

"PNO" IN A BOX



Principles

TRAIN. TRAIN. TRAIN.

This will be an exciting event for you, your team, foster/adopt parents and their kids. But, the best thing you can do to prepare is to ensure all volunteers are trained and well equipped in how to care for kids from hard places.

BUILD A LARGE TEAM

Plan on about 1:3 kids if possible. If there are any special needs kids attending, look for 1:1.

LIMIT THE NUMBER OF FAMILIES

Foster families tend to be large so understand 25 families likely equals 100+ kids. Have a strict pre-registration to manage your count. You will also need to account for volunteer kids if you allow them to attend the event as well.

HAVE A SECURE CHECK IN AND CHECK OUT SYSTEM

ONLY allow the parents who dropped off the child to pick up. If another pick up person is coming, caregivers should notify staff prior to pick up and communicate that adult's information.

ACCEPT THAT SOME KIDS MAY NOT BE COMFORTABLE PARTICIPATING

Have secondary options for kids who may be sensory avoiding or sensory seeking. Fidgets, and items with fun textures can be calming for kids who need that. Earmuffs or quiet rooms will be helpful for kids who get overwhelmed easily in chaos.

OFFER "TRAUMA FRIENDLY" MEALS

Avoid Red 40, large amounts of sugar, and caffeine. You can create fun food experiences without causing more issues or damage to kids. Going for the obvious foods like corn dogs and candy may cause greater issues for families as they try to get their kids in bed. By doing your research and offering foster friendly meals, you can help kids have a more successful evening and relieve many parents' concerns from the start!

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Principles (cont.)

ENSURE ALL AREAS WITH CHILDREN HAVE AN ADULT PRESENT

Don't leave kids alone with other minors. Using your youth ministry is great, but kids from hard places sometimes need more experienced babysitters. Be sure to have adults around at all times and in all serving areas. Use youth leaders as assistants and errand runners.

CHANGE YOUR LANGUAGE

Titles like "parent", "mom" or "dad" can be confusing or upsetting. Not all children recognize foster parents as a "mom" or "dad" and some kids may be cared for by a grandparent or aunt/uncle. Instead, use language like "your grown up".

BE CAUTIOUS OF MEDIA CAPTURED

Don't take pictures for media that include the faces of children in attendance. Ask your team to refrain from taking pictures and have one designated photographer to capture the events of the night that does not show the faces of any children.

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Pre-Event

PROMOTION:

- Contact your local child welfare office to communicate to families in your area
- Find your local foster/adopt Facebook Groups
- Contact local churches to invite their foster/adopt families
- Contact local children's homes or agencies to pass out your information
- Create online registration so it can be shared via Facebook

REGISTRATION:

- [Click Here](#)

RECRUIT YOUR TEAM:

- Team Leaders:
 - 2 adults that oversee a small group of children. These leaders will stay with their team throughout the entire event. Teams could rotate from one area to the next maintaining the same leaders.
- Game/Activity Leaders:
 - These may be student leaders with a lot of energy and great leadership skills. Their role is to set up, tear down and lead the activity and game portion of the evening.
- Craft room leaders:
 - These may be a few ladies who can teach kids how to create their craft and oversee managing supplies and maintaining a clean room.
- Check in and check out:
 - These leaders need to be diligent in collecting information and disseminating it to the appropriate leaders. They should be warm and inviting to families as they arrive.
- Set up/Tear down crew:
 - This team will come early and stay late to make sure all rooms are ready for the event and cleaned as it ends.
- Floaters:
 - These leaders can jump in if a situation arises among one of the teams. They can help kids to regulate, or contact parents if an emergency occurs. These leaders need extra training and experience with kids from hard places.

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Recommended Training



MEETING 1: TRAUMA INFORMED TRAINING:

- This is to help prepare your teams on how to manage behaviors, and understand the uniqueness in a child from foster care or that has been adopted.
- Backyard Orphans offers GROW a 90 minute training that focuses on the basics a leader needs who is serving kids from hard places.

MEETING 2: PROCEDURES AND PLANS

- Mandatory reporting :: be sure to communicate to your team on what is required of them if there is any signs of abuse.
- Roles and responsibilities:: Every team member needs a clear role. Leaders who are overseeing kids should not be responsible for other tasks. Give clear directives on what every leader's role is. You may consider:
- Agenda
- What to do in an emergency?
 - Make sure all leaders know who to contact if any emergency occurs.

MEETING 3: PRE-EVENT HUDDLE

- Check in and check out systems
- Language:: Grown ups instead of parents
- Be excited!
- Prayer

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The Event

SCHEDULE SAMPLE:

5:30 pm : Registration

6:00 pm: Dinner

6:30 pm: Small Group Activities (20 min rotation)

- Art Project :
- Small Group Games .
- Free Time :

7:30 pm: Large Group Activity

8:00 pm: Movie & Popcorn

9:00 pm : Pick up

RECOMMENDED MEALS

- Potential Dinner
 - High in Protein
 - Chicken Tenders
 - Spaghetti and Meat Sauce
- Snacks
 - Granola Bars
 - Protein Bars
 - Sugar Free fruit snacks
 - Water
- Foods to Avoid
 - High in sugar
 - Red 40: such as Corndogs, breakfast cereals, jello, pudding, etc

RECOMMENDED SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

- Craft Room Art Project :



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The Event (cont.)



SMALL GROUP GAMES

◦ PING PONG TOWERS

- Supplies: styrofoam cups or or light weight stackable materials, 5 ping pongs (per team), 1 slingshot (per team)
- Rules:
 - Each team builds a tower with their materials in 2 minutes
 - After the towers are built, teams rotate to knock down the towers with a slingshot and ping pong balls
 - First team to knock the entire tower off the table wins

◦ ELEPHANT STAMPEDE

- Supplies: 1 pool noodle split in half
- Rules:
 - Select 2 players to be “it”
 - On go, the 2 “it” players chase other kids trying to tag them with the pool noodle.
 - Once a child is tagged, they take the noodle and hold hands with the person who tagged them.
 - They proceed to tag other kids. The line grows longer as each kid gets tagged, the newest kid takes the noodle and is at the front of the line.
 - Longest Elephant line at the end of the game wins
 - Play as many rounds as you like

◦ BALLOON TENNIS

- Supplies: 10 Flyswatters (or 1 for each kid), Balloon, 10 chairs, String or rope
- Set up:
 - Tie the string in the middle of the “court” like a short volleyball net
 - Place 5 chairs on either side of the “net” in similar positions
 - Give each player a fly swatter
- Rules:
 - Kids must remain seated in their chair at all times.
 - Rules are similar to volleyball: 3 hits and the balloon must go over the “net”.
 - Kids will hit the balloon with their flyswatter.
 - If the balloon hits the ground, the other team wins a point.
 - If a team hits the balloon more than 3 times before knocking it over, the other team gets a point.
 - The team that earns the point each round serves for the next round.
 - Winner is the first team to reach the designated amount of points.

• FREE TIME:

- Legos
- Water Table
- Balls
- Playground activities
- Water Activities (for summer time events)