

Under the leadership of the NextGen Pastor, the First West NextGen Team is responsible for age division discipleship and family ministry on all First West campuses. The team includes the NextGen Pastor and all age division ministers and directors at First West.

#### Must Do:

- Our focus and strategy for NextGen Ministry at First West is **home + church**, or the **Orange Strategy**. When home and church work together, our spiritual growth strategy for the next generation has lasting impact on preschoolers, children, students and their families.
- Our Sunday AM ministry for children in grades 1-5 is called **Treehouse**. Each campus will use Treehouse curriculum, organization, programming and leader training procedures.
- **Check-in areas and security** procedures will be used in preschool and children's areas.
- The **Treehouse environment** calls for a large gathering space with simple audio, lighting and video. At a minimum, the backdrop should be black pipe and drape with chairs appropriate for children.
- Nursery will be provided for **babies and preschoolers**. Campuses will utilize paid nursery staff supplemented by volunteers as needed.
- Each campus will offer group **discipleship for all ages**. Groups for children and students will be offered on Wednesday evening or at other times appropriate for the campus context.
- Our summer outreach initiative for children is **Vacation Bible School (VBS)**. All campuses will schedule VBS in consultation with the NextGen Pastor. Times, dates and scope will be contextualized for each campus, and large group assemblies will harness economies of scale with team-based music and drama across campuses.
- All age division volunteers and paid staff must have **background checks**. Campus leaders are expected to ensure compliance with this key security protection.
- Age divisions will maintain **member records and attendance** via ACS and The City.
- **The Baptist Faith and Message (1963)** is our doctrinal standard as a church and serves as our statement of faith. All teaching should align with these doctrines.
- The NextGen Team meets once a month for a **Cross-Campus Champion-led Meeting**. All age division leaders are expected to attend this meeting.

#### Should Do:

- A **computer check-in process** should be used if possible.
- The Treehouse environment should have a **purpose-built outdoor treehouse set** with a platform and professional audio, lighting and video. Providing a quality experience for children and their families is something we value.

- Our Sunday AM ministry for preschoolers is called **Little Treehouse**. When staffing and facilities allow it, a campus should implement a Little Treehouse program. Each campus will use Little Treehouse curriculum, organization, programming and leader training procedures.
- Plan periodic **MERGE Sundays** (at least once per quarter) to bring families together in a corporate worship service. Schedule these services around strategic sermons and message series.
- Each campus should aim for **multiple services at the earliest date feasible** in order to allow workers to serve 1 hour and worship 1 hour.
- Use **strategic outreach events** for children and families to build contextual momentum in our communities.
- Campuses should launch with a part-time **Children’s Minister** and transition the position to full-time status once average weekly worship attendance is 250 or more.
- **Initial staffing** for a campus NextGen Ministry should include: a part-time Children's Minister, 12 volunteers (on a 1 month rotation) and 4 paid nursery workers.
- **Worker training** should begin 3 months out and start with an initial reading of Brian Haynes’ *Shift*.
- The NextGen Pastor will occasionally **call meetings** as needed for long-range age division planning, family strategy or curriculum adjustments. It is expected that these called meeting are a priority.
- The NextGen Team will work as needed to create and evaluate **sermon-guided resources**.

**Nice to Do:**

- The NextGen Pastor reserves the right to request that the NextGen Team attend **conferences, seminars or make visits** to area churches for professional development.

**Discouraged – Don’t Do:**

- Don’t start Sunday AM groups for children since it requires too much work and too many leaders.
- Don’t reproduce the Playscape at other campus locations. The financial investment required is too great and financial resources can better be spent in other places.
- Don’t do anything without asking the “why” question.

**NextGen Team:**

- NextGen Pastor – Mark Cole
- Children’s Minister – Lisa Hartline
- Preschool Minister – Amy Bowman
- Fairbanks Children’s Minister – McKenzie Reech
- Calhoun Children’s Minister – TBA