

WELCOME TO THE 2025 NATIONAL OBSERVANCE OF CHILDREN'S SABBATHS® CELEBRATION

Organizing Tools Workbook

*Planning with care, acting with courage,
and sustaining the work for every child.*

Introduction

The Organizing Tools Workbook translates the heart of Children's Sabbath into a clear, doable path—so teams can move from intention to impact with steadiness, creativity, and joy. Designed for multi-faith contexts, it honors the wisdom of every tradition and the leadership of children themselves. Organizing becomes a shared spiritual practice: we set the table, make room for every voice, and prepare the conditions where children can flourish.

You'll find cues to protect children's dignity and safety, practices that reduce overwhelm for volunteers, and rhythms that keep your team grounded. Every tool aims to cultivate belonging—before, during, and after your observance.

This section will guide your team through:

- Map a 8–10 week path from vision → observance → sustained advocacy.
- Share responsibility through clear roles, buddies, and a care plan.
- Prepare welcoming, accessible spaces with consent-forward practices.
- Communicate clearly with congregations, partners, and press.
- Invite concrete action (letters, petitions, meetings) that advances policy rooted in care.
- Capture stories and metrics that honor children's voices and guide next steps.
- Keep momentum alive after the weekend with reflection, gratitude, and ongoing commitments.

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Tool 1

Organizer's Planning Guide

Timeline with Checkboxes & Write-Ins

Purpose: Step-by-step timeline so nothing is missed and everyone is prepared.

Use This When: Kicking off planning; weekly check-ins; final confirmations.

Customization Note: Every Children's Sabbath event will look different—this timeline is a flexible guide. Adjust weeks, swap steps, and remix tools to fit your tradition, capacity, and community context (even on a 2–4 week runway).

8–10 Weeks Before

- ☐ Form your planning team (diverse in ages, roles, perspectives)
Names/roles: _____
- ☐ Select a date and theme/advocacy focus
Date: _____ Theme/Focus: _____
- ☐ Invite participation from children, youth, and families (voices in worship/art)
Outreach plan: _____
- ☐ Connect with local orgs serving children (list 3–5)
Partners to contact: _____

6 Weeks Before

- ☐ Confirm worship leaders, presenters, preachers, musicians, readers
Confirmed: _____
- ☐ Begin promotion (newsletter, bulletin, social, web)
Channels/dates: _____
- ☐ Review worship/advocacy resources; select which to use
Selections: _____

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Tool 1

Organizer's Planning Guide

Timeline with Checkboxes & Write-Ins

3 Weeks Before

- ☐ Prepare pledge cards, bulletin inserts, advocacy materials
- ☐ Recruit volunteers (greeters, action tables, follow-up)
Names/roles: _____
- ☐ Continue publicity; invite local leaders/media
Who/when: _____

1 Week Before

- ☐ Walk-through with leaders + children/youth
Date/time/location: _____
- ☐ Finalize advocacy opportunities (letters, petitions, visits)
Which actions: _____
- ☐ Remind community (all channels)

Day Of

- ☐ Arrive early; ground team with prayer/centering
- ☐ Set worship materials, action tables, childcare
- ☐ Share stories, elevate children's voices, gather commitments

1-2 Weeks After

- ☐ Count commitments/letters; log numbers
- ☐ Thank participants, especially children & volunteers
- ☐ Share results with community, partners, and the Children's Defense Fund
- ☐ Reflect + identify next advocacy steps

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Tool 2

Role Assignment Chart

*Share the load, match gifts to
needs, and care for the team.*

Purpose: Share responsibility and match gifts/skills to needs.

Use This When: Assigning roles, confirming backups, and day-of coordination.

Role	Responsibilities	Suggested Leader(s)
Organizer/Coordinator	Oversees all planning, ensures timeline is followed	Pastor, lay leader, or organizer
Worship/Arts Coordinator	Works with clergy, faith leaders, artists, musicians, and children to shape service	Clergy, faith leader, music director
Children/Youth Coordinator	Engages children and youth in prayers, readings, or art	Teacher, youth leader, community artist
Action/Outreach Coordinator	Prepares pledge cards, letters, action tables	Justice/advocacy leader
Communications Coordinator	Handles announcements, flyers, social media	Media/communications volunteer
Radical Hospitality Coordinator	Ensures welcoming environment and logistics	Ushers, greeters, organizers
Documentarian	Documents stories, photos, and commitments	Documents stories, photos, and commitments

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Tool 2

Role Assignment Chart

workbook

Purpose: Share responsibility and match gifts/skills to needs.

