



first KIDS

QUICK START GUIDE

First Friends Cypress





WELCOME

to FIRST FRIENDS and FIRST KIDS
PRESCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

We hope this brief guide will help connect you with First Friends and First Kids Cypress. We want you to know who we are, what we do, and why we do it.

This quick start guide is a snapshot of our ministry's mission, vision, values and some fantastic opportunities for your family.

We are passionate about kids, Jesus and Cypress! Our team of teachers and staff wants to get to know your family. Let us know how we can help you navigate and get plugged in to our Preschool and Children's Ministry.

Erin Ruddle

Erin Ruddle

OUR VALUES


MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of First Friends and First Kids Cypress is to show the love of Jesus to children and their families through teaching them God's word; equipping them to worship and to serve; and by empowering parents to be the primary disciple makers of their children.

VISION:

Our vision for children is that they would come to love Jesus Christ; love His Word; and share the love of Christ with others.

WE VALUE:

1. Parents as the primary disciple makers of their children.
Our role is secondary and viewed as a partnership.
 2. Developmentally appropriate Bible teaching.
 3. Building relationship and community.
 4. Equipping children to serve in the church and in the world.
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MEET OUR TEAM

WHO WE ARE AS A CHURCH:

Houston's First Baptist Church is a relevant, biblical community who has a 175-year legacy gathering together in Worship; Growing our Souls; and Giving our Lives. Houston's First has 5 campuses throughout Houston: Cypress, Downtown, Español, the Loop, and Sienna.

WHO WE ARE AS A MULTISITE:

Our campus exists to extend the Gospel and ministry to the people of Cypress. We are a church who meets the needs of the community in a neighborhood-specific context.

WHO WE ARE AS A MINISTRY:

The Preschool and Children's Ministry serves children birth through fifth grade; empowering and equipping them to know and love Jesus, while also encouraging families to grow their faith at home.



Erin Ruddle

Director of the Preschool and Children's Ministry

Erin.Ruddle@HoustonsFirst.org

Favorite ice cream: Cookies-N-Cream

If I were an animal I'd be: a butterfly

Favorite thing about children: They Are REAL. (not!) I love meeting them right where they are!



Eric Cowpersmith

Preschool and Children's Ministry Associate

Eric.Cowpersmith@HoustonsFirst.org

Favorite ice cream: Cookies-N-Cream

If I were an animal I'd be: an Orca

My favorite thing about children: They are so full of energy and joy!



Timber Garner

Preschool and Children's Ministry Assistant

Timber.Garner@HoustonsFirst.org

Favorite ice cream: Chocolate. In a cone.

If I were an animal I'd be: an Otter

My favorite thing about children: Their faith! Kids are quick to believe God's promises.



Cindy Wineman

Preschool and Children's Ministry Administrative Assistant

Cindy.Wineman@HoustonsFirst.org

Favorite ice cream: Ice cream sundae with nuts

If I were an animal I'd be: a wolf

Favorite thing about children: Their capacity to love unconditionally.



Michelle Valentine

First Friends and First Kids Coordinator

Michelle.Valentine@HoustonsFirst.org

Favorite ice cream: Birthday cake

If I were an animal I'd be: a horse

Favorite thing about children: Their pure joy.



Sandra Fong

First Friends and First Kids Coordinator

Favorite ice cream: Jamoca Almond Fudge

If I were an animal I'd be: a lady bug

Favorite thing about children: Their innocence.

THE LINGO

Here are a few terms that you need to be aware of to better understand our ministry:

NEXTGEN: NextGen refers to the “next generations,” our ministry to children 18 years old and under.

MILESTONES: a framework of discipleship for your family, targeted at stages of life.

MIDLINK: Wednesday night opportunities for the whole family. MidLink is a touch point, linking our people’s lives together from Sunday-to-Sunday.

BLAST: BLAST stands for “building lives around scripture and truth,” which is our Wednesday night discipleship opportunity for 1st through 5th grade.

MISSION FRIENDS: Mission Friends is a Wednesday night opportunity for birth through Kindergarten where kiddos explore Biblical truths, missionaries from around the world, and other cultures.

WOW: “Worship our Way” is a rotation during Wednesday night mission friends that allows preschoolers to make a joyful noise to the Lord. Through movement and simple praise songs, they learn how to worship!

LBS: Age appropriate Life Bible Study is available on Sundays for children birth through Kindergarten.

HEARTLAND: An age-appropriate worship experience for PreK and Kindergartners in which they worship through song, message and strategic interactive stations; all contributing to reinforce the lesson they have been taught in LBS.

KIDS WORSHIP: An interactive worship experience for 1st - 3rd graders to gather, to worship, and to learn from the Bible in an engaging way.

FAMILY WORSHIP: 5 times a year we have Family Worship in lieu of Heartland or Kids Worship. Children PreK through 3rd grade who normally attend their own worship times, go to worship with their parents. Parents are able to both model worship and participate in worship with their children in our main worship service. This is a fantastic experience for the entire church!

