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All  
Ages

# Religious Education in the Home and Small Meeting



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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

By  
Mary Snyder  
and Friends

Illustrations by  
Nina (Speed) Gold

Friends General Conference, 1986

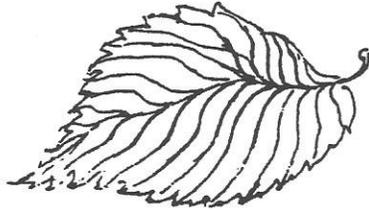
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This is an Idea packet. It has been assembled in response to all of you who are wrestling with maintaining a First Day School in a small meeting--that's 70% of us in Friends General Conference.

The packet contains as much material as possible. We hope that you are not confused by the sometimes conflicting information in the same publication. Friends are simply not uniform. What works for one meeting does not necessarily meet the needs of another. For example, we strongly advocate intergenerational worship to maintain unity in the meeting. When intergenerational worship precedes or follows First Day School, your meeting will feel closer. If, however, you have a significant contingent of active preschoolers with parents who need a break from childcare, your scheduling must take that situation into consideration.

To help you find what you need most, the packet is arranged in six color-coded sections. Activities, articles, and handouts are often cross referenced for your convenience. Yet most pages are able to stand alone. This will enable you to pull out and duplicate what your group needs.

All of the ideas in this packet have worked from some meeting. Eau Claire/Menomonie Monthly Meeting in Wisconsin has successfully tried most of the curriculum. Contributions from other meetings are noted.

Chapter I Starters (blue) The first chapter presents ideas for starting a First Day School even though you have sporadic attendance, broadly mixed ages, and no real classroom. These short term projects can also be used as a series for a more established First Day School, a once a month break from your regular curriculum, intergenerational activities for the whole meeting, projects to accompany other curriculum such as Joint Educational Development (JED), or activities for yearly meeting.

Chapter II Beyond the Box (white) Once you are assured of a core group of children each First Day, it is time to call a meeting to talk about setting up a more organized program. At this stage of First Day School development, there are many choices regarding schedule, organization, grouping, and theology. The handouts of Chapter II will help you learn from the experience of others in a similar situation.

Chapter III Curriculum Ideas (green) Chapter III contains many long and short term curriculum ideas for broadly mixed aged groups.

Chapter IV Monthly Variety (orange) Chapter IV describes activities which meetings may wish to use on a monthly basis either in place of First Day School or at some other time such as a family retreat or evening youth group.

Chapter V Especially for Teachers (yellow) Chapter V is a collection of articles which will help teachers relate to their students, plan lessons, and get a feel for where their piece fits into the overall picture. Use some of these as a basis for discussion during teacher training meetings (if you should be so lucky) or pull out and copy

several vital sections to make a packet for new teachers.

Chapter VI At Home (pink) Whether your meeting has a thriving First Day School or not, building a spiritual foundation in the home is most important. This chapter is a must for everyone.

Chapter VII Historical Perspective (tan) Chapter VII provides the opportunity to trace the origins of what we now call religious education. A glimpse of our past really helps put the present into perspective.

This entire book is stored in a computer. It will be revised from time to time. Please write up your own additions and improvements. Send them to: RE in the Home and Small Meeting Revisions, Friends General Conference, 1520 B Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102.

Already this publication is the composite work of many. Nina (Speed) Gold of Menomonie drew most of the lovely illustrations. Sandra Branam, Abington Monthly Meeting, invented and sketched the giant puppets.

I am very grateful to the various contributors who made the wide variety of approaches and ideas possible. I also appreciate the help of the dedicated FGC Religious Education Committee members who carefully read and improved every page of the manuscript. To my husband Steve Snyder, I want to extend very special thanks for patiently running the copying machine and, often, the household.

Now it is your turn to get involved in religious education and to tell us about it. We look forward to hearing from you.

Mary Snyder  
Eau Claire/Menomonie, Wisconsin,  
Monthly Meeting

