks prior to the event.

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CM/YM LEADERSHIP JOB DESCRIPTIONS:

PROGRAM PLANNER: The staff creates an agenda for the evening, including whatever skit they may want to pull together to entertain their guests. The staff also knows best what to communicate to children, youth and families for the upcoming school year and will use this event to spread the word about the upcoming programs, classes, trips, service projects, etc. they're excited about within the program. This is a great chance to introduce the leaders to families, so it works well to have everyone have some sort of recognizable role in the program.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES: If your youth ministry is large enough to have a separate administrative person, ask that person to make sure that invitations are received by all of the youth on your youth mailing list. He or she also works closely with the leadership to pull together the necessary forms and information to pass out at the Event. This person also comes up with a way to track attendance at the Fall Kick-Off.

TO CONSIDER FOR THE BUDGET:

Invitations

Postage

Children's/Youth directories and whatever forms the staff wants to hand out

Food

Decorations, including plastic tablecloths and fun centerpieces

Costumes or hats for staff and volunteers (if the church chooses to do so)

Program needs (to be determined by the staff)

Thank-you notes for all of the volunteers

LOGISTIC TIP FOR HANDOUTS/ATTENDANCE TAKING: Put all forms and directories in 8 ½ x11 envelopes and run labels with youth names and addresses for each youth to be placed on the front of the envelope. Have youth go to a grade designated section to pick up their information. Monday morning, take attendance based on the packets that are leftover and mail the extra envelopes to those who were not able to make the Fall Kick-Off so that they have the information they need as well.

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A SAMPLE TIMELINE OF FALL KICK-OFF EVENTS:

- **4-months prior:** Youth Director recruits a Fall Kick-off chair and reviews the process.
- **3-months prior:** The Fall Kick-Off chair has recruited any additional members of the team and reviews their rolls. Staff sometimes helps with this recruiting. Sometimes, rolls can be combined. For example, one person might take on the responsibility for both set up and clean up – but you're more likely to get people to do volunteer next year if you give them bite-sized jobs that don't wear them out. The team has met to brainstorm themes and other creative ideas.
- **2-months prior:** The Heads have recruited their specific teams of helpers. The Fall Kick-Off Chair is available to help with this. A simple "Save the Date" message has gone out via the church bulletin, newsletters and any children's/youth communications.
- **1-month prior:** Invitations are complete and given to the youth staff (or appropriate volunteer) to be labeled to mail.
- **3-weeks prior:** Invitations mailed. The leadership has the program planned for the Fall Kick-Off and works with the staff to make sure they know their roles in skits or in relaying information to parents. He also lets the Fall Kick-Off Chair know if there are any program supplies he needs help finding. Examples could include costumes for the staff, a spotlight, music needs, etc.
- **2-weeks prior:** Staff has all printing of forms and directories completed.
- **1-week prior:**
 - Staff creates packets for each student of all documents.
 - Decoration Chair plans a few work sessions for volunteers to help create props and centerpieces for the event.
- **2-days prior:** Decorating Crews at work!
- **1-day before:** Food Chair sets up food in AC room. The staff "dress rehearses" for the event.
- **The day:** Fall Kick Off Event! Enjoy!

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