**CedarCreek Kids**

**DreamTeam Guide**

We exist to introduce kids to Jesus and the life-changing adventure with him. We invite DreamTeam to step into purpose, using their gifts in CedarCreek Kids, to provide a safe and fun experience where kids and families feel known, cared for, and connected. We live this out through a thriving DreamTeam.

To grow and maintain a mission-driven DreamTeam we will focus on:

* Recruitment
* Development – *In progress*
* Discipleship – *In progress*

**Recruitment**

As followers of Jesus, we’re called to be growing. Part of growing means that our teams are called to be recruiting and raising up new DreamTeam members. This is evangelism work, discipleship work, and unlocking the God-given purpose of the people God has entrusted to us. We see the apostles modeling this in [Acts 6:1-7.](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%206%3A1-7&version=NLT)

So how do we do it?

There’s no one thing that makes recruiting a team easier, but when you implement multiple of the following strategies personally and with your DreamTeam (leaders and members), it leads to an invitational culture where everyone plays a part to help the team, and the people on it, grow.

**Pray.**

Consistently and specifically pray for what you long to see. God wants His church to thrive and be healthier more than we want that, so invite Him into the process as much as you possibly can.

But it doesn’t stop there:

* Be specific in your prayers. Specifically pray for what you need, ask your team to be praying for what you need and then give Him the opportunity to give you names or promptings.
* Be bold and ask Him to fulfill the vision that He has given you. As an example, “I pray that lack of DreamTeam will no longer be a challenge in CedarCreek Kids.”

**Follow Up.**

We ask in prayer, and then we follow up with the people God provides by:

* Remembering names and details
* Asking for time; get to know their story
* Help build weak ties between new and existing teammates
* Share what you see God doing in our church and why you see them as part of it

When recruiting new members, 24 hours is the ideal follow-up time frame. If people don’t feel contacted quick enough, then they may determine their next step must not be that important to you, which could leave them with more questions than answers.

**Create a Team Worth Joining.**

Part 2 of this guide is all about building a healthy culture, but the famous Peter Drucker quote applies to recruitment too - “Culture will eat strategy for breakfast”, in other words, if the culture’s bad, it doesn’t matter much what you do, it makes or breaks your team's ability to add and keep new people.

Ask yourself, “Would I want to be on this team?” If yes (or no) why? Lean into that. CedarCreek Kids should be the MOST FUN team to serve on!

For current team members, a good temperature check is to contact past team members and ask them, “Hey! Why was it that you stopped serving or left our ministry?” As a leader, this is one of the greatest things you can do. Really listen to what they share, ask follow-up questions, don’t take it personally – tell them you want to learn and invite the last 10%.

Some typical reasons you may hear:

* Lack of vision.
* No sense of true community (remember, it can be challenging to build community on the Kids Team when adults are split up in different rooms)
* Systems are unclear and/or lack of clear & fast on-boarding process
	+ Great systems provide clarity and that is key when it comes to managing people
* Open ended serving time that leads to burnout
	+ Consider building a “contract time” of 9 months to 1 year that they commit to serving and stagger them so volunteers don’t off-ramp all at once, but also causes an internal trigger to follow-up and check-in.
* Last minute asks to help cover gaps in the schedule
	+ Commit to scheduling at least 1 month out
	+ Develop a strategy for asking your team for last-minute help so you are not burdening the same people every weekend and contributing to guilty feelings when they are unable to serve.

**Recruit Your Team to be Your Recruitment Team.**

It’s more than just telling your team, “Hey! You’re now the recruitment team. GO!” Your approach is everything.

* Have a conversation with your team about what it would look like to have a team that was fully resourced by DreamTeam who are living out their God-given purpose and gifting on our team
* Help them see the ways they can contribute based on their gifting
* Have everyone on the team commit to asking God to give them opportunities to connect and recruit people that He wants to be a part of the team
* Do this same process again every semester and celebrate the wins

**Put Yourself (and your team) in Places to Make the Ask and Develop the Team.**

Weekend Opportunities

GrowthTrack

* Alongside the rest of the campus team, know who is in GrowthTrack, their spiritual gifts and the areas they have identified to potentially serve
* Make intentional connections, every week if possible.
* Introduce yourself to all attending and make yourself available by saying, if you know someone who could use their gifts on my team, introduce me!
* Remind your team, and GrowthTrack attenders, that just about every spiritual gift can be used in Kids Ministry!

