



[www.ptgroupstogether.org.uk](http://www.ptgroupstogether.org.uk)

## Delegate Resource Information

Although we see our network function primarily as local prayer support, we have gathered some information/contact details which may be useful.

This is available in hard copy to first time delegates and those who do not have access to www website link.

You can download a copy from the pt groups together website.

We cannot guarantee that all these resources are available or up to date. You will need to check for yourselves.

### Organisations

- **Children's Ministry** Based at Eastbourne can send you sample material for their 0-3's teaching programme. Tel. 01323 437737. Check their website for more info. Including the wonderful Children's Ministry weekend conference in Eastbourne in Jan/Feb each year.

A wide range of publications and reasonably priced starter puppets.  
26-28 Lottbridge Drove, EASTBOURNE E Sussex BN23 6NT  
Tel. 01323 437759. [www.childrensministry.co.uk](http://www.childrensministry.co.uk).

- **Care for The Family**  
National Playtime Conferences for PT group people.

**Playtime National Conferences see website for details**  
029 2081 0800

'Playtime' Magazine for leaders and helpers PT groups. Excellent ideas from around the UK.

Care for the Family, Freepost (CF4636) Cardiff CF15 7GZ. Tel: 029 2081 0800. [www.care-for-the-family.org.uk](http://www.care-for-the-family.org.uk) Also an e-mail newsletter via their website to be updated with news and info re events and initiatives.

Also providing a wide range of material and programmes on family & parenting.

- **Parentalk** Parenting course material, training and events around the country the popular 'Parentalk' programme featuring Rob Parsons and Steve Chalke. **There are so many other resources now.**
- **Scripture Union - including the resources for Parent Toddler Groups and childrens work with under-fives - 'Tiddlywinks Big Books' and the 'Big Bible Story Book'.**  
[www.scriptureunion.org.uk](http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk). Also look out for the 'Bubbles' series for under fives and the excellent SU website. Also their training days and the series of books to compliment the Big Books :  
 'Pray and Play',  
 'Glitter & Glue'  
 'Say and Sing'
- **Children Worldwide** [www.rainbowministries.co.uk](http://www.rainbowministries.co.uk)
- **National Christian Resources Exhibition** Sandown Racecourse, Esher, Surrey held annually in May [www.creonline.co.uk](http://www.creonline.co.uk)
- **Spring Harvest, New Wine** and other national conferences

## Books

- **'Pretty much everything you need to know about Working With Under 5's'** by Judith Wigley (pub SU) £8.99 An essential purchase!!
- **Tiddlywinks Big Books** - Scripture Union Themes with story, song and craft activities for pre-school sessions (£8.99)
- **Big Bible Story Book Scripture Union** - delightfully illustrated with puppet style characters and beautifully worded text.
- **Sharing Jesus with Under Fives** - by Janet Gaukroger Pub. Christian Focus (£6.99) An **excellent** reference including babies and pre-birth too! Janet has over 20 years experience of teaching under 5's in church. She also speaks on child and family issues at conventions such as Spring Harvest... spoke at our Training Day in 2004
- **Working with the Under Fives'** by Sue Price. Pub. Childrens Ministry. A great reference. Sue is Director of the Children's Ministry Conferences held each year in Eastbourne and Head of Childrens Ministry at Kingsway with editorial responsibility for the CM Teaching Programme.
- **'Here's One I Made Earlier'** - photocopiable resource. By Kathryn Copsey - Scripture Union
- and **'Here's Another One I made Earlier'**

- **Learning Styles** - Marlene Lefever
- **Starting School-**  
Scripture Union has produced a pack especially for rising 5's with a theme of starting school
- **'My First Experiences'** series by Catherine MacKenzie Published by Christian Focus. £2.99 each  
Titles in the series:  
Our New Baby  
Going to the Doctor  
Going to School  
Our New Home  
Similar to the popular 'Topsy and Tim' books but with a Christian basis. Short texts from scripture link with the simple messages.
- **'Easy Ways to Bible Fun for the Very Young'** and other titles by Vicki Howie ( Pub brf.) (spoke at our 2004 Training Day)
- **Look out for titles published by 'Pupfish (Susie Poole)**

**Try using mainstream books with a good message and add a little bit about God's love or end with 'Thank you God for...'**

- **'Netmums.com' website**  
A new venture - a network of sites for references and info for local areas for parents with pre-school children. You can also access lists of pt groups in any area if you log on.

