

KidzMatter Conference Breakout Schedule 2025

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Click on the arrow beside the breakout number to view a drop down menu featuring the breakout presentation options for the corresponding time slot

BREAKOUT #1: Tuesday, October 07 · 12:30pm CT

	Room	Speaker	Title	Description	
	Old National: Ballroom B	Jenny Smith + Allegra Collins	<i>Discipling Infants and Toddlers? Absolutely.</i>	It's time to shift the mindset—your nursery is never “just childcare;” it's a foundation for faith. Discover how discipleship starts from the very first years of life and why it matters more than you think.	
	Old National: Ballroom C	Amy Bishop	<i>New to Children's Ministry? How to Make a Splash Without Sinking</i>	Welcome to the wonderful world of ministry! You've moved from getting your feet wet in ministry waters to jumping in wholeheartedly. Cannonball! Come discover a strategic plan to anchor you and your ministry team in success. You'll take away practical tips from children's ministry leaders, helping you manage your ministry, balance your life, and navigate the unknown waters on the horizon.	
	Old National: Locust B	Corey Jones	<i>Beginner's Blastoff: Navigating Your First KidzMatter Conference</i>	New to The KidzMatter Conference? Join us to learn how to navigate the week effectively, win some prizes, and gain valuable insights for taking your ministry to the next level.	
	Old National: Locust D	Hannah Augustine	<i>Help! Why Every KidMin Leader Needs to Keep Going and Growing</i>	Being a KidMin leader gets tougher by the minute. As hard as it can be, our kids (and their parents!) need us - which is why we can never stop going (after what God has called us to do) and growing (into who He made us to be as we do it). Let's dive into five practical steps on how to keep going while we're growing!	
	Old National: Ballroom D	Josh Denhart	<i>Training Volunteers: A Radically Different Approach</i>	There is a big problem: No one is willing to show up to another evening meeting. Those who do show up could probably lead the meeting for you! Learn new and out-of-the-box strategies to effectively train volunteers. Your job WILL instantly become easier if you attend this breakout...trust me. There is a way, modeled by Jesus, that trains volunteers in a sustainable way and life giving way.	

Old National: Walnut B	Lorie Lee	<i>Building Compassionate Kids</i>	As Kidmin leaders, one of our greatest challenges is helping the children we serve cultivate a heart of love and compassion for their neighbors—both near and far. In this breakout session, we will delve into the transformative power of compassion, rooted in the Greek word “splaḡchnizomai” which speaks to the very core of human emotion and the heart’s deep capacity to respond to the needs of others. Compassion is more than just a feeling; it’s an action. Drawing from the biblical understanding of this term, this session will provide practical tools to help children and families view life through the eyes of their global neighbors in the Philippines, and empower us to live out compassion in action by caring for others, both here and around the world.
Old National: Locust E	Scott Myers	<i>Planning Center for Children’s Ministry</i>	Join us for an overview of how to use Planning Center to set up a safe and secure check-in system, plan events, follow-up with families, and schedule your volunteers—all without burning out!
Old National: Locust F	Kristen Hitchcock	<i>How to Lead Spiritual Practices for Kids as They Discover Identity in Christ</i>	We want our kids to know who they are in God—that they are known by Him, loved by Jesus, and led by the Holy Spirit. We want these truths to be the foundation of their identity. Spiritual practices, teaching kids how they can spend time with God, is a powerful place to start. How can we teach contemplative practices that are right for our kids? How can we creatively teach them to talk with and listen to God? Experience some of these practices firsthand and walk away with practical activities and approaches to engage kids in their faith formation.
Old National: Walnut A	David Rausch	<i>Sticky Faith: Lessons that Last a Lifetime</i>	A study by Barna found that nearly 75% of Christian youth fall away from the faith and leave the church after high school. But why? And how do we stop it? During this session, we’ll explore the answer to those questions and discover transformational teaching methods that not only change minds, but change hearts as well. In the end, you’ll walk away with practical ideas for how your lessons can help kids develop a lifelong relationship with Jesus.
Double Tree: Ballroom C	Brian Dembowczyk	<i>Is My Ministry Really a Gospel-Centered Ministry?</i>	We know that Jesus must be at the center of all we do in ministry, but how do we determine if truly He is? In this breakout, we will review what it means to be gospel-centered and consider how we can evaluate each of the key aspects of our ministry programs to see if Jesus is really at the center of it all.

Old National: Walnut C	Sean Sweet	<i>Make it an Event: Creating Moments that Help Preteens Own Their Faith</i>	We grew a preteen ministry from 12 to 50 in less than a year, and events were a critical part of the equation. Learn how to leverage summer events, special services, and even your weekly programs to create high-impact moments that help preteens take ownership of their faith. Walk away with practical ideas to turn ordinary gatherings into extraordinary, faith-building experiences.
Old National: Walnut D	Avery Foley	<i>Creation vs Evolution: Why it Matters</i>	Is Genesis relevant in today's culture? Many young people believe that Genesis is of little importance to our world today and that it cannot be trusted as an accurate account of origins. Discover why Genesis matters and the biblical and scientific reasons to trust God's Word, beginning in Genesis. Great for middle and high school ministry leaders!
Old National: Walnut E	Vanessa Myers	<i>Teaching the Bible Like Jesus: Creative Methods for Impactful Lessons</i>	Jesus was the ultimate Teacher, captivating audiences with parables, questions, object lessons, and real-life applications. In this breakout session, we'll explore how to follow His example to teach the Bible to kids in creative and engaging ways. From storytelling techniques to hands-on activities, we'll discuss practical ideas you can implement right away.
Old National: Walnut F	Angela Bainter	<i>Ministry in the Mess: Leading Through Real Life Challenges</i>	Life doesn't pause for ministry. Whether you're navigating anxiety, chronic illness, loss, or the everyday struggles of life, this breakout offers encouragement and practical advice for leading well when life gets hard. Join us for a candid conversation about the challenges we face and the strength we find in embracing grace and realism in leadership.
Double Tree: Ballroom B	Brian Dollar	<i>Leading Families Through Death and Tragedy</i>	Death and tragedy are unavoidable. Kidmin Leaders often find themselves in the middle of these crises, and it is important for them to know the "dos and don'ts" of leading families through crises. In this breakout, Brian will give practical guidance as well as timeless principles.
Double Tree: Crescent	Cortney Jenkins	<i>Every Child Can Know Jesus: Tools for Disability Ministry</i>	Discover practical tools and creative strategies to support students with disabilities in your kid's ministry. This session will equip you to utilize visual supports, adapt curriculum, and creatively share Bible stories to help make the Gospel accessible to all learners. Walk away feeling equipped to serve and include students with disabilities and their families with more confidence and understanding.