Use This When: Assigning roles, confirming backups, and day-of coordination.

Role	Responsibilities	Suggested Leader(s)
Organizer/Coordinator		
Worship/Arts Coordinator		
Children/Youth Coordinator		
Action/Outreach Coordinator		
Communications Coordinator		
Radical Hospitality Coordinator		
Documentarian		

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Tool 3

Day-of Checklists

*From doors open to benediction or
the closing circle.*

Purpose: Smooth implementation with quick visual checks.

Use This When: Setup, service, action tables, hospitality, and pack-up.

Time	Element	Lead
7:30am	Arrival and Grounding	Fred (age 16)
8:00am	Sound check & seating	Teen Tech Team
9:00am	Call to worship (children's voices)	Children's Group
9:30am	Sermon/sermon starter	Rev. Vahisha
10:00am	Prayers/pledge moment	Kali (age 12)
10:30am	Performance	Community Storytelling Group
11:30am	Action invitation	City Councilperson
12:00pm	Closing & benediction	Rev. Hasan
12:30pm	Community Brunch	Mr. Wilson

Tool 3

Day-of Checklists

workbook

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Tool 4 Talking Points for Organizers

Say what matters

Purpose: Clear, confident language for sharing the heart of Children's Sabbath.

Use This When: Conversations with community, partners, press; pulpit; phone; social.

Use these to frame conversations with your community, partners, or press:

About Children's Sabbath

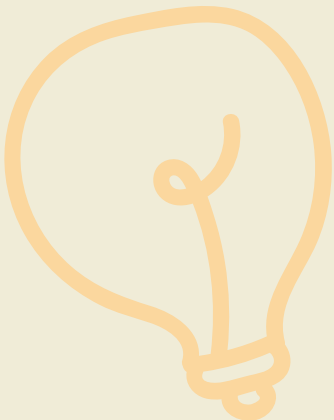
The National Observance of Children's Sabbath® is a national, multi-faith observance that brings people of faith together in prayer, worship, education, and action to ensure every child has a fair chance at life.

Why It Matters

We know children are among the most vulnerable in our nation. Observing Children's Sabbaths allows our community to both pray for and act on behalf of children, calling for justice in policies and compassion in our daily lives.

Invitation to Join

Your voice and presence matter. Join us in worship, in advocacy, and in building a community where every child can thrive



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Tool 5

Post-Sabbath Reflection Worksheet

*Measure what moved, learn what
lasts, plan what's next.*

After the Children's Sabbath, it is vital to pause, reflect, and carry forward the commitments made. The Post-Sabbath Reflection Worksheet is designed to help organizers capture participation numbers, advocacy actions, and powerful stories while the experience is still fresh.

This tool also invites leaders to think about sustainability. What did we learn? How were children's voices centered? What actions will we continue beyond this weekend?

Completing this worksheet strengthens your community's advocacy and contributes to the wider movement when results and stories are shared back with CDF. Reflection is itself an act of accountability and hope—ensuring that the spirit of Children's Sabbath extends into lasting change.

Congregation/Organization/Group: _____
City/State: _____

Participation

- Number of worship participants: _____
- Number of children/youth involved: _____

Advocacy Actions Taken

- Letters sent (how many: _____)
- Petitions signed (how many: _____)
- Advocacy meeting planned
- Other: _____

Stories & Highlights

- What moments stood out?
- How did children's voices shape the day?

Next Steps

- How will we sustain this energy?
- What long-term advocacy will we commit to?

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Tool 5

Post-Sabbath Reflection Worksheet

Measure what moved, learn what
lasts, plan what's next.

Purpose: Capture participation, advocacy actions, and stories—then plan what's next.

Post-Sabbath Reflection Worksheet

Congregation/Organization/Group: Transform
Network
City/State: Charlotte, NC

Participation

- Number of worship participants: 50
- Number of children/youth involved: 75

Advocacy Actions Taken

- Letters sent (how many: 250)
- Petitions signed (how many: 5)
- Advocacy meeting planned
- Other:

Stories & Highlights

- What moments stood out? singing together as a community.
- How did children's voices shape the day? we asked children to lead the service.

Next Steps

- How will we sustain this energy? we are coordinating a monthly meeting to advocate on behalf of children.
- What long-term advocacy will we commit to? lobbying at the capitol in Raleigh, NC.