## **Music**

- **'God's Wonderful World'** by Julia Plaut. This is a 'must have'!
- **'Thank You God for Snails'** Julia Plaut. Released by Kingsway
- **Jumping for God'** another CD by Julia Plaut
- **I will Live in Your House'** CD by Susie Poole
- **'Little Kids Praise'** Released by ICC and Spring Harvest
- **Ischmael's 'Little Songs for Little Children'** released by Kingsway 1998

## Storytelling

- **Story Sacks**  
Use search engine and type in 'Story Sack' search for a comprehensive list of websites about story sacks.
- **'Happy Bags'** simple drawstring bags with toddler/baby board books - lift the flap etc soft toy etc hung up in church for parents to collect during the service to amuse their tots if they wish. Often a family group trying out church, may appreciate this as baby may not settle in an unfamiliar crèche or toddler in a Sunday School Group. Perhaps they just prefer to cuddle up with their grown up.
- **Keep things visual** - with home made story boards, puppets, action and interaction, pace, timing
- **Song bags (or baskets)**  
Have props for singing requests ready to pick out from the song bag. Use charity shop toys as props - puppets etc so when a child chooses a favourite song, you can provide a visual aid to go with it!
- **Godly Play**  
You may not take up the concept as a whole but there are wonderful insights re creative methods of opening up or unfolding a story for children and parents to ponder and wonder about. Lots of ideas for visual aids too. See UK site [www.godlyplay.org.uk](http://www.godlyplay.org.uk)  
US resources at [www.godlyplay.com](http://www.godlyplay.com) Learn more re children's spirituality Introductory and Development days in Trumpington (near Cambridge - see UK website for details) and also through London Diocese in London. (see UK website)
- **Story aprons** - a relatively new idea using finger puppets and toys in pockets of an apron... ready to be brought out during storytelling.

## Puppets

- **One Way UK** puppet ministry [www.onewayuk.com](http://www.onewayuk.com) or Tel: 0707 122 6065
- Puppets by post [www.puppetsbypost.com](http://www.puppetsbypost.com)
- Time to Sow - puppets and other resources for Christian ministry. [www.timetosow.com](http://www.timetosow.com)
- **Children's Ministry puppet range** - £20-25 for children puppets with legs... ideal for sitting on your lap and helping to tell stories, singing and keeping order!! [www.childrensministry.co.uk](http://www.childrensministry.co.uk)
- **Early Learning Centre** currently stock finger puppets. 10% discount card available if you present a letter confirming your involvement with a group.

- **IKEA** stock reasonably priced puppets Also look in charity shops for bargains!
- Animal pyjama cases, are ideal for sitting on the lap and whispering in the ear. Provide a 'way in' for a story about Jesus or a story he told. Use your imagination to make simple puppets from odds and ends, paper bags, mops,
- **'Fetch the Vet'** TV character soft toy can be bought on ebay and transformed into male bible characters!

## Crafts

- A good catalogue supplier with competitive prices worth knowing about is **'Baker Ross'** with a website and online ordering too. Tel. 0870 241 1867 [WWW.BAKERROSS.CO.UK](http://WWW.BAKERROSS.CO.UK)
- **'Save it'** - by Anita Reith Stohs with 52 bible crafts from recyclable items. Published by CPH ISBN 0-570-04602-5
- **Discount Deals**  
Did you know that Early Learning Centre issue 10% discount card to groups on proof of running a Parent Toddler Group. Contact them direct for details and an application form.  
See [www.daniellesplace.com](http://www.daniellesplace.com) for ideas on Christian Crafts (US)  
**'Hobby Craft'** - a superstore for crafts enthusiasts so much all under one roof! See website [www.hobbycraft.co.uk](http://www.hobbycraft.co.uk) for your local store.
- **Scrap Store Bargains!**  
These stores use recyclable materials from local businesses and you can click onto the website directory for your nearest one. Sign up for a small fee and then fill £1 or £5 sized bags full of goodies for craft activities. Look up on the National UK Scrap Store Directory.  
[www.childrensscrapstore.co.uk](http://www.childrensscrapstore.co.uk)

## Together Times

- **'Sleeping Bunnies'** song - teach your group this to get the children to quieten down!
- **'Song basket'** - similar to story sacks but using a bag or basket to keep different props to prompt choices of songs by toddlers.
- **Velcro board** or 'fuzzy felt methods to keep things simple and visual
- **Overhead Projector** for song lyrics or just images to keep things visual
- **Story carpet** or rug for emphasising special times for songs and stories together

- **Group mascot** - use a cuddly toy or puppets as mascots to provide a 'doorway' into the story. Puppets can speak to each other and enable you to say more than if just you talking at or to the gathering.
- **Use simple signing with babies** as we sing together. Songs with actions. Explore the baby signing opportunities through 'Sing & Sign' [www.singandsign.com](http://www.singandsign.com)

Vicki Howie -author and storyteller explained at our 2005 Conference that we need a 'way in' to a story.. a path that leads us towards the main point of our story. Use puppet characters (even as a weekly 'mascot' to indicate that the story time is coming up. Two friendly animal puppets can have a little conversation and then we can say... 'Well, did you know that when Jesus was....'

