



HOW TO GROW YOUR TEAM

How to recruit people to increase your reach and service to families.

Having prayerfully discerned how your church will engage with and become a First Thousand Day (FTD)-friendly church, the next step is to seek who the people are to join your team; who will strengthen your team and run this ministry in your church to create loving connections with families.

HOW TO SELECT MEMBERS OF YOUR TEAM

You may have a lot of people interested in joining, and that is fantastic – however as the Sikunye Champion you need to prayerfully discern who will be the most appropriate next person to join the team. Consider who has the capacity and passion you need for the team to be successful in taking your church on a journey to becoming FTD-friendly. Explore, too, who has the qualities of a Sikunye Champion to support, love and care for families within the FTD of life. Here are some ideas on how to choose your team wisely:

Firstly, any team member should be an empathetic everyday Christ-follower, who supports your church leaders (and yourself) in the vision of becoming a FTD-friendly church.

They must be able to sustain momentum and take active steps towards achieving the goals you have set out and champion the cause with you – so that you are not doing this alone. It is important that they have a heart for families and children in the First Thousand Days of life and supporting each family in realising the God-given potential for their child.

They can be male or female, as we hope to connect with all caregivers in a family, supporting moms, dads, grandmothers etc. who are responsible for loving and connecting with the child.

It is also important that whoever joins your team knows it is as a volunteer; and this person must be:

- Mature and responsible.
- A positive role-model in the church community.
- Show good relationship skills like empathy, listening, warmth, and respect.
- Have a heart of love towards others (not necessarily marginalised).
- See this role as part of their ministry – using their gifting to be part of the mission that God has called them to.
- Connected into community – i.e. have a good network of support around them.

- Does not need to be an expert in first thousand days or health information but rather knows how to see and love someone.

What knowledge and areas of expertise would be useful to include within your team?

- **Theological expertise:** Who are the voices of people who can bring a solid biblical perspective to the issues surround FTD?
- **Have a heart for social justice:** It may be useful to have one or two voices in the team who can bring an experienced perspective around some of the particular realities and difficulties moms/families face in your context, and around trying to make a difference in the lives of those who are marginalised. Having the knowledge of people who have worked or are working in this sector is so powerful. Common Good is also a good source of support or help.
- **Experience in Early Childhood Development:** see in your congregation who are the experts in FTD (e.g. breastfeeding specialists, counsellors, parents,) and invite them to join your team – or at the very least be someone you can call on in the times that an expert is needed.
- Who are the **connected people** in your congregation who have a great network and access to organisations and people that impacting the poor and marginalised – get to know your community and who is working in the FTD space that you can network/partner with.

What skills would be useful in your team to help in achieving success?

Growing a team will be useful to help you carry the load and support families in your congregation and community – however if you cannot find a team, just start – even with one person, change can happen:

- **Visionary:** FTD teams will need a visionary individual to keep them on track to their big dream of impacting families and children by playing a unique role as God's church.
- **Inspirational:** The voices of those who can inspire and motivate will be critical to mobilising your team to envision, equip and activate members of the congregation.
- **Speakers:** Do you have people who will speak out and be a part of engaging with your congregation – this can be or is in addition to your pastor/elder/leader.
- **Facilitation:** Perhaps there is someone in your group who has skills in facilitation which would be useful to equip them with the skills to deliver one of Sikunye's initiatives (home-visiting, book-sharing or Flourish antenatal and postnatal classes).
- **Lateral thinkers:** People who are able to create new possibilities and creative ideas and solutions for your team to engage with in order to best support families

- **Strategic thinkers:** Make sure you have got someone who can see the 5 year plan and keep your team on track.

People management and support skills: Engaging with people from all communities and especially with volunteers and/or congregants wanting to get involved in what your team is doing, makes this a critical need in your team. You need someone who can inspire but also check in and pastorally care for volunteers in your team.

Things to consider

As you discern and plan how your congregation will serve and support families, it will start to become clearer what skills you will be needing in your team. For example, someone with administration skills, or someone who can speak another language, or dads to support dads, or someone to commit to support specific families and receive training to do so. Find people from your church community to fill the skills you need. When selecting someone to join your team, however, consider whether they are the right person, and in the right season. Someone may have the heart to join your team but on closer look at what they are currently involved with or dealing with, they may not be in the right season of life to join. Reflect on the following questions and pray about it:

- Do they realistically have the time to commit to this ministry for a long period, so that they will not be overburdened and drop off due to inability to commit the time you need from them?
- What is their ability and capacity to sustain being part of the FTD-team? This includes time, commitments, family life, skills, patience, financial burdens, ability to attend trainings etc.
- What may be their personal triggers from past experiences that have not been dealt with in a healthy way that has led to true healing (for example, a miscarriage, inability to have children, divorce etc.) Many of us have gone through trials that could be potential sore points/triggers – however many people deal with these experiences in a healthy way that leads to true healing and when faced with a situation very similar to their it may bring up painful memories, but they are still able to support, care for and love families in a healthy way without their experiences impacting the loving connections – have they healed from their past and are these memories triggers that potentially could be detrimental to your ministry?
- Do you know whether there are any mental health concerns that may negatively impact the team or moms and families?
- Are they good at setting personal boundaries and asking for help when they are struggling – to know how much pastoral care/support you would need to provide?
- Do they embody respect, empathy, compassion, speak with positive affirmation, have active listening skills, facilitate good conversation and able to problem solve?
- What is going on in the person's life to know if this is the right season for them - prayerfully discern with them if this is the right season and if they have the time, passion

and commitment (please see the job descriptions and expectations for any member that would like to train in home-visiting, book-sharing and/or Flourish)

Remember, members of your team can simply play a role in welcoming families on a Sunday and creating a warm and welcoming environment, to hosting the parent/family room or running a mid-week group (such as book-sharing or Flourish antenatal and postnatal classes or moms groups). The role of each volunteer will be decided upon their heart, their capacity and abilities, and their time commitment. Be sure to not over-commit one person that they end up pulling out and leaving your team with a gap.

connect · care · thrive

21 Nelson Road, Observatory, Cape Town, 7925

info@sikunye.org.za | +27 (0)21 201 1493 | www.sikunye.org.za

Sikunye is a Common Good initiative | www.commongood.org.za
NPC (2006/018059/08) | NPO (062-229-NPO) | PBO (930026077)



This resource is made available under the Creative Common [Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/) License.