

# The Five Step Formula for SUNDAY SCHOOL GROWTH

## Childhood Leadership Training Plan

### Preparation

- Gather six large gift bags. Prepare six cards with the following phrases:
  - Know the Possibilities +
  - Enlarge the Organization +
  - Provide the Space and Equipment +
  - Enlist and Train the Workers +
  - Go After the People +
  - = A Growing Children's Sunday School
- Each card will be attached to a bag during the conference. Place the gift bags on the display table.
- Make cards with the different formulas found on the Item 1 handout, and place the cards randomly on the focal wall. You may want to collect other scientific items such as beakers, a child's microscope, glass slides, and so forth to create a scientific lab-type atmosphere. Place the display table in front of the focal wall with the bags on the table.
- Arrange children's curriculum pieces on the display table for viewing.
- Make copies of the handouts (Items 1-5) for each conferee.
- Make a copy of the "Enlarge the Organization Assignment Cards" (Item 6) and of the outreach case studies (Item 7). Cut apart both sets of case studies.
- On a separate index card write each of these terms: *Inreach, Outreach, and Homereach.*
- Make a copy of the Environment Evaluation sheet from *Essentials for Excellence: Connecting Children's Sunday School to Life*. Cut these apart into strips and place in a small gift bag.
- Collect markers, tear-sheets, paper, a 1-quart jar or other container, name tags, and other necessary items.
- Write the following case studies on separate cards. *Case Study #1:* This past week, two families visited your church for the first time. Both of the families have children in your class. What would you do to minister to these families? *Case Study #2:* A new neighborhood is being built two miles from your church. What will you do to minister to the people moving into the community? *Case Study #3:* Your church just has held a

neighborhood picnic. Many unchurched families attended. What will you do to "go after" these families to enroll them in Sunday School? *Case Study #4:* Recently, your community has begun to include international people groups. What can your church do to reach these people groups for Sunday School?

### Introduction/Get Acquainted (10 minutes)

- Allow the conferees to make name tags as they arrive. Provide a copy of Item 1 for each conferee, and let him begin working on the get-acquainted activity. Encourage the conferees to have fun with the activity as they guess what the correct match is for each formula.
- Once everyone is settled, give the correct answers to the formula match.

H <sub>2</sub> O	water
CO <sub>2</sub>	carbon dioxide
E=mc <sup>2</sup>	Einstein's formula for the conversion of mass to energy
a <sup>2</sup> + b <sup>2</sup> = c <sup>2</sup>	Pythagorean Theorem for a right triangle
A, T, C, G	abbreviations for the four building blocks of DNA
A <sup>2</sup>	area of a square
LW	area of a rectangle
πr <sup>2</sup>	area of a circle

Then allow the conferees to share their formulas for a growing Children's Sunday School.

- Using the material in the Introduction of *The Five Step Formula for Sunday School Growth*, begin a discussion of who Arthur Flake was and of his ministry with Sunday School and the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (now LifeWay Christian Resources). Emphasize that Arthur Flake developed a five-step formula to build a healthy, growing Sunday School.
- Say: "Although the formula is over one hundred years old, these principles of Sunday School and open Bible study groups are still valuable and workable in our churches today. Let's look at each part of the formula and see how it applies to Children's Sunday School."

### *Step 1: Know the Possibilities*

1. Attach the card “Know the Possibilities +” to the first bag on the display table. Say, “Each children’s department director should have a list of prospects for their department. These can come from many different sources.” Form four small groups. Give each group a sheet of paper and a marker. Instruct each group to write three different ways to get prospects for their Children’s Sunday School and/or department. Allow two minutes for the groups to work. After the two minutes, the groups pass the papers to the right and then work together for another two minutes to list three different ideas. Continue the activity until the papers are with their original groups. Each group then should have on its paper 12 ideas of how to obtain prospects.
2. Invite each group to share some of their ideas. Emphasize the importance of obtaining correct information from children and their parents at church events. Instruct them to then relay this information to the departments and the outreach organization of the church for contact and follow-up.

### *Step 2: Enlarge the Organization*

1. Attach the card “Enlarge the Organization +” to the second bag on the display table. Say, “Once the prospects have been discovered, your next step toward developing a growing Sunday School is to create an organization that will accommodate the members and the prospects that you have discovered.” Lead a discussion on this principle using the material in the book. Help the conferees understand that they are not creating an organization only for the children currently enrolled and attending but one that includes children who are not attending regularly and children who are prospects for Sunday School. This change involves stretching the organization—creating new units for growth.
2. Most of our departments only accommodate those children who are present because that is the number for which the departments were designed. Illustrate this principle by showing the conferees a quart jar. Ask: “How much water does this jar hold? (*a quart or a little more*) Why? (*because that is all it was designed to hold*) What happens when you put more than a quart of water in the jar?” (*The water runs over the top, because a quart is all the jar can hold and no more.*) In your discussion, link the jar’s size with the Sunday School organization each church forms. Most current Sunday School organizations cannot accommodate and sustain more

people than are currently attending because the organizations were designed for the churches’ present needs, not for future growth.