Old National: Terrace Lounge	José, Aileen, + AJ Rodriguez	<i>How to Plan a Purposeful and Successful Children's Event (Cómo Planificar un Evento de Niños con Propósito y Exitoso)</i> <i>*Presented in Spanish*</i>	<p>Description in English: Learn how to plan children's events that are fun, engaging, and have an eternal purpose. Discover ways to turn activities like Egg Hunt, VBS, Trunk and Treat, and Christmas celebrations into evangelistic opportunities. Get practical tools to create memorable events that share the Gospel and transform lives.</p> <p>Descripción en Español: Aprende a planificar eventos infantiles que sean divertidos, atractivos y con un propósito eterno. Descubre cómo convertir actividades como el Egg Hunt, E.B.V., Trunk and Treat y celebraciones navideñas en oportunidades evangelísticas. Obtén herramientas prácticas para crear eventos memorables que compartan el Evangelio y transformen vidas.</p>
Old National: Ballroom A	Dr. Tammie Grimm	<i>Finding Sabbath Rest in a Noisy, Nonstop, 24/7 World</i>	Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Just how do we do that in a world that says productivity can only be achieved through a hurried and harried lifestyle? This breakout session will consider why God's call to Sabbath rest is crucial to our spiritual health and well-being, and explore how rhythms of rest and renewal can be cultivated in life-giving ways.
Double Tree: Ballroom A	Jessica Bealer	<i>Get GRIT: Succeeding As a Woman in Ministry</i>	You're passionate, dedicated, and you know the calling God has placed on your life, but sometimes leading in ministry as a woman can be difficult. In this breakout, we'll discuss practical ways in which you can stay healthy, lead up, and walk confidently in the calling God has placed on your life.
Double Tree: Valley	Kayla Stevens	<i>What the "Tech" Happened</i>	In this breakout, we'll take a deep dive into the latest research on technology use, focusing on phones and screens, and how these tools are shaping the next generation. Together, we'll evaluate the effects of screen time on kids' development, relationships, and faith formation. We'll discuss the practical implications of these findings for ministry, education, and parenting. Expect an engaging session that balances data with actionable strategies to help kids navigate a tech-driven world with wisdom and intention.
Old National: Locust A	Darlene Abbott	<i>Preschool Worship</i>	We will take a deep dive into preschool worship. Let's dig into the how and why we teach worship. Are we being effective when teaching worship, or are we spinning our

				wheels in a rut? We will discuss "must have" elements and the variety that we can use to accomplish the goal.
	Double Tree: Ballroom D	April Raver	<i>Beyond Sundays: Everyday Discipleship for Real Families</i>	Discipleship doesn't stop at the church doors! In this interactive session, discover practical and proven ways to help parents lead their families in faith all week long. You'll explore simple, meaningful discipleship rhythms that fit into busy lives—and even try out some fun, hands-on activities that families can do together. Come ready to be equipped, encouraged, and inspired to take faith home!
	Old National: Locust C	Indiana Wesleyan University	<i>The "Prayground"</i>	A "prayground" is an interactive, experiential space designed to foster prayer and spiritual reflection, especially for children of all abilities. Unlike traditional prayer areas, a "prayground" is hands-on and filled with multisensory stations that inspire movement, creativity, and heartfelt participation. It's not a quiet museum to observe but a space to engage—praying through touch, motion, drawing, building, and guided reflection. We invite you to explore the "prayground" anytime during the conference, with each station thoughtfully designed with accessibility and spiritual depth in mind. Don't just look—come experience, come participate, and come pray!

BREAKOUT #2: Tuesday, October 07 • 1:30pm CT

Room	Speaker	Title	Description
Old National: Ballroom C	Kim Hudson	<i>Passionately Preschoolers</i>	When you hear the word "preschoolers," what immediately comes to mind? Do you feel passion or panic? When I hear the word, meet a new family, greet a familiar family, or engage in all things preschool, my first thought is passion. Passion to ensure these tiny humans know God made them, God has a plan for them, that Jesus is the way and that the Holy Spirit is with them.
Old National: Locust A	Nick Blevins	<i>Creating a Successful New Family Retention Strategy</i>	It's a challenge for every church to reach new people each year. However, what about the people who are already attending for the first time? What would it look like to focus on helping them come back and continue to take steps? In

				this breakout, we'll discuss healthy retention metrics and talk through a 5-part strategy you can use to retain more new families.
Old National: Locust B	Kenny Conley	<i>Replicate Your Leadership Through Ministry Coaches</i>	Ever wished you could be in more than one place at the same time? Or wished that there was another version of you to take on the impossible workload? Cloning is not the answer but empowering volunteers to lead like staff could be the solution you need. The most effective ministries rally teams of coach-level volunteers who lead key ministry areas and other volunteers. It's time to level up your leadership and expand your impact.	
Old National: Locust F	Mitch Jensen	<i>Beyond the Ask: Building Recruiting Campaigns with Lasting Impact</i>	Do you wonder if a volunteer recruiting campaign is right for your ministry? This session will help you answer that question—spoiler alert: the answer is yes, and it's easier than you think! Discover simple, engaging strategies to create your own recruiting campaign that communicates your ministry's needs and sparks excitement and vision within your church!	
Old National: Terrace Lounge	Carl Barnhill	<i>The Power of Visual Media and AI Tools in Kids Ministry</i>	Join Carl Barnhill from Church Visuals as he combines the power of visual media with cutting-edge AI tools to transform how you communicate the gospel to kids. In this workshop, you'll discover why visuals matter deeply in reaching young people for Jesus, learn practical ways to use compelling graphics and videos in your ministry, and explore the best AI tools available to enhance your visual communication—where the technology is heading, and how to implement these tools to engage the next generation more effectively through powerful visuals.	
Old National: Walnut E	Laura Ottaviano	<i>Building Faith Now that Withstands Deconstruction</i>	What is Deconstruction and how can we prepare our children now to withstand onslaughts of doubt in the future and to ensure they develop a faith they won't walk away from? This workshop focuses on how to root kids in biblical truth and cultivate a personal faith that can withstand cultural and intellectual pressures. You'll gain practical tools to disciple kids in a way that encourages scriptural-based critical thinking, deep conviction, and a lifelong relationship with Jesus.	
Old National: Locust D	Jeremy Carroll	<i>FLIP Your VBS</i>	Statistics show that more unchurched kids attend programs like VBS and day camps than any other ministry event. Research tells us that we must reach the next generation through relationships. Discover how to maximize	

