



# WHAT IS A SIKUNYE CHAMPION?

*The role and function of these key people in growing First Thousand Day (FTD)- friendly churches.*

Sikunye Champions are empathetic, everyday Christ-followers from across South Africa, who have a heart for families with children in the First Thousand Days (FTD). They are passionate about activating local church communities to connect and care for families and the want to see their church prioritise FTD in all church activities.

## AS A SIKUNYE CHAMPION YOU WILL:

- Be the person to sustain the momentum, take active steps towards realising goals and drive the cause in your church.
- Engage your pastor/elders/leadership in your church to put FTD as a priority activity in the church.
- Continue to read, watch videos and engage with Sikunye to grow your understanding in what is the FTD and how your church can play a part.
- Grow a team of people who are passionate about the church playing a role in loving and supporting families in the FTD of life.
- Have the opportunity to attend further training, if you would like to be a Flourish host, book-sharing facilitator or home visitor – whilst encouraging other team members to be trained as well.
- Address barriers to families coming to church, whilst looking at ways for your church to become FTD-friendly.
- Look out for families in the FTD of life and encourage them to come to church, or whilst they are in church make them feel welcomed, seen and valued.
- Look for new ways to 'see' families and support them (e.g. have a WhatsApp group to announce pregnancies, births and to pray for families in the FTD of life; look at the spaces in your church and what could be used to engage families during church services; meal rosters; how to use small groups to support families etc. Please look at [the first easy steps you can take](#) for more ideas.
- Be connected to a national network of champions with whom you can collaborate, share ideas and attend further FTD events.

## By signing up to be a Sikunye Champion you...

- Are not alone in your passion to see Children Thriving, Families Caring and Churches Connecting. Sikunye aims to support you every step of the way as you strengthen families to give their children a strong start to life. You will have access to resources and training to equip and support you – continually check the website for latest tools, resources and training dates.
- Can showcase the journey your church is making towards becoming FTD-friendly. This encourages and motivates others by demonstrating how each contribution is helping to shape our nation's future.
- Attend the Sikunye Champions meeting, if you can, to hear lessons learned and forge networks and connections with other churches around South Africa.
- Can engage with Sikunye on our social media channels and with us directly to share:
  - The steps your church is taking to become more inviting, welcoming and responsive to the needs of families with children in FTD;
  - The training you are offering to expectant and new moms, dads, caregivers and extended families – in particular the innovations that have been introduced for your specific context and feedback from participants;
  - The ways in which your church's FTD-friendliness is spilling over into your surrounding communities;
  - What has worked in engaging your pastor, and feedback on what else would help.
- Inspire, motivate and encourage others to become Sikunye Champions and work towards your church, as well as others becoming FTD-friendly.
- Network with other churches and services in your community to make sure all families in FTD are supported.
- Can complete any surveys Sikunye may send out to track how your church is growing and developing as a FTD-friendly church.

As a Champion, you are not alone. You are part of a network of passionate individuals in churches across South Africa, all working to see the church play its unique role in surrounding families in the FTD. *Sikunye, we are together.*

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Sikunye is a Common Good initiative | [www.commongood.org.za](http://www.commongood.org.za)  
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