Purpose

To provide an event that helps the Children’s and Youth Ministries be more family-focused, recruit/develop leaders, and share the excitement with the whole church. The more excited everyone else is, the more they share the positive narrative about the children’s/youth ministry. The more excitement there is across the body, the easier volunteer recruiting will be and the more financial resources available! Win-win!

Rationale/objectives

* This plan is a part of the total initiative and improvements happening in the children and youth ministries, giving them something to look forward to in growing relational bonds with peers, church members, and God.
* This plan is also designed to create connections between youth/children and other church members (in addition to their parents and peers’ parents).
* This plan is part of developing a more visible set of Rites of Passage/Milestones.

What’s currently happening related to the game plan

* The Leadership Team is addressing the needs for increased Rites of Passage

and a more sustainable children’s/youth ministry.

* The Leadership Team, along with staff, will develop a “Program Kickoff” series of events.
* This game plan is being written and implementation is expected.

Decisions to be made before moving forward with the game plan

* **What events will this Program Kick-off entail?**

**Suggestions:**

* Sunday morning worship recognition for children moving up into pre-school/Kindergarten/7th/9th grade. Doing this in worship (not a Rally Day at Sunday school time) gives the kids and older members a chance to interact. Find ways for the older folks to make connections.
* Blessings of their backpacks with a church backpack tag, supplies from congregation members, notes from church members, hands-on prayer in worship, pencils with scriptural sentiment or church name (check Oriental Trading Co. for these items).
* Right-after-church event to create buzz among congregation. Ideas could include an adults vs youth mud-pit, shaving cream fight, dodgeball tourney, etc. Inviting the whole church to come after worship gives them something fun to watch, starts the buzz, and creates a new tradition!
* Have blow-up or carnival-type games for children available with supervision so that a 30-minute time frame can be carved out for parents to meet with staff/leaders and receive that year’s info packet.
* What theme might this event take? For example:

* A Mighty Fortress (Kings, crowns, castles, etc.)
* Christians vs Romans with an Italy feel
* Messy Ministry Mud-pit
* Back-to-school Bacon Bash (I mean, who doesn’t love bacon?)
* What calendar dates/times?

* What space in the church facility is needed?

* What booths/tables are needed?

* What packet info is needed? (registration, contact info, permission slips, volunteer signups, calendar dates, etc.)
* What adults will be needed for this event?

* Is renovating/cleaning/sprucing up the children’s/youth rooms needed to create an inviting environment?

* What volunteer needs for the school year could be advertised and recruited? (Give this a fun “job fair” feel. You might even give parents a number of spaces to sign up for; for example: 3 driving times, 3 meals, 2 events, 1 overnight.)

* Is babysitting needed for children while parents are in a meeting?

Ministry Team Members’ Responsibilities

* Oversight of this event
* Creation of a Major Event Notebook for following years’ use
* Coordinate with staff
* Develop a friendly and welcoming environment and intentional “first-timer” process for any new people/families that might connect
* Registration/contact info/data management system in place. A cloud-based system with on-the-spot info collection at the event is best.
* Recruit and resource volunteers
* Develop/support a full communications plan that will contact and invite children/students to events using multiple mediums
* Setup and decorations, then cleanup. A theme is always fun!

Staff Responsibilities

**(Work with the ministry team to define who’s responsible for which details.)**

* Develop a friendly and welcoming environment and intentional “first-timer” process for any new people/families that might connect.
* Registration/contact info/data management system in place. A cloud-based system with on-the-spot info collection at the event is best.
* Support youth room renovations
* Recruit and resource volunteers
* Develop/support a full communications plan that will contact and invite children/students to events using multiple mediums.

Volunteers Needed

* Adult youth ministry volunteers/teachers
* Major event coordinators
* Youth room renovation crew
* Musicians
* Speaker
* Paperwork police
* Food coordinator
* Setup/cleanup coordinator

Volunteer Responsibilities

**Youth Group Volunteers:**  Facilitate relationships among the youth, making youth group exciting and fun.

**Kick-off Volunteers:** Facilitate the tables/booths/signups, etc.

**Worship Planning Team:** Discuss/plan for worship involvement.

**Crew:** Make sure that the space has a feeling of warmth and

is inviting and fun. Determine and find special event coordinators.

**Musicians:** Lead worship/music for event

Calendar Space Needed

* Sunday worship event
* Sunday signup event
* After Sunday “fun event”
* Meeting/trainings for those involved

Databases Needed

* List of possible volunteers who would be suitable for the positions described.
* List of children/youth who have participated in church activities within the last 18 months.
* If church has an on-site school: list of children/families enrolled in the school.
* If church has an on-site preschool: list of children/families enrolled in the preschool.
* List of youth/children who participated in VBS.
* Children’s/Youth Ministry Database

Expectations of others involved in the game plan

* Senior Pastor signs off on plan and is a visible presence during kickoff event.
* Worship team finds way to involve the Rite of Passage.
* Facilities people are aware of setup needs.
* Sunday school team is clear on what, if any, pieces they’re responsible for.
* Youth board has taken on responsibility for the welcoming spirit pieces for the event.