



HOW TO....

Speak up

becoming an FTD-Friendly Church

Sikunye seeks to equip and support churches to care for families in the First Thousand Days (FTD). This reflection is part of a range of workshops hosted by Sikunye, aimed at equipping churches to become FTD-Friendly.

Listen to audio recording [here](#)

Watch the video recording [here](#)

Proverbs 31:8-9

“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.”

Speaking up is one of the ways we as Christ followers can influence how families are seen, cared for and supported. Churches have trusted voices in communities and can use existing moments of preaching and teaching to share the opportunity of the First Thousand Days (FTD). Whether in public, in private, on social media (WhatsApp groups, church Facebook page etc), or in networking moments (fraternals), we can use everyday opportunities to speak about FTD and the impact it has on the lives of children.

Churches have a respected voice and people listen when the pastor or leaders speak. Each week churches are teaching in various ways like the Sunday gatherings/services (even if via Zoom or Youtube) and through courses or mid-week meetings or home groups. These moments can be used to inspire people, challenge them and get them serving families in your church and around your church.

There are many opportunities as leaders, as individuals and as a collective of churches in an area. Find ways to use your influence to speak into your context including your workplace and friendship circles. At the same time, understanding your context and what the needs are that should be addressed or spoken about. Speaking up as a church includes adding examples into sermons, correcting myths around FTD topics (like breastfeeding, fathers' role and much more), and bringing truth and light to ensure that all families are seen, supported, and encouraged.

**Speak up | advocate | speak out | give voice to the unspoken | stop the silence |¹
raise awareness | talk | communicate | voice out | motivate | inspire**

some practical tips for speaking up well

- **Grow your awareness** of what is happening in your community and what challenges families are facing. Keep growing in your understanding of FTD – read, watch, listen, notice to understand better what is happening.
- Aim to **win the person**, not the argument – speak up in a “winsome” way that helps move people towards action.
- **Find common ground** with people to try win them over. Find ways to be to allies and not adversaries. Don't get stuck in an 'us' versus 'them' framework. Rather, find ways to work together that both sides want the best for the family and child.
- **Be clear on the purpose** – what do you want people to know, think or feel and put into action. Then you can communicate well to help move people.
- **Don't use guilt, obligation or fear** to motivate people.
- **Take people on a learning journey of awareness** – help them take their next step. People don't go from unaware to passionate in one conversation.
- **Be vulnerable and authentic** instead of trying to be the most factual person.
- **Credibility** around the topic speaks loudly. Invite those with credibility to help you speak up.
- **Choose the best communicator** for the context, not necessarily the most passionate person. Find the right person to talk or share.

useful resources to help you speak up

- Grow in your [understanding of FTD](#) – for a range of resources to read and watch about FTD on our website.
- [How to inspire your congregation](#) – tips of how to stir the hearts of your congregation to spread the big idea and move them into action.
- [Listening to parents and families in the FTD stage of life](#) – use this tool to help you grow your awareness.
- SidebySide booklet for [Supporting breastfeeding in the workplace: a guide for employers and employees](#) also see the [SidebySide website](#) for more on how to use this booklet.
- [TedX Video: What if we nurtured moms?](#) Diana Spalding - when did we stop caring for mothers.