

NUTS AND BOLTS

Incredible Years Group Organizing Manual

1. It is vital that an organization have a group/childcare coordinator in place when thinking about doing Incredible Years groups.
2. Develop a list of reliable childcare workers. Include contact information, when available, how many hours/ week they can commit to.

TIP: Important to keep in mind that in order to hang on to childcare workers you may need to guarantee a number of work hours per week.

TIP: When hiring for a large catch met area it's good to ask the childcare workers which areas are willing/able to travel to for work.

3. Develop a list of group leaders. Include contact information especially “emergency contact numbers” in case a group leader calls in sick and you need to find a last minute replacement.
4. Food Planning is a major consideration when organizing Incredible Years groups. The more groups you have the more complicated the logistics. Below are a number of Tips that can make the coordinator’s life easier.

TIP: Develop a basic meal menu that can be rotated each week for variety

TIP: Find restaurants that have a number of locations. The closer the restaurant is to the group location the better.

TIP: Ask restaurants for the “Party or Catering” menu.

TIP: Call the order in well in advance and arrive 15 minutes early. That way the restaurant has time to address any mistakes made to the order.

TIP: Pay with a credit or debit card. Have a “petty cash” system available in cases where a credit card is not accepted or if for some reason the card has reached its limit.

TIP: Some restaurants will accept payment in advance. This can save a lot of time.

TIP: Don’t forget to order food for the group leaders and childcare staff.

TIP: Observe amounts of food leftover each week. Most restaurants provide large portions. You may be able to order less and save money.

TIP: Keep track of the number of children and parents served each week. Although this may not be the same number each week one can observe patterns and make close estimates. This can help reduce the potential of over or under buying food.

TIP: Develop a “childcare meal request form.” This should address any child food allergies the coordinator and childcare workers need to be aware of.

TIP: Develop weekly Snack Menu for the children.

TIP: Buy Child snacks in bulk. This can help cut down on food costs.

TIP: Create a food “serving items” checklist and carrying case.

5. Develop age-appropriate activities and an activity schedule the childcare workers can use each week.

TIP: Create activity tubs with all the materials the childcare worker will need week to week.

TIP: Childcare coordinator should debrief each week with the childcare workers to address any problems that should arise.

6. Have someone available to help organize the parent groups each week.

TIP: This person can make copies of materials needed for the weekly groups. This can be very time consuming so make sure you give yourself plenty of time.

TIP: Having an Incredible Years group leader “Starter Kit” can save time and worry.

7. Some organizations that plan to do groups will need to find space in the community. This can be time consuming and challenging. Some helpful tips are included below:

TIP: Many religious organizations have facilities designed to accommodate families. They usually have space where groups of adults can meet as well as childcare rooms.

TIP: It can help to have persons within your organization who are affiliated with a religious organization to make the initial contact.

TIP: Larger childcare centers tend to have ideal space available as well.

TIP: Scope out the space ahead of time to make sure the layout is appropriate for the number of children and parents, and the type of childcare that will be provided. Sometimes the organization will state the facility will accommodate your needs when it may not.

TIP: Communicate to staff to be mindful/ respectful of the place being used. Supervise children carefully.

TIP: Have the coordinator periodically observe how the space is being used to determine what is working or not.

TIP: “Shop around.” Facility rental prices can vary from place to place.

TIP: Some organizations are not accustomed to renting out their facility on a weekly basis. Be prepared to take the lead when negotiating this. Some agreements on how to invoice and setting an ongoing price may need to be worked out.