				relationships through your summer ministry events using F.L.I.P. connections and other practical steps.	
Old National: Ballroom B	Karl Bastian	<i>The Kids Church Crew: Empowering Children to Serve and Learn</i>		Children are not just future leaders—they are today's leaders. By giving kids meaningful roles and responsibilities in children's church, we affirm their God-given gifts and raise up a new generation of disciples who lead with confidence, creativity, and a servant's heart.	
Old National: Walnut F	Joe Wisley	<i>Building the Kingdom...at HOME</i>		This breakout will focus on spiritual formation in an area many churches overlook: the families of ministers themselves. Whether you're single, newly married, raising littles, or have kids who've left the nest, we'll focus on how to point your own family to Jesus in the midst of the chaos of vocational ministry.	
Double Tree: Valley	Dale Hudson	<i>Travel Ball Children's Ministry...Yes or No?</i>		Travel sports often pull kids out of church for weeks on end. How can we connect with travel ball families? How can we help them grasp the importance of kids being in church consistently? What are some creative ways we can reach travel ball families and disciple them? See what some churches are doing about this and prepare your strategy for this important group.	
Double Tree: Ballroom C	Vance Martin	<i>Should I Stay or Should I Go?</i>		Discover how to navigate the difficult decision of whether to stay in your current role or move on to new opportunities. This breakout explores how to discern God's calling, find purpose in seasons of uncertainty, and push through the dips and challenges that often lead to growth. Gain clarity and confidence in making decisions that align with who God is calling you to become.	
Double Tree: Ballroom A	Kayla Smith	<i>How Trauma Affects the Kids We Love and What to Do About It</i>		From abuse, neglect, and divorce to lockdowns, social isolation, and civil unrest, childhood trauma is on the rise. In this session, you will learn how trauma touches the children in your ministry and what many churches get wrong when it comes to teaching and disciplining hurting kids. Make sense of the most frustrating, confusing, and heartbreaking child behaviors, and discover practical, research-based strategies to help children who have experienced trauma heal and succeed at church.	
Old National: Locust E	Amanda Willis	<i>Difficult Behaviors: Seeing Through the Lens of Trauma</i>		Ever wonder if challenging behaviors in kids might be a sign of something deeper? This breakout will explore how trauma can impact a child's actions and equip you to understand different types of difficult behaviors through a	

				trauma-informed lens. You'll gain practical strategies for responding with grace and showing the love of Jesus to children and families navigating the effects of trauma in your classroom.	
Double Tree: Crescent	Beth Frank	<i>Seen, Known, Loved: What Special Needs Ministry Means to a Family Like Mine</i>		Gain essential knowledge and crisis prevention techniques through real-life scenarios, empowering you to confidently handle any situation. Take this training back to train your volunteers and enhance your ministry's support for individuals with special needs.	
Double Tree: Ballroom B	Tyler Bates	<i>Faith for Every Child: Teaching Beyond One-Size-Fits-All</i>		You want every child in your ministry to grow in their faith—and that means finding ways to engage them through meaningful, effective teaching. But every child is unique. What sparks curiosity in one may not connect with another. This is especially true when navigating a culture often shaped around neurotypical norms. In this workshop, you'll discover practical strategies for differentiating your teaching so every child—regardless of how they learn—can be seen, included, and disciplined in a way that helps their faith come alive.	
Old National: Walnut D	Aaron Conley	<i>5-Talent Leadership</i>		You've got the gifts—now it's Go time. Don't sit on what God gave you. Step up, lead strong, and chase what's next with bold Kingdom purpose.	
Old National: Walnut C	Dr. Amanda Drury	<i>The New Face of Kids Ministry: Turning Cutting-Edge Research into Practical Impact</i>		This breakout session bridges the gap between complex research and everyday ministry with kids. You'll discover emerging, evidence-based trends that are reshaping how we reach, teach, and disciple the next generation. But this isn't just theory. You'll walk away with bite-sized, practical tools you can put into practice immediately—on Sunday morning, midweek gatherings, or anywhere your ministry happens. Whether you're passionate about data or just want to try something new that works, this session is designed to equip curious leaders with smart, usable strategies rooted in solid research.	
Old National: Ballroom A	Natalie Runion	<i>Social Media Mania!</i>		Ever wonder how some church social media accounts explode and get lots of engagement, but you struggle to get a few likes? Ministry shouldn't feel successful off our number of followers; however, social media is a tool that shares the Gospel and what is happening in the Global Church. Learn practical tools and the latest trends to help your ministry reach more people for Kingdom purpose.	

Old National: Walnut A	B.A. Snider	<i>Show Me Jesus Through Worship and Prayer</i>	Even though God created us to worship him, we need to be taught. In the Old Testament we see the rich history of how God taught his people to worship. This breakout will explore how to help our children feel welcomed to exercise their creativity as they engage with the world of the Bible, the elements of worship, and the components of prayer—with the ultimate aim of knowing and loving God.
Old National: Walnut B	Alysia Gonzales	<i>Leading From the Middle: How to Influence Campus Culture Without Being There</i>	Jesus empowered His disciples to do ministry while He coached and walked with them. It's not about being everywhere at once, but about raising up people who carry the heart.
Old National: Ballroom D	PANEL	<i>Women in Ministry</i>	Join us for a special Women in Ministry panel featuring passionate female leaders serving in children's ministry. These incredible women will share their personal journeys, the joys and challenges of balancing ministry and motherhood, and the lessons they've learned along the way. Come be inspired, encouraged, and equipped through their honest conversations and practical wisdom.
Double Tree: Ballroom D	Terry Bishir	<i>Long-Haul Ministry</i>	This workshop invites you into the heart of long-haul ministry—a journey marked by deep roots, enduring faithfulness, and slow, steady growth. Together, we'll explore how cultivating depth today leads to lasting impact and generational influence over time. Come be encouraged to stay the course with endurance, vision, and hope as your life reflects Christ through every season.
Old National: Locust C	Indiana Wesleyan University	<i>The "Prayground"</i>	A "prayground" is an interactive, experiential space designed to foster prayer and spiritual reflection, especially for children of all abilities. Unlike traditional prayer areas, a "prayground" is hands-on and filled with multisensory stations that inspire movement, creativity, and heartfelt participation. It's not a quiet museum to observe but a space to engage—praying through touch, motion, drawing, building, and guided reflection. We invite you to explore the "prayground" anytime during the conference, with each station thoughtfully designed with accessibility and spiritual depth in mind. Don't just look—come experience, come participate, and come pray!

BREAKOUT #3: Tuesday, October 07 • 3:30pm CT

	Room	Speaker	Title	Description
	Old National: Ballroom C	Sharon Stratmoen	<i>Discipleship Preschool Style: The Power of Play-Based Learning</i>	There's so much preschoolers can do! Even as their busy brains develop and make new connections, these little ones really can befriend Jesus and learn to love and follow Him. This interactive workshop will highlight early childhood best practices and techniques to help you disciple preschoolers through play! You'll walk away with an up-to-date understanding of this age level, plus practical ways to introduce Jesus to our youngest brothers and sisters in God's family.
	Old National: Locust A	Annette Safstrom	<i>Essential Systems for a Sustainable Ministry</i>	How do you keep all the plates spinning? There are a few essential (often missed) systems that can keep everything running smoothly and even allow you to take a vacation. This breakout highlights some of the essential ministry systems and practices that will take your ministry from frantic to joyful. Learn how taking time to establish strong systems now will save you time later.
	Old National: Walnut D	Brent Moxey	<i>Video Media For Kids Ministry</i>	Use something as simple as your iPhone camera to make fun, engaging videos for your kids and families to watch together! Making videos for your ministry can bring you into the next generation of reaching families. This easy, low-budget form of ministry can be both beneficial to keep families engaged with what kids are learning and also reach families not yet in your church.
	Old National: Locust B	Stephanie Barthelemy	<i>Aligned for Impact: The Power of Unified Purpose</i>	One of the reasons people don't serve or don't stay serving in kids ministry is because they don't understand the true impact and purpose KidMin serves. Most ministry leaders aren't marketers, so sometimes we falter at making it clear just how important, rewarding, and fulfilling this ministry is. Leaders in this training will learn how to craft a message that attracts the right volunteers to KidMin and communicates their purpose clearly from the get-go.
	Old National: Ballroom D	Melanie Hester	<i>The Formational Home</i>	The greatest spiritual influence in a child's life isn't the church—it's their parents. Discover how to empower families to take ownership of their child's faith journey and partner with them in meaningful discipleship.