3. Create three small groups, and give each group a case study (Item 6). Allow the groups five minutes to read their case studies and to complete their assignments. Then ask each group to share their work with the larger group. Lead the conferees to create from their case studies examples of Sunday School organizations that allow for continual growth.

*Additional information on creating new units can be found on the “Sunday School Strategy Growth Worksheet” located on the CD-ROM of Essentials for Excellence, General Information. This excellent resource will help conferees develop a strategy for growth for their Children’s Sunday School divisions.*

### *Step 3: Provide the Space*

1. Attach the card “Provide the Space and Equipment +” to the third bag on the display table. Say, “The next step toward a growing Sunday School is to provide the necessary space and equipment for each children’s department.”
2. Refer to the “Meeting Space Specifications Chart” in the book. Discuss the importance of the proper square footage per person, maximum attendance, room size, and recommended leader-learner ratio for a children’s department. Ask, “Why do you think this is important to a growing Children’s Sunday School Ministry?”
3. Distribute the Environment Evaluation Tips. Ask the conferees to read the tips and to think about why each tip is important and what would happen in a children’s department when the tip is not the standard. Allow time for the conferees to discuss and share their information with one another.

### *Step 4: Enlist and Train the Workers*

1. Attach the card “Enlist and Train the Workers +” to the fourth bag on the display table. Say, “The fourth step to a growing Sunday School is to enlist and train the workers.” Ask for four to six volunteers. Ask two or three of the volunteers to create and act out a skit showing how not to enlist teachers and the other volunteers to act out a skit showing good ways to enlist teachers. Allow a few minutes for preparation, and then let each group perform their skit.
2. Give each conferee a copy of the handout “10 Keys for Enlisting and Keeping Good Workers” (Item 2). Allow the conferees to fill in the blanks as you lead in the discussion.

The 10 Keys are:

- Pray. (Pray to the God of the harvest.)
- Know a good recruit when you see one. (Characteristics of a Good Children’s Sunday School teacher)
- Know how many workers you need. (Teacher Child Ratio)
- Use a job description. (Be honest about what you’re asking them to do.)
- Know that God is in control. (He knows our needs.)
- Share the joy: use the “buddy system.” (Use division/department directors, and other teachers to help recruit. Recruit two people to work together as “buddies”)
- Provide training.
- Provide support. (Allow your division/department to become a family.)
- Appreciate your leaders.
- Never stop. (Don’t think it’s a once a year thing. Always be looking for new teachers.)

Allow time for conferees to ask questions and interact with the discussion.

3. Instruct the conferees to complete the word search “Ways to Train Teachers” (Item 3). Provide a tear sheet and a marker, and ask the conferees to brainstorm additional ways to train workers. You may refer to the ideas listed in the book and additional ones that have worked in the local churches.
4. During the discussion, refer to the LifeWay curriculum pieces on the display table. Guide the conferees to see the importance of curriculum that “knows its ABCs”:
  - A-activity oriented
  - B-biblically based
  - C-child-centered
  - D-doctrinally sound
  - E-educationally correct
  - F-foundational

Use these points to guide your discussion. Current curriculum updates can be resourced.

### *Step 5: Go After the People*

1. Attach the card “Go After the People+” to the fifth bag on the display table. Say, “A growing Sunday School has an organized approach for reaching and ministering to those enrolled in their departments. Care4Kids is a plan used by Children’s Sunday School leaders to help girls and boys experience God’s love and care. Care4Kids includes reaching, fellowshiping, praying, and performing acts of ministry.” Information for

Care4Kids can be found on the CD-ROM of *Essentials for Excellence: Connecting Children’s Sunday School to Life*. Use this information to lead in a discussion of how Care4Kids can aid in the reaching process for a children’s department. Give each conferee a copy of the “My Care4Kids Group” handout (Item 4). Encourage the conferees to complete the sheet with other Children’s Sunday School leaders at their church.

2. Show the “Inreach,” “Outreach,” and “Homereach” cards. Explain the significance of each kind of activity in a children’s department outreach program. Show the “Childreach” handout (Item 5). Refer to the code on the bottom of the page (I = Inreach, O = Outreach, H = Homereach, A = All). Ask conferees how they can use these ideas at their church and with their Care4Kids group. Ask for additional ideas they have used for inreach, outreach and homereach in their churches.
3. Form four smaller groups. Give each group an outreach case study (Item 7). Allow them five minutes to complete their assignment. After each group is finished, let each group share their assignment with the large group.

### *Step 6: A Growing Children’s Sunday School*

1. Attach the card “= A Growing Children’s Sunday School” to the sixth bag on the display table. Say, “As we began our conference we brainstormed a formula for a growing Children’s Sunday School. Our conference today has explored Flake’s Formula and its implications for a Children’s Sunday School Ministry. These principles worked 100 years ago and are still relevant for a growing Children’s Sunday School Ministry today.”
2. Read Matthew 28:20b, “And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Say, “This verse reminds us that we are not alone on our task of reaching children and families for Christ but that Jesus is always with us and will never ever leave us.”
3. Before the conferees leave, lead in prayer, asking God to help the conferees develop growing Children’s Sunday Schools in their churches.