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

SUNDAYS

9:30a LBS All Ages
Heartland Worship PreK-Kinder
Kids’ Worship Grades 1-3
11a LBS All Ages
Heartland Worship PreK-Kinder
Kids’ Worship Grades 1-3

TUESDAYS IN THE FALL AND SPRING

9a - 2p Mother’s Day Out
9:30a - 11:30a Women’s Bible Study Childcare
9:30a - Noon MOPS- Mothers of Preschoolers
(1st and 3rd Tuesdays)

WEDNESDAYS IN THE FALL AND SPRING

6 - 8p Mission Friends and W.O.W. – Birth-Kinder
B.L.A.S.T.: Grades 1-5

THURSDAYS IN THE FALL AND SPRING

9a - 2p Mother’s Day Out

THINGS WE DO

MILESTONES

Parent Commitment: Suggested for infants through 1-year olds. Parents present their babies to the church as they publicly commit to raise them in the ways of the Lord.

First Grade Bible Presentation: To celebrate the milestone of learning to read, First graders are presented with their own Bibles in the worship service.

5th Grade Launch: We celebrate the milestone of graduation from elementary as 5th graders are launched into the Student Ministry through a family-centered gathering..

CELEBRATIONS:

Promotion Sunday: Children will promote to their next age or grade level on the first Sunday of June.

Back-to-School Sunday: The church recognizes the significance of students and families in their prospective school settings as the ultimate difference makers in the community. Back-to-School Sunday is like a pep rally for kids, starting the kids off on the right foot!

The Christmas PAR-TAY: Every December we celebrate Christmas in a BIG WAY with all the kiddos birth through 5th grade!

CAMP INTERSECT:

Yearly week-long summer camp for children from all 5 campuses who have completed grades 3-6, as they come together for an amazing spirit-filled getaway!

BACKYARD KIDS CLUB:

Families from the Cypress campus participate in dozens of Backyard Kids Clubs across Cypress each July. We reach out to kids in our own neighborhoods by hosting 3-day streamlined Vacation Bible Schools on our own streets. In lieu of a traditional VBS, we aim to build a bridge between church and community through literally "loving our neighbors" to Christ.

MISSIONS:

We are a missions-minded ministry, seeking to involve families in many outward-focused initiatives throughout the year.

MOTHER'S DAY OUT

Mother's Day Out is on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9a-2p, during the spring and fall semesters. We welcome children, infants-PreK, both from our church and our community to engage in Bible-centered teaching, enrichment and fun! Registration is required and spacing is limited.

You can register and find out more info online at Houstonsfirst.org

If you have any questions, please contact Michelle valentine at Michelle.Valentine@Houstonsfirst.org



FAQs

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED AS A PARENT?

One of the best ways to get involved as a parent, is to volunteer with us on Sundays or Wednesdays. All volunteers must fill out a NextGen application; undergo a background check; and be members of Houston's First. For more information, please contact Michelle Valentine.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP MY CHILD?

All first time guests will report to the first time guest check-in for room assignments, name tags and security cards. No adult is allowed into the NextGen area without a proper nametag. You will be escorted to your assigned rooms. Your security card is required at the end of the session to retrieve your child. The next time you join us, you will be able to print your name tags and security cards at the kiosks using your 10 digit phone number.

IS MY CHILD SAFE AND SECURE?

We make every effort to maintain a clean, safe and inviting environment for children to feel secure and to promote learning. Every detail is considered. To ensure the safety of all of our children, the only adults who are allowed in the classrooms are approved volunteers. (Volunteers wear designated name tags so that they are easily identified.). We strongly encourage all of our parents to volunteer on a monthly rotation; however they must be approved before entry into the classroom.

HOW WILL I BE CONTACTED IF THERE IS AN ISSUE WITH MY CHILD?

If there is cause for concern with your child, we will text you. Please have your cell phone with you and set to vibrate so we can reach you discreetly.

WHAT IF MY CHILD HAS AN ALLERGY?

Please let us know if your child has a serious allergy so we can input it into our database and indicate their allergies on their nametags. Please also indicate allergy on their classroom check-in sheet. We are a nut-free ministry. We do not allow any nuts or nut products into the area. We have special accommodations for typical allergies such as gluten, dairy or egg.

DO 4TH AND 5TH GRADERS GO TO KIDS WORSHIP?

As we prepare 4th and 5th graders for their launch into The Student Ministry, and indicate their allergies on their nametags. We feel they are ready for and benefit in participating in the large Worship Service with their parents, observing and taking part in the various elements of "big church."



GROW@HOME

Grow@Home is a churchwide commitment to encourage spiritual growth at home.

Spiritual training at home and regular attendance at Life Bible Study and Milestones at Houston's First lay the foundation for a deep and lasting faith. The goal of NextGen Ministry is to aid families in becoming the primary disciplinakers of their children.

Listen, Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

These **WORDS** that I am giving you today are to be **in your heart**.

REPEAT THEM TO YOUR CHILDREN.

TALK ABOUT THEM WHEN YOU

sit in your house

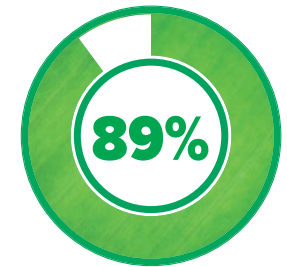
when you walk
along the road,



when you lie down

when you get up.

Deuteronomy 6:4-7



Percentage of "church kids" who did not see Christian faith lived out at home and walked away from the faith as adults.

A G@H Family is...

- Authentic** – Being real about the problems and issues faced in the home
- Engaged** – Actively working to be in the game, and not on the sidelines
- Relational** – Bringing down emotional walls and creating credibility in relationships
- Missional** – Believing Jesus is King and focusing resources, relationships and the calendar to reflect that belief
- Intentional** – Not just letting life happen, but taking real steps to live purposefully

Wherever you are is a great place to start.