Keep it at the children's level. Remember little children at pt groups would be able to concentrate for only 1 or 2 minutes. Relate to their world and perspective. What is important in their world? What do they see from their buggy. What do they like to do. Who is special to them?

Routine and markers in a together time are very important.

## Prayers

- **Bubble prayers** - a simple child like prayer released with a bubble!
- **Prayer stars or flowers** - get families to print child's name (or prayer) on a pretty star or flower cut out and hang up as prayers
- **Prayer Candles** - light a candle for a short, simple prayer
- **Body Language!** Using our bodies to express a prayer - body language is a natural way of expressing ourselves to each other and to God....try it out!

## Christian Clipart

For you computer folks, there are wonderful resources available from and hours of fun cutting and pasting! Go to [www.sunrise-software.com](http://www.sunrise-software.com) Particularly recommended is the 'Quickart' Clipart CD-Rom package 1&2 and 3 - the 'megapack'.

**Fairtrade** - are we encouraging fair trade by using and selling fairly traded goods within our PT group settings? Have we thought about this in our churches?

Look for ways to support charities together so nurture outward focus to your group.

## 'Getting to know you'

Just some ideas we have heard about through meeting others leading groups:

- **'Light Lunch'** - informal lunchtime gatherings once a month with a short testimony/ personal story
- **'Coffee & Croissants'** - welcome breakfast mid week after school drop off.
- **'Coffee & Cake'** - similar but mid morning and with cake
- **Parenting Courses** (with crèche or baby sitting?)
- **Basic Skills Courses** - listening to children, play, language etc
- **Creative Craft Day** - come and share/learn a skill - learn how to wire a plug, make a cake decoration, change a wheel... let people come and share their own practical gifts to encourage others!
- **First Aid courses**
- **Pampering Evening**
- **DVD film and Pizza**
- **Helping to set up baby sitting circle networks**
- **Treats & Traditions Evening** - An evening social for reflecting on preparing for Christmas with young children.
- **Creative afternoons** - have a go with clay or other art media. Adults need to play too!
- **Fundraising Events** - cakes sales, bring and buy,
- **Treats and Traditions** - marking the Festivals and times of preparation - Advent and Lent with a social get together for adults.  
*'preparing for Christmas with young children'* or *'Easter Fun ideas with young children'* Remembering family traditions and sharing ideas with each other with seasonal refreshments.
- **Craft workshops with adults and children together** - How about a Saturday morning or holiday morning for a craft workshop for adults and children with a simple message, refreshments and craft activity.
- **See Activate for more ideas** [www.activate.org.uk](http://www.activate.org.uk)

## Supporting Families - listening

- **Acorn Christian Foundation**  
[www.acornchristian.org](http://www.acornchristian.org) - runs Christian Listening Courses
- **Look out for opportunities to explore listening** - to children and listening skills generally
- **The importance of play and play and creative techniques**

## Families - Separation and Divorce

For families going through divorce, separation, change, there is a range of leaflets produced by the Lord Chancellor's Department. These can be downloaded from the website - [www.dca.gov.uk](http://www.dca.gov.uk)

Or ordered via FREEPOST PO BOX 2001, Burgess Hill, W. Sussex RH15 8BR.

One of the publications is called *'Me and My Family - Dealing with separation and divorce'* designed for younger children to do with some help and explanation from an adult.

These is a range appropriate for different aged children.

**Parent Line Plus** also produces leaflet including

- 'A new baby in a stepfamily'
- 'Being a Stepdad'

[www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk) a good informative website

## **Parenting**

If you are thinking of offering a parenting course, consider carefully re how you present it... perhaps choosing to refer to it as 'a series of sessions over... weeks to explore parenting together..' otherwise people might think we have all the answers!

Parents may be more likely to attend a faith exploring course if they have seen what it is like to meet in a small group. (we may take that for granted!)

**Children & Bereavement - Being available to listen and support families in crisis or long term illness etc**

**Teamwork - recognising team roles and building teams, recruiting volunteers.**

Unless you work on your own (and there are some of you who do...) you are likely to be part of a team. You may be a leader, you may be a storyteller, you may be quieter and prefer to serve the teas, wash up or sit and cuddle babies. You may stay for the whole session or turn up to set out or clear up. You may not attend the group at all but you could be praying for the team and the families who attend. There is a valuable role for everyone.

**Not all groups are the same!!**

Some groups are structured others are a free for all where bikes, ride ons and lots of zooming around is just the ticket! Some sing, others don't . Some mums just want to chat with each other.

Some parents don't have childhood recollections of their own parents' singing or playing with them. We can make assumptions. For some parents, singing nursery rhymes with their children might not come easily and this should be taken into account. It helps if the routine of singing is introduced on a regular basis (if your group wants to offer a singing time) so it becomes a well established pattern within the session programme.