Old National: Walnut C	Scott Myers	<i>VBS Planning: Mastered with Planning Center</i>	Become a Planning Center Pro for Vacation Bible School as we learn the best ways to use Planning Center, from setup to follow-up and everything in between.
Old National: Locust E	Christen Clark	<i>Unwrapping Potential: Helping Kids Discover and Use Their Spiritual Gifts</i>	Every child has a God-given purpose—help them discover it! In this breakout, you'll gain practical insights to guide kids in recognizing their unique gifts and finding a place to serve in the church. Equip the next generation to grow in faith, belong in the Body of Christ, and make a meaningful impact!
Old National: Walnut F	Brian Dembowczyk	<i>Bibles 101</i>	The Bible is at the center of all we do, so it's helpful to know as much about it as we can. Pull up a chair with a Bible publisher to talk about how the English Bible came to us and its trustworthiness, why we have different English translations, strategies to consider when choosing or recommending a Bible, and questions you might have about the wonderful gift God has given us in the Bible.
Old National: Locust D	Corinne Noble	<i>Strategic Events: Going from Fun Events to Discipleship Opportunities</i>	Events can be a lot of fun, but "fun" shouldn't be the only goal of a successful event. Let's talk about how to use your ministry events to create discipleship moments, the pitfalls of not having an events strategy, and help you put together an events strategy that helps you connect with families.
Double Tree: Ballroom B	Sean Sweet	<i>The Weekly 3: Experiences that Help Preteens Grow Spiritually</i>	What if you could structure your preteen ministry in a way that consistently helps kids take steps toward owning their faith? Discover three key experiences—rooted in what we see preteens experiencing in the Bible—that can be incorporated into your weekly programming. These experiences have a proven track record of helping preteens grow spiritually, and this session will equip you with practical, intentional strategies that fit any curriculum or setting.
Double Tree: Ballroom A	Avery Foley	<i>Only One Race: The Biblical Answer to Racism</i>	Race issues are huge in the US today, but our culture's answers won't solve them! We need the history in God's Word and the gospel. Discover the biblical and scientific truth that there's only one race and how the history in God's Word is the only answer to racism.
Double Tree: Valley	Barney Kinard	<i>Becoming a Master Bible Storyteller</i>	Unlock the art of captivating storytelling in this hands-on workshop! Learn how to creatively share illustrated Bible stories anytime, anywhere, using just four-Story Sticks. Gain practical techniques and the confidence to bring Scripture to life, engaging audiences of all ages in a meaningful and memorable way.

Double Tree: Ballroom C	Jaymi Keeter	<i>Help! My Kids Ministry Has No Budget</i>	Are you struggling to engage kids with very little money? In this breakout, we will discuss how to have a fun and well-run ministry on a very small budget.
Old National: Locust F	Windy Egeberg	<i>When His Calling Becomes Work Instead of Works and You Lose Grace for the Race</i>	This will be a breakout focusing on the joy of our salvation. It is easy to burn out when we aren't allowing for our own self and soul care. God sees you, and He wants to remind you of your worth.
Old National: Walnut A	John Hailes + Julie Pratt	<i>From Lesson to Life: Designing Engaging Services That Bring Scripture to Life</i>	Every moment in a kids' service is an opportunity to move beyond information and into transformation. In this session, you'll discover how intentional planning can turn ordinary lessons into life-shaping encounters with God's Word. Learn practical strategies to design services that engage kids and bring Scripture to life in meaningful, memorable ways.
Double Tree: Crescent	Kristin Langford	<i>10 Inclusive + Accessible Things You Can Do by next Sunday</i>	Wondering how you can do disability ministry without starting a formal program? If your church is unable to hire additional staff, lacks dedicated space, feels too small for a special needs ministry, or if your leadership team hasn't yet prioritized this area, we're here to help! We will provide you with practical next steps, inclusive best practices, and ten creative ideas to start fostering a sense of belonging by next Sunday.
Old National: Terrace Lounge	Dr. Luz Gálvez de Figueroa	<i>Building Bridges to Connect with Latino Families</i>	Building bridges to connect with Latino Families is essential in creating a more inclusive and supportive community. Language alone doesn't define Latino families. This workshop highlights key cultural elements relevant to Latino families today. Participants will receive books and materials from various publishers, designed for practical use in both churches and homes.
Old National: Walnut B	Luke Miller	<i>Plot Twist! Leading Your Team Through Change</i>	In school, they never taught us how to navigate the waters of change. Leading a team through the changes God is leading you to make can be difficult and painful. We will examine a model for change that communicates openly, values team members, promotes positivity, and addresses opposition.
Old National: Ballroom B	Scott Turansky	<i>Raising Balanced Kids in a Tech-Driven World: A Heart-Based Approach</i>	There's a growing awareness of the dangers of electronics. Not only will this session teach about electronics addiction, but it provides parents with practical tools and strategies to use electronics to build the necessary character to live in a technology-saturated world. I coach families and have trained over 500 coaches, and we see the power in using electronics with kids to foster a new way of thinking and acting. Parents

				want practical answers, so we not only give them what they want but also tie it into a biblical worldview to empower their parenting.
Old National: Walnut E	Madi Hackworth	<i>Let's Get Social: Harnessing the Power of Social Media to Build PEOPLE over PLATFORM</i>		It seems like everywhere you look, someone is telling you how to grow your platform on social media. We want more likes, more shares, more followers, more views - these are the metrics we use to determine success. The question is, how do we link those metrics with real, effective ministry? As a KidMin social media manager for over a decade, I want to spend some time helping you optimize your social media strategy for both platform growth AND real, meaningful connections with the people you serve.
Old National: Ballroom A	Dr. Hank Spaulding	<i>Resonant Discipleship: Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Youth Ministry in Dialogue with Hartmut Rosa</i>		Dietrich Bonhoeffer's early work as a youth pastor and mentor shaped his theological imagination and ethical commitments in profound ways—yet this dimension of his life is often overshadowed by his later political resistance. This talk recovers Bonhoeffer's ministry with young people as a rich site of theological praxis, exploring how his pedagogical vision fostered a living, dynamic relationship with God and community. By placing Bonhoeffer in conversation with contemporary sociologist Hartmut Rosa's theory of resonance, the talk illuminates how Bonhoeffer's approach offers a powerful model for youth ministry today—one that resists alienation, cultivates meaningful connection, and nurtures responsive discipleship in a disenchanted world. Drawing on Bonhoeffer's writings, letters, and lived ministry, the presentation offers both a theological retrieval and a sociological reframing for practitioners seeking deeper engagement with the next generation.
Double Tree: Ballroom D	Ken + Georgia Peckett	<i>Protect Your Marriage in the Midst of Ministry</i>		We all have multiple pulls on our lives: ministry, family, and work, to name a few. Make sure your marriage isn't the one thing that gets left behind. Learn the core practices to keep you strong as a couple.
Old National: Locust C	Indiana Wesleyan University	<i>The "Playground"</i>		A "playground" is an interactive, experiential space designed to foster prayer and spiritual reflection, especially for children of all abilities. Unlike traditional prayer areas, a "playground" is hands-on and filled with multisensory stations that inspire movement, creativity, and heartfelt participation. It's not a quiet museum to observe but a space to engage—praying through touch, motion, drawing, building, and guided reflection. We invite you to explore the "playground" anytime during the conference, with each station thoughtfully

