

Good ideas happening through playgroups

This list is made up of suggestions that have come to us from a number of playgroups.

Obviously no playgroup can do all these things – we don't want you to feel daunted – but we wanted to inspire you to think about what might work in your context.

- Family Dinners at Christmas time with a jumping castle to keep the kids happy.
- Individual Christmas and Easter cards with an invitation to the church service.
- Pastoral input (this can be the church leaders or any with the heart for evangelism or shepherding heart) at each playgroup session so the community mothers can mix and talk with them.
- Pairing up different people for morning tea to promote friendships with others.
- Having a one on one buddy system to help build relationships with the community mothers.
- Community people are happy to come and listen to stories about God (presumably this is in the story time with the kids)
- Mums and Grandma's having a girl's night out without the kids.
- Colin Buchanan CD's given to the kids.
- Having a set of core values for all the workers of playgroup.
- Someone to sign in and welcome each mum.
- Simplified program and simplified craft provides less stress.
- Adjusting to be more flexible at playgroup.
- There is more help behind the scenes, allowing mums to connect with each other and in church.
- Big playgroups are not necessarily better playgroups.
- Having prayer for playgroup.
- An even delegation of jobs between the leaders.
- Have a section in the church newsletter or a DVD to raise awareness of Playgroup in the church, what is going on there and what may be needed. The church needs to take ownership as well.
- One group of playgroup has been hard as they are from different countries, they have been doing ESL(English as a Second language). However after 3 years their English has improved and some have become Christians, and they want to share this with others. For these cultures it would be good to translate simple songs into different languages, eg Twinkle Twinkle into Spanish etc This makes them feel a part of the community.
- Food days, where different mums prepare food from their country.
- Friendships are continuing with community mums from playgroup at other church events, eg at scrap booking with Soul in Nowra.
- having a series of parenting talks, some playgroup and community families are coming.
- Some churches have employed a person to run playgroups as it is such an important part in the community
- As children grow older, its gets easier to build relationships as children are more independent.
- Having an end of year party with playgroup and church mums invited.

- The leaders going to one evangelistic conference to catch the vision.
- Having a directory available which lists the services for helping people in a domestic violence setting, or local counsellors.
- Invite your pastor to visit the playgroup and chat to the parents
- an excellent resource available called Tiddlywinks from Scripture Union Victoria (BIG Blue, Red, Yellow books.) Great Christian content for 3-4 year olds.
- It's good to have helpers without kids to be willing to practically serve.
- Cap the numbers at approximately 20 to build a sense of community
- Start with coffee and Tea for the mums.
- Hold a love language for children course, this goes for 4 weeks.
- A lady comes in once per term to give 6 mums massages. Yeh baby!!
- Having dinners once per term for the playgroup mothers. The 1st and 4th is a fun night, and the 2nd/3rd a formal dinner. Have a guest speaker, ask the question who is the most influential person in your life?
- Share the roles on the roster.
- If you have an older lady helping out in the kitchen its great to all bring one piece of fruit to share. But otherwise it's simpler to have the children bring their own morning tea. This gives a more relaxed atmosphere so the leaders have time to chat with the mothers.
- If 'clicks' start to form, change the room around, have 'stations' set up for kids of different craft activities.