

Planning for Long-term Success: Yearly Assessment

Now that you've begun leading change within your congregation, make plans to check-in regularly to maintain, evaluate, and make adjustments to your program. You may still need to meet regularly with small task-teams to accomplish goals from Modules 1-9. However, the goal of this activity is to commit to a yearly check-in for key leaders to keep the vision of children's faith formation within your congregation focused:

Who? It could be the triad as well as other leaders such as a vestry/elder board member, key children's ministry lead volunteers, or parent-committee representatives.

When and How Often: For the first year, it may be helpful to plan to meet two or three times to make sure adjustments continue to go smoothly. After that, consider meeting once or twice a year for an assessment. Pick a regular month for this meeting- avoid Thanksgiving-Christmas, Easter, and summer vacation.

How: Decide now what general elements you would like the agenda to cover, focusing on areas with major changes or with significant pushback to change. Other topics to consider discussing include adjustments to new staff members, introducing the vision to new church members, adding or discontinuing any programs, or significant changes in ministry size or the volunteer pool.

Follow-Up Reading: The continuing education of the assessment team will be key to continuing to make wise, creative, and thoughtful decisions.

Consider picking a book each year to discuss:

- Will Our Children Have Faith? by John H. Westerhoff, III.
- Children's Ministry in the Way of Jesus, by David Csinos and Ivy Beckwith
- Parenting in the Pew, by Robbie Castleman
- Listening to Children on the Spiritual Journey, by Scottie May and Catherine Stonehill
- Intergenerational Christian Formation, by Holly Allen