



# A FEW EASY STEPS YOU CAN TAKE

*By starting your journey to become a First Thousand Days (FTD)-friendly church, there are a few easy wins you can achieve to become more FTD-friendly.*

## SOME QUICK WINS TO BECOME AN FTD-FRIENDLY CHURCH

Here are some ideas for things you can start doing immediately. Please do ensure that your church leader agrees with these next steps, as you work together to grow your church to be a place that families want to come to, where they feel welcomed and seen.

*It doesn't have to be complicated. Just start!*

*Attendee of Church and Early Life event – South Peninsula*

### SPEAK UP

Read, watch videos, print Sikunye's resources and grow your awareness on FTD so that you can speak to people around you about the importance of The Church creating loving connections with families – this is something you can start today and simply involves reading, looking at who is around you and speaking to others about it – especially your leaders and congregants.

### SURROUNDING FAMILIES

Identify who is pregnant or had a baby recently in your small group/church and start a meal roster to take meals to the new parents; talk to families and see what help they may need support in to direct what activities you choose to do; visit moms who have just had a baby for a cup of tea; dedicate a Sunday to announcing new births, baby dedications or praying for families; starting a moms group at someone's house for new mothers; look at what you are doing for fathers and how you can include them more.

### YOUR CHURCH ENVIRONMENT

Having listened to parents in your church, discuss with them ways in which they would feel most welcomed and supported. It could include changing the name of the “cry room” to something appealing to moms and dads; it could be using that room as a time to minister to parents in a different way by hosting the room during the Sunday meetings; perhaps it is supplying water and glasses in the room; or putting up the Sikunye posters; encouraging families as they come into church, even if they are late.

## PRAYER

During your prayer meetings, add names of families and their child that is in FTD of life; pregnancies; new births; single moms and/or dad and families that need support and pray for them. Create a WhatsApp group with members of your congregation to pray for the families and children. See this example where anyone can take a name of a child in the kids ministry and pray for them....such a beautiful idea!



## EQUIPPING AND PREPARING PARENTS

Sikunye offers training for churches who wish to provide more targeted support to families – start by selecting and recruiting volunteers to join your team and sign up to the trainings (such as home-visiting, book-sharing, and Flourish antenatal and postnatal host); look for other opportunities in your community to build the capacity of your parents; offer marriage courses or parenting courses or find out which churches in your community are offering these and refer your families to them.

## COLLABORATING AND CONNECTING

Look for opportunities to refer parents to other services that are available in your community; look for ways to link parents to preexisting services that as a church you do not need to recreate; get to know your community and connect with other churches and Faith Based Organisations to make sure families that need support do not fall through the gap; know where to refer families to if they need help.

And there are many more ideas...contact Sikunye if you would like to discuss your ideas!

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