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BREAKOUT #4: Tuesday, October 07 • 4:30pm CT

Room	Speaker	Title	Description
Double Tree: Ballroom A	B.A. Snider	<i>Nursery - Not Just Childcare!</i>	It can be tempting to underestimate the significance of our nursery and early childhood ministries. But, let's face it, if parents are not comfortable leaving their baby in your care, they will not be back to the church, no matter how great the worship. Six musts for a successful nursery.
Old National: Locust A	Karl Bastian	<i>KidMin Secrets: The Ministry Lessons No One Tells You</i>	Sometimes, the most important leadership lessons are the ones we don't learn in a textbook. In children's ministry—where the stakes are high and responsibilities are constant—it's crucial to grasp the "unspoken truths" that can preserve our sanity, priorities, and passion. This workshop explores those lessons head-on. It isn't about shortcuts—it's about wisdom gleaned from real-life experiences.
Old National: Walnut E	Megan Pullen	<i>Bringing the Spirit of Hospitality to Your Kidmin Check-In</i>	Come explore how your Check-In and Welcome areas can create lasting first impressions and become a welcoming hub for both new and returning families. These spaces are not just about logistics—they're about setting the tone for a positive, helpful experience, by infusing warmth and hospitality through your environment and volunteers. Discover key questions to ask and actionable strategies to implement, transforming these areas into a place of connection and comfort.
Old National: Ballroom A	Esther Moreno	<i>Leading with Purpose: How to Build a Children's Ministry Department That Lasts</i>	In this workshop, you will learn how to build a children's ministry department that is not only strong but also sustainable for the long haul. We will explore key strategies for fostering a culture of unity, empowering volunteers, and creating systems that ensure growth and stability. Whether you're starting from scratch or looking to elevate your current ministry, this session will equip you with the tools to lead with purpose and create a lasting impact on the next generation.

Double Tree: Ballroom C	Lynne Howard:	<i>How to Develop and Grow Your Volunteer Base</i>	Overwhelmed, burnt out, lost in the chaos...we've all been there, and our volunteers have too. But this doesn't have to be the norm! Make your ministry a place of spiritual renewal for your volunteers as you help them discover their 'why' through encouragement and training. Discover how to get the 'AHA' moments with your volunteers as you maximize retention and build a team that clicks.
Old National: Ballroom D	Brittany Nelson	<i>5 Things KidMin Leaders Must Do to Effectively Partner with Today's Parents</i>	Today's parents are Millennials, and they bring a fresh perspective to parenting. Understanding their unique characteristics can help ministry leaders better equip and encourage these parents in the discipleship of their children. In this session, we'll explore some key characteristics of Millennial parents and discuss five things kidmin leaders must do to effectively partner with them.
Old National: Locust B	Anthony Hunt	<i>Unlocking the Power of AI: The Next Frontier in Kids Ministry (AI 101 level content)</i>	Discover innovative ways AI technologies can enhance engagement, streamline administrative tasks, and personalize learning experiences for children. Learn practical strategies and real-world examples that will empower you to leverage AI to its fullest potential, ensuring your ministry stays ahead of the curve and effectively ministers to the next generation.
Old National: Walnut F	Robin Loisch	<i>Unforgettable Bible Stories</i>	Tips, tricks, and techniques for building Biblical literacy with kids in your ministry. Join us for a fun and fast-paced time as we discover new ways to engage kids, using approaches that appeal to multiple intelligences. Let's explore new ways to make Bible stories unforgettable for the kids we love.
Double Tree: Ballroom B	Shawna Murlin	<i>Midweek Matters: Biblical Literacy Needs More Than Sundays</i>	Unpack the unique role midweek plays in biblical literacy, explore the distinct discipleship opportunities midweek offers, and consider why your church might need to rethink your Sunday-only approach.
Old National: Locust D	Matt Hogg	<i>Outreach Unleashed: Creative Tools to Connect With Schools</i>	Discover creative ways to address tough topics like bullying, drug prevention, and mental health in public schools through skits, games, and a mascot-driven approach! This interactive breakout session equips you with engaging tools to connect with students in a fun, relatable way while delivering powerful messages that inspire positive change. Walk away with practical ideas to spark meaningful conversations and make a lasting impact in your community.
Old National: Locust E	Collin Hamm	<i>Why Should I Start a Preteen Ministry?</i>	Are your fourth, fifth, and sixth graders starting to check out? Have you been tasked with the idea of starting a preteen ministry? Has God laid this ministry on your heart? Come join

				us for this breakout as we dive into what a preteen ministry should look like and why it is so important in this day and age!
Old National: Locust F	Valerie Ellis	<i>Compelling Bible Storytelling: Engage Kids Like Authors Do to Foster a Lifelong Love for God's Word</i>		Drawing on tools of the author trade—such as show, don't tell, create empathy, raise the stakes, and more—children's book author and certified teacher Valerie Ellis offers a creative approach to Bible storytelling. Her practical tips work in a variety of settings and include ways to support kids and families as they read the Bible on their own. This session will help children's ministry staff and volunteers reclaim the art of storytelling and add more tools to their toolbox to help kids learn from and love God's Word.
Old National: Walnut A	Tracy Griess	<i>Ministry and Family Balance</i>		Have you ever reached the end of a busy week and found yourself asking, "Can I truly thrive in ministry while maintaining a healthy family life?" In this breakout session, we'll explore the concept of balance between ministry and family responsibilities. Is such a balance achievable—and more importantly, is it Biblical? Together, we'll examine what Scripture teaches about our priorities and consider practical strategies to align both ministry and family life with God's design
Double Tree: Valley	Butch Hartman	<i>The Heart of a Child</i>		How do we reach the hearts of children? How do we protect them? And how do we not only introduce them to Jesus, but how do we get them to stay on the path?
Double Tree: Crescent	Doc Hunsley	<i>From Chaos to Calm: Handling Challenging Moments in Special Needs Ministry</i>		This hands-on workshop equips any volunteer with practical strategies for confidently supporting individuals with special needs from childhood through adulthood. Participants will build a comprehensive toolbox of crisis prevention techniques while working through real-life scenarios in small groups. Leave ready to handle challenging situations with confidence and train others at your home church using the same proven methods.
Old National: Terrace Lounge	José, Aileen, + AJ Rodriguez	<i>Becoming an Influential Teacher (Cómo Ser un Maestro Influyente)</i> <i>*Presented in Spanish*</i>		<p>Description in English: In this interactive session, you will gain practical tools to become a more intentional and impactful teacher. Discover how your commitment and dedication can shape children's spiritual growth, guiding them toward a deep and lasting relationship with God.</p> <p>Descripción en Español: En esta sesión interactiva, adquirirás herramientas prácticas para ser un maestro más intencional y transformador. Descubre</p>