Each group knows its families best and trying to get a universal approach is not appropriate or desirable.

## Avoiding Burn out!!

Let us remember that we must work in God's purpose not our own! It is easy to stray like sheep off the path, even with the best of intentions. But let us not be fearful of new things... ready to have a go and explore new opportunities. Pacing ourselves is so important, especially if we are the 'busy types' !

Let us cherish and support each other.

Start each session with prayer in addition to regular prayer meetings for support and planning. Prayer should be our foundation and can often get squeezed out by earnest intentions and activity.

## Ways into the Life of the Church

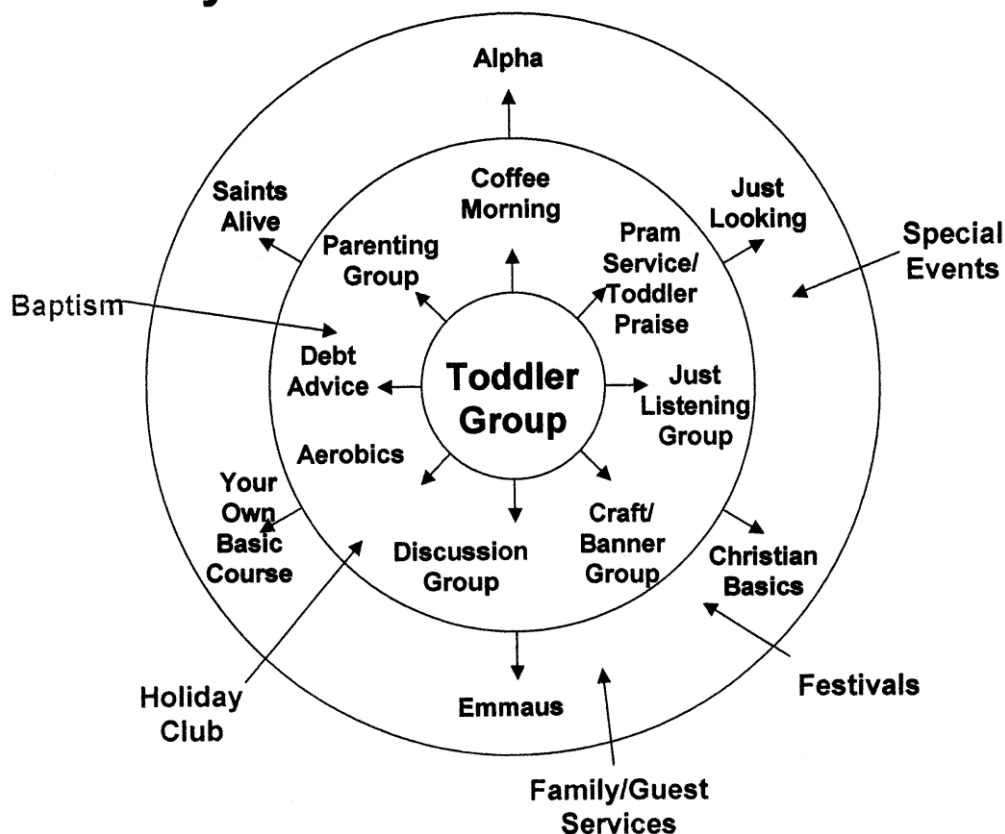


Diagram produced by Jackie Cray - featured at 2004 Conference

## Family Friendly Church

How does your church rate as family friendly? Are children and young families on the fringe of church welcomed and accommodated in terms of their needs and apprehensions if they are trying out church services?

What are your all age/family services like? What is the response /attitude of your church family to little children, visiting families or newcomers Does your

church view little tots as an opportunity to welcome or a bit of a nuisance and a distraction?

### **Mission Shaped Church - the place of Parent Toddler Groups**

Our groups can be one of the most significant aspects of church outreach as we welcome and support many families coming each week. What opportunities for sharing God's love. Do you have a welcome strategy?

Does your group have a voice in Church decisions re ministry and mission? Does the church pray for you or know your concerns and joys?

How does your midweek group link in with other aspects of church ? ... feeding into toddler services? Opportunities for parents to explore faith, stepping stones to Sunday school?

### **Kingdom Work**

When she spoke at our first Conference in 2004, Jackie Cray reminded us that this is 'Kingdom Work'... what an inspiration (especially when we are tired and weary!) Just think for a moment about things of the kingdom... often small but with great potential and capacity to change hearts and lives... a mustard seed, a seed sown in the ground, the pearl of great price, a lamb.... a little child.



‘Whoever welcomes a little child in my name, welcomes me.’ (Mark 9 : 36)

“ ‘Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth. Anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child, will not enter it.’ And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.”

Mark 10: 14-16

Does your group or activity for under fives meet these criteria? Use this model to consider your vision and the practical outworking of it.