



Playgroup that connects

Here are some thoughts and ideas to help you think about how your playgroup can be intentional in being a place where your playgroup families have the space to connect... with each other, with your church and with Jesus.

The playgroup team understands that Playgroup is a ministry, not just a nice activity for the community. They are intentional about getting to know parents, particularly new members, and making them feel welcome and part of the Playgroup community.

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Ideas for welcoming everyone at the start of the year and for new families at any time:

- **Name tags** – encourage their use all year so newcomers can quickly learn names
- **Photos of leaders** on pin-board with names
- **Information sheet** with contact details, policy information and services that your church can provide (counselling, family support, kids club/youth, service times, marriage/parenting course, food bank)

Keep your programming simple (e.g. lots of outdoor time) to allow time for the adults (carers and playgroup team) to chat.

Collect contact information for each family (email, phone, etc.) and send regular communications about Playgroup events, invitations to special church events, news and needs, items for sale, book/product/movie reviews, helpful websites, etc. Permission will be required from parents to share photos or videos. Establish a private Facebook page for parents to join and update regularly with news and reminders.

Establish the 'routine' (e.g. some time indoors first, then story time, morning tea, outdoor play – will you have a good-bye routine? – or however you want to arrange your program). Young children feel secure when they know what to expect – once they are comfortable, then small changes can be introduced without causing distress or insecurity.

Have a morning early in the year where children are supervised by church members with a Working with Children Check while carers and team have a **'get-to-know-you' session** (you may need some ice-breaker questions to get discussion going and keep on-topic).