



Family Tree Kick-off Tips and Suggestions Photo Submission Instructions

Kick-off Tips and Suggestions ***By Susan Eernisse***

You can plan a kick-off theme party prior to the first rehearsal of *Family Tree* OR include some fun introductory activities for the first rehearsal. Either way, here are some suggestions to add energy and build excitement for your children and their families.

Theme and Décor

Display framed family photos gallery-style as everyone enters the space. You can contact families in advance of the event for these photos. Use photocopies, not originals for the display. You can purchase dollar store or thrift shop frames, or simply mount the photos on colorful cardstock. Try to get names and dates to go with the photos – the older the better! Print labels or have a volunteer hand-letter them. Save the gallery items to display at the opening night of your performance!

Play the *Family Tree* track as everyone arrives.

Enlist parents/grandparents to provide items for a treat table using favorite family recipes. If they are willing, allow the adults to do a recipe swap at the event. Make sure you check

for food allergies. It's a good idea to post ingredients near each item. Treats may be consumed as families arrive or at the conclusion of the event.

Have a photo booth with props from different decades and take family photos of all attending. These can be printed or sent digitally to participants. Some of these may be used in your promotional materials for the musical in print materials, social media, etc.

Set up some activity stations for children and their families to visit as they arrive:

1. Make a scrap book page of a favorite family event or holiday; provide art supplies.
2. Draw a family portrait. Provide large art sheets with crayons or markers and have the family members work together to create a drawing together.
3. Provide jigsaw puzzles to work on as the group gathers, allowing newcomers to join.

Large-group family-related activities

1. Have families take turns acting out a favorite family memory – camping trip, vacation, leisure activity, etc. They can choose to act it out with a single narrator OR use actions only and have the other families try to guess the activity.

2. *Family Feud* Fun – play a competitive trivia game with adults versus children. Trivia can be in categories like “the good old days” and “modern technology” – just have age-relevant categories so that both groups can offer their expertise.

Wrap up the event by relating a brief summary of the musical, providing a list of all rehearsal and performance dates, and making other announcements.

First Rehearsal Option

If you choose to do the kick-off as part of the first rehearsal, you can still include the families. The gallery and photo booth can also be included. They can participate in the rehearsal, or you can provide a separate space for them to visit with each other. Plan to do a mini-performance of one song (doesn't have to be perfect – use the track with vocals!) at the end of the rehearsal with families as the audience.

Looking ahead

Feature one family at each rehearsal. Children from that family may bring an adult family member as a guest. They can tell something special about their family – origin of the family name, a bit of history of the family, country of origin – limit their presentation to 5 minutes.

Our prayer is that your presentation of *Family Tree* will be a transformative, spiritually enriching experience for all the children and families whom the musical touches!