Lobby Time

* Set personal goals every weekend of how many conversations you want to have (Ex. I want to invite 3 new people to consider joining my Preschool Team this weekend.)
* Equip DreamTeam that have the gifts for connection for Lobby conversations and connections and then partner with them. Consider asking your DreamTeam Leadership to set weekend goals as well.
* Keep your CedarCreek Kids' needs on all team's radar, not just staff, and even if they aren’t comfortable connecting, they can still help by using their own personal connections with family or friends or by praying.

Intentionality and Excellence in CedarCreek Kids

* We honor God with our best, but excellence is also attractive.
* When you receive kids ministry compliments on weekend – turn it into conversation about THEM! Perhaps they have an eye for excellence when it comes to serving kids and families, experience working with kids, and/or a real passion for the next generation. They may be a great fit for your team!

During the Week

Local Universities

* Build, at the very least, loose relationships, and then potentially as it grows partnering and collaborating with university education departments. This could start as coffee with the leaders to simply build connection, hear how things are going, what their challenges are and to be praying for them.
* Education majors need experience working with kids and could in some cases use volunteer hours towards their program.
	+ UT (be sure and talk with each other across campuses to ensure multiple campuses aren’t trying to connect with the same people))
	+ BGSU
	+ University of FN
	+ Owens Community College
	+ Tiffin University
	+ CRU, H2O and others for collaboration
* A key piece is our willingness to serve them in their context as well. If the team isn’t in a position to do that then be wise in your connections here.

Local Schools

* Continue to build and foster relationships with your partner school. Increase your community visibility as the Kids Director at your campus to not only serve the school and build relationships with kids/families, but also in hopes of inspiring new DreamTeam (others who are passionate about the next generation) to join us on mission. As a bonus – you may be able to recruit some excellent teachers and worship leaders through High School music programs!
* How is your campus currently serving your partner school? How can you step in to serve while also being a vision carrier for CedarCreek Kids?

Visit Adult Groups with “Seasoned” Parents/Grandparents

* Work with your Next Steps Director of Groups to identify groups with seasoned parents/grandparents who have older students (or even “empty nesters”.) Connect with those Group Leaders and ask to visit their group. Share vision for CedarCreek Kids and how we are inviting experienced adults to help lead the next generation and partner with parents. Their life experience, wisdom and perspective will not only be beneficial for kids, but for the parents who are looking for mentors and help as they raise their children.

Kids Team Test Drive

* Plan a 15-minute vision and mingle experience (post service and/or in-between services) to make weak ties and share a compelling vision of what CedarCreek Kids is all about; think GrowthTrack pitch.
	+ Invite anyone you have been recruiting and ask your DreamTeam to invite one person and then come with them
	+ Prep a DreamTeam member to share a 2 minute story of why they serve in Kids and the difference God has made through them
	+ Tour the space
	+ Q and A
	+ Include an “attention grabber for grownups” (Ex. Come spend a quick 15 minutes with us, grab some nachos, and learn what CedarCreek Kids is all about!)

**Build Relationship with Students.**

We know that some of our best CedarCreek Kids leaders are Students. They are passionate, energetic and can be wonderful role models. In addition, we know that serving is a key growth component for a student’s spiritual journey.

* Connect with your Student Director. Discuss which students would be a great fit in CedarCreek Kids, who is ready for that next step, etc.; with a focus on High School students.
* Attend Student Night and make connections with students. Consider intentional “I see in you” conversations and discuss how their gifts can make a difference.
* Consider inviting a Student Group to come visit CedarCreek Kids on the weekend, give them an idea of what their serve would look like, and help make weak ties with kids and your DreamTeam.

**Play the Long Game.**

While our recruitment and onboarding processes matter, we can’t lose sight of retaining our team members and maintaining a healthy culture they want to remain a part of.

Check in with your team seasonally (encouraging your Coordinators to do the same with their team) and ask the following:

* What do you love most about serving on the team?
* What frustrates you the most about serving on the team?
* What could I do to better support you as a part of the team?
* Where do you feel you have more to offer?
* What else is on your mind that I haven’t asked about?

### **Celebrate the Wins, Reinforce the Why, & Remind them Continually.**

Celebration leads to replication. If you are constantly talking about and celebrating how people are bringing people onto the team, how the team is growing and what life-change we are experiencing, then your team will know what is valued and will begin to replicate it.

Consider celebrating through:

* Huddle stories
* Volunteer spotlights (in huddle, via team communication, etc.)
* DreamTeam meals (dinner on Saturdays and breakfast on Sundays)
* Hand-written cards
* Team nights (not trainings … but pure celebrations!)

Keep the “why” in front of them. If you aren’t talking about vision, no one is, and the team will drift.

Every strategy is only as good as its implementation.