				cómo tu compromiso y dedicación pueden impactar el crecimiento espiritual de los niños, guiándolos hacia una relación profunda y duradera con Dios.	
Old National: Ballroom C	Josh Denhart	<i>Conflict! How to Prevent and Manage Conflict in Ministry</i>	Ministry is ripe for conflict. However, there are intelligent leadership pathways that can REDUCE the likelihood of a painful conflict occurring. Since conflict is truly unavoidable, how can you successfully navigate challenging people and challenging situations? This powerful breakout will provide you with practical strategies to help with "Clean-Up on Aisle 9" and how to prevent unnecessary conflicts from ever happening.		
Old National: Walnut D	Toiya Willams	<i>Loving and Serving Children Through Setting Behavior Expectations</i>	In this session we will focus on practicing and modeling best practices in classroom behavior management. Participants will learn to foster a sense of belonging while effectively coaching Elementary-aged children through pertinent scenarios and examples.		
Old National: Walnut B	Vicki Abbott	<i>Mastering Multi-Site: Leading Beyond What You Can See</i>	Leading across multiple locations comes with unique challenges—but distance doesn't have to mean disconnect. Discover strategies to build strong teams, maintain culture, and lead effectively, even when you're not in the room. Dive into the dynamics of campus-led and centrally-led teams, examining their strengths, challenges, and best practices. Gain insights into how each model can drive ministry effectiveness.		
Old National: Ballroom B	Connie Bates	<i>Wired for Worship: Helping Kids Experience God's Presence</i>	Kids are navigating big emotions, tough questions, and everyday challenges—and they need more than just good advice. They need an encounter with God. Worship can be a powerful pathway for that connection. But this isn't just about singing songs—it's about leading kids into the presence of God and helping them develop a lifelong hunger for Him. This is worship discipleship. In this workshop, we'll explore what it means to disciple kids through worship and why it's a vital part of ministry for every generation.		
Old National: Walnut C	Steve Taylor + Mike Nawroki	<i>Media and Child Discipleship: How to Use Screens and Stories to Teach Kids About the Bible</i>	Stories have long been a cornerstone of effective teaching, particularly for young children. Research shows the unique power of storytelling in fostering cognitive, emotional, and social development, which all contribute to a child's long-term faith formation. Join Mike Nawroki, voice of Larry the Cucumber, and Steve Taylor, producer of "The Dead Sea Squirrels," as they share educational data and practical tips for using stories to teach kids about the Bible.		
Double Tree:	Dan Huffman	<i>Family Ministry Made Simple</i>	Current statistics reveal that segregating children from adult		

Ballroom D			worship conditions them to stay apart from church when they grow up. However, the same stats show that churches with vibrant children's ministries attract young families. Do you feel the tension? During COVID, our popular Awana midweek drop-off program was restructured into an intergenerational family ministry. In this breakout, you will learn from this experience and current research how to explore family ministry in simple ways.
Old National: Locust C	Indiana Wesleyan University	<i>The "Prayground"</i>	A "prayground" is an interactive, experiential space designed to foster prayer and spiritual reflection, especially for children of all abilities. Unlike traditional prayer areas, a "prayground" is hands-on and filled with multisensory stations that inspire movement, creativity, and heartfelt participation. It's not a quiet museum to observe but a space to engage—praying through touch, motion, drawing, building, and guided reflection. We invite you to explore the "prayground" anytime during the conference, with each station thoughtfully designed with accessibility and spiritual depth in mind. Don't just look—come experience, come participate, and come pray!

BREAKOUT #5: Wednesday, October 08 • 11:00am CT

Room	Speaker	Title	Description
Double Tree: Ballroom A	Jaymi Keeter	<i>Engaging Preschoolers</i>	Preschool ministry can be HARD! A lot of leaders struggle with keeping preschoolers engaged and learning! In this breakout, leaders will hear some great helpful tips and tools to help you make your preschool ministry more than just a playtime! We will talk about great ways for leaders to engage with kids and lay a foundation for their faith!
Old National: Ballroom C	Jody Brolsma	<i>Confessions of a Children's Ministry Volunteer</i>	What are your volunteer team members not telling you? Let's put ourselves in the volunteers' shoes and consider what they need most from our leadership. We'll explore how to set volunteers up for success, communicate effectively, and truly value people for who they are rather than what they do. Plus, results from an exclusive childrensministry.com volunteer survey will debunk our commonly held assumptions about volunteers and help us truly listen to volunteers' feedback—and receive their encouragement, too!

Old National: Locust A	Kris Smoll	<i>A Recipe for Successful Volunteer Training</i>	How do you design a successful volunteer training that engages, empowers, and excites them about discipling kids? Join us to learn how to create training that your volunteers will actually look forward to attending!
Old National: Walnut D	Josh Zello	<i>Beyond Magic: Applying Disney's Hospitality to Ministry</i>	What can the church learn from the way Disney creates unforgettable experiences? In this session, we'll explore key takeaways from Disney's excellence in hospitality, engagement, and intentionality—and how those principles can help us create gospel-centered, welcoming, and joy-filled environments for preschoolers and their families.
<i>Double Tree: Ballroom C</i>	Ashley Otto	<i>New to Kids Ministry.....the Good, the Hard and the BLESSING</i>	If you're new to kids ministry and you've seen the beauty of this ministry but now you're weighed down and feel like you're drowning, how do you get back to the beauty of it and the BLESSING it produces? Remembering to follow the Holy Spirit and letting Him lead you, you will see the BLESSING of kids ministry.
Old National: Locust B	Scott Myers	<i>Volunteer Care with Planning Center</i>	You can easily find yourself scrambling to keep things afloat. In this webinar, you'll get practical tips for how to use Planning Center to care for the people on your team so they and the children in your care can all flourish together.
Old National: Ballroom D	Chris Heaslip	<i>Tech That Serves Your Sunday Strategy</i>	You're in it—the late-night prep, the never-ending to-do lists, the juggling act of making Sundays happen. And some days, you wonder how you'll pull it all off. What you need isn't just a quick fix. You need a big solution—one built with your church in mind, because what you do every Sunday truly matters. Technology should simplify your Sundays, not complicate them. That's why we've been hard at work creating a game-changing tool designed to take the stress out of Sunday programming—so you can focus more on ministry and less on media.
Old National: Ballroom B	Brian Dembowczyk	<i>Helping Our Kids to Go From Loving Deeply in the Church to Living Boldly in the Community</i>	Our calling is to point our kids to Jesus so they trust in Him and love Him. But that isn't where our ministries end! We are also to help them live as disciples—to live boldly showing, and sharing the gospel with others. In this breakout, we'll walk through the who, what, where, when, how, and why of making this happen.
Old National: Locust F	Shawna Murlin	<i>More Than Crafts: Leading Engaging Small Groups</i>	Your small group isn't just about keeping hands busy or kids talking—it's a discipleship moment. Learn how to make small groups meaningful, interactive, and rooted in faith formation beyond crafts and worksheets.
Old National:	Natalie Runion	<i>Raising Stayers</i>	How can we raise up a generation that not only looks forward to

	Ballroom A			going to church but also wants to take active roles in leadership and worship each week? In this breakout, we will look at what creates successful environments for multigenerational churches and how we can use the deconstruction of one generation for the rebuilding of the church for another.
	Old National: Locust D	Jacklyn Gust	<i>Communicating So the Unchurched Can Understand What You're Saying</i>	As Christians, we often speak and act in ways that make sense to us but can be confusing or misinterpreted by those who didn't grow up in church. In this session, we'll uncover common church habits that unintentionally create barriers and explore practical ways to communicate the Gospel clearly—without compromising its truth. Drawing from my experience in one of the most post-Christian states in the U.S., I'll share simple shifts in language, behavior, and event planning that create a culture where first-time visitors feel seen, valued, and eager to return.
	Old National: Walnut E	Avery Foley	<i>God's Word on LGBTQ</i>	What does God's Word teach about marriage, sexuality, and gender? Discover biblical answers as we go verse by verse through the key passages, toppling progressive "inclusive" interpretations of the text. Great for equipping young people to think biblically on this crucial issue.
	Old National: Locust E	David Rausch	<i>Master the Mic: How to Speak So Kids Will Listen</i>	This session is a masterclass in public speaking. It's filled with bite-sized practical tips for you and your leaders on preparing and delivering a dynamic message for kids. We'll cover techniques regarding memorization, blocking and movement, voice, and more. By the end, you'll be a far more confident and effective communicator.
	Old National: Walnut A	Anna DuBois	<i>Pastors with Anxiety: Calming the Storm and Slowing the Burnout Spiral</i>	Ministry professionals are not immune to anxiety and its impact on our work. The constant worry leaves us exhausted, running on empty, and eventually burned out. This breakout will explore practical tips for managing anxiety and slowing the spiral of burnout that so many of us keep finding ourselves in.
	Double Tree: Ballroom B	Scott Turansky	<i>Powerful Heart-Based Tools to Address ADHD</i>	<p>ADHD is a biological condition affecting the brain, but it's so much more pervasive as it provides challenging behavior, thinking, and emotions. Unfortunately, too many parents limit their thinking to biological solutions for a biological problem. A heart-based approach provides huge tools. Come and hear strategies and ideas that have been tested over and over again in the Biblical Parenting Coaching Program.</p> <p>I work with kids with ADHD and am amazed at the progress made in a short period of time. This approach is primarily designed to help the church equip parents with specific tools</p>

				they can use at home. Home therapy with children, incorporating a biblical approach, can provide children with the internal skills necessary to manage their challenges.
Double Tree: Crescent	Kim Botto	<i>Discipling Neurodivergent Kids: Strategies for EVERY Learner</i>		Every child learns differently, and discipling neurodiverse kids requires intentionality and flexibility. This workshop will equip you with practical tools to engage kids with varying learning styles, helping them grow in their faith in ways that resonate with them.
Old National: Terrace Lounge	José, Aileen, + AJ Rodriguez	<i>Using Creative Arts to Teach Biblical Principles (Usando las Artes Creativas para Enseñar Principios Bíblicos)</i> <i>*Presented in Spanish*</i>		<p>Description in English: In this interactive class, you will learn how to use creative arts and puppets to teach biblical principles in a fun, clear, and memorable way. You'll discover practical strategies to create dynamic and meaningful lessons, helping children connect with God's Word and apply it to their daily lives.</p> <p>Descripción en Español: En esta clase interactiva, aprenderás a usar las artes creativas y los títeres para enseñar principios bíblicos de una manera divertida, clara y memorable. Descubrirás estrategias prácticas para crear lecciones dinámicas y significativas que ayuden a los niños a conectarse con la Palabra de Dios y aplicarla en su vida diaria.</p>
Old National: Walnut B	Kurt Goble	<i>The Neurodivergent Follower</i>		Last year, in "The Neurodivergent Leader" breakout, we discussed how the challenges associated with conditions like ADHD, OCD, ASD, Depression, and PTSD affect leadership. This time, we will look at how these things impact the way that we follow Jesus, and offer some tools and advice along the way.
Old National: Walnut F	Kurt Brodbeck	<i>Big Church, Big Teams, Big Hearts: Structuring for Impact, Not Just Output</i>		Leading in a large church can easily become all spreadsheets and schedules—but it doesn't have to be. In this session, we'll unpack how to build smart, scalable systems that support your ministry without sacrificing heart, connection, or calling. You'll leave with practical tools to help your ministry thrive organizationally while still leading like Jesus—relationally and intentionally.
Old National: Walnut C	Yancy Wideman Richmond	<i>Proven Ways to Help You Lead Worship Better</i>		Come learn simple steps you can take to make a big impact. These practical tips for on stage and off will equip you to connect with your audience in specific ways so you can engage them and lead kids in worship more effectively. Yancy says, "Leading worship is more about your leadership ability than your musical ability."

	Double Tree: Valley	Matt Carmichael	<i>Serving Side by Side: Raising Kids Who Love Ministry</i>	How do you lead in ministry while raising kids who don't just tag along but actually want to serve with you — and continue to love the church as adults? In this breakout, we'll talk about practical ways to involve your children in ministry, set healthy rhythms as a family, and create a legacy of faith that sticks. You'll leave encouraged and equipped with strategies to help your kids catch the joy of serving Jesus alongside you.	
	Double Tree: Ballroom D	Rachel Davidson	<i>From Trauma to Transformation: A Ministry Framework for Identity-Based Care</i>	Share in the conversation around Identity-Based Trauma-Responsive Care as a holistic approach to supporting children, which integrates trauma-informed principles with a deep respect for each child's unique identity, coupled with encountering God's love, healing, and identity as a known and beloved child of God.	
	Old National: Locust C	Indiana Wesleyan University	<i>The "Prayground"</i>	A "prayground" is an interactive, experiential space designed to foster prayer and spiritual reflection, especially for children of all abilities. Unlike traditional prayer areas, a "prayground" is hands-on and filled with multisensory stations that inspire movement, creativity, and heartfelt participation. It's not a quiet museum to observe but a space to engage—praying through touch, motion, drawing, building, and guided reflection. We invite you to explore the "prayground" anytime during the conference, with each station thoughtfully designed with accessibility and spiritual depth in mind. Don't just look—come experience, come participate, and come pray!	

BREAKOUT #6: Wednesday, October 08 • 12:30pm CT

	Room	Speaker	Title	Description	
	Double Tree: Ballroom A	Meghan Graham	<i>Incorporating Music in the Preschool Classroom</i>	Calling all preschool teachers: music is a powerful tool to use in a preschool classroom. Learn how to use music for classroom management, Bible memory, story time, and more. No musical experience required!	
	Double Tree: Ballroom C	Rebekah Mickle	<i>Volunteers, Scheduling, Admin - OH MY - Navigating the Newbie Journey in KidMin</i>	Starting out in Children's Ministry can feel like stepping into the unknown—full of excitement but also overwhelming. In this session, we'll break down what it really looks like to be brand new to ministry: from the responsibility of ministering to kids	

				and families, to navigating the intricacies of church assimilation and the weight of administrative duties. Together, we'll slow down, take a deep breath, and explore how to approach this journey with confidence, clarity, and a sense of purpose.
Old National: Ballroom C	Josh Denhart	<i>Retaining Volunteers: Never Lose a Good One Again!</i>		High turnover in volunteers is the greatest inhibitor of ministry momentum. The development and retention of the volunteers God has already provided is critical. This breakout is FILLED with ready-to-implement strategies and done-for-you solutions for volunteer retention!
Old National: Walnut C	Coming soon!!			
Old National: Locust B	Scott Myers	<i>The Expert's Guide to Children's Ministry with Planning Center</i>		Make the most out of Planning Center with advanced tips and tricks on running children's ministry. We'll be moving quickly and jumping around, so we recommend you have a general understanding of the Planning Center system.
Old National: Walnut D	Curt Nelson	<i>Worldview + Identity: Why Systematic Theology is a Game-Changer for Kids</i>		<p>Systematic theology helped me overcome crippling anxiety by showing me God's unconditional grace and my identity in Christ—and it can give children today the same unshakable foundation for their faith and life, no matter what challenges or issues they face.</p> <p>In this session, you'll gain a clear, practical understanding of what systematic theology is and how it empowers kids to build a strong, lasting faith.</p> <p>Walk away inspired, encouraged, and equipped to teach life-changing theology to the next generation.</p>
Old National: Walnut A	Darlene Abbott	<i>Engaging Kids in Scripture Memory</i>		Knowing scripture and memorizing scripture are both crucial in helping kids understand God's Word and grow in their faith. Come and experience fun activities and games to teach Bible facts and scriptures in ways that kids will not only love but will keep them coming back for more.
Old National: Locust D	Brian Ondracek	<i>Lies the World Wants Your Kids to Believe</i>		Our children are being bombarded every day and in every way by a culture that continues to drift further away from God's Word and His truth. This breakout will explore seven lies the world would love your kids to believe and how you can partner with families in your church to teach kids the truths God wants them to know.

Double Tree: Ballroom B	Brittany Nelson	<i>Diapers, Drop-Offs, and Discipleship: Serving Young Families</i>	Serving families with babies and preschoolers goes beyond meeting physical needs—it's a vital opportunity to lay the foundation for discipleship. This session will equip you with practical ways to support today's parents with littles, providing both physical and spiritual encouragement. We'll explore creative ways to connect with parents of littles, provide resources that simplify spiritual development, and create a supportive church community for families navigating the early years
Double Tree: Valley	Savannah Elery	<i>Kids on Mission</i>	Not just ministering to kids, but ministering through kids. This breakout will equip you with tools to help your students embrace missions as a lifestyle.
Old National: Walnut E	Sean Sweet	<i>Cracking the Code: Why Preteens Are the Way They Are</i>	Why do preteens ask the weirdest questions, get distracted so easily, and sometimes seem like entirely different kids from one week to the next? Understanding the unique wiring of preteens will transform the way you minister to them. This breakout will unpack how preteens think, learn, and process faith—and how you can meet them where they are.
Old National: Locust A	Avery Foley	<i>Dinosaurs for Kids</i>	Dinosaurs and the Bible? Yes! Discover how to use dinosaurs to help young children lay a biblical foundation of history and connect them to the gospel.
Old National: Locust E	Brian Dembowczyk	<i>Now That's a Good Question</i>	A catechism, scripted questions and answers about the Christian faith, is one of the earliest and most successful discipleship tools we have in our ministry tool belt. In this breakout, we'll walk through a brief history of catechisms before spending the bulk of our time considering how we can incorporate catechisms into our ministries.
Double Tree: Crescent	Doc Hunsley	<i>Volunteers: The Lifeblood of Your Ministry!</i>	Volunteers are the lifeblood of every ministry especially special needs! Volunteer recruitment is always one of the biggest concerns for any ministry leader, no matter what size your ministry is. In this workshop, you will learn how to recruit, retain, and train your volunteers to last for the long haul in any-sized church! I will also share with you the four most important letters in the alphabet for volunteer recruitment and how they will help you recruit volunteers at over a 90% success rate with longevity!
Old National: Ballroom D	Brent Moxey	<i>The Power of Kids Ministry in a Smaller Church Environment: Why Being a "Smaller" Church Has Huge Advantages for Life Change, Discipleship, and Beyond</i>	In this breakout, Kids Pastor Brent Moxey will unpack why a smaller church environment partnered with a biblical kids' ministry thrives through deeper, more personal relationships where every child is truly known, valued, and spiritually nurtured. We'll discuss, through a conversation, how this close-knit community allows for intentional discipleship, where leaders can

				walk closely with children and families on their faith journey. Rather than being a limitation, the smaller size becomes a powerful catalyst for authentic life change, lasting impact, and generational transformation.
Old National: Ballroom B	Debbie Rhoads	<i>Just Because You're Busy Doesn't Mean You Are Effective</i>		As a kids ministry leader, it's common to have a never-ending "to do" list. You may be "busy" about the Lord's work, but are you effective? In this breakout session, we will explore the difference and pursue the path of effectiveness.
Old National: Locust F	Jeremy Carroll	<i>The Power of Belonging</i>		Helping kids know they belong isn't just about fun and friendships—it's about opening their hearts to Jesus. In this breakout, we'll explore how a strong sense of belonging builds trust and lays the foundation for faith. You'll walk away with practical tools to make your ministry a place where kids feel at home and encounter the love of Christ.
Old National: Terrace Lounge	Dr. Luz Gálvez de Figueroa + Dr. Denise Muir Kjesbo	<i>Nurturing Faith Between Church and Home</i>		Research from the Nurturing Faith Collective highlights the crucial role of partnership between church and home in discipling the next generation. This interactive breakout will equip attendees with practical strategies for fostering spiritual growth. Through dynamic discussions, you'll gain practical ideas for creating a faith-centered environment, ensuring that both children and parents can grow spiritually at church and home, strengthening their faith journeys!
Old National: Walnut B	Areo Donahue	<i>The ABCs of Faith Formation: Three Keys to Nurturing a Child's Early View of God</i>		A child's early view of God has a great impact on their lifelong faith formation. Join Areo Donahue, all-around creative and creator of "God's Greenhouse," as she shares three crucial aspects of establishing a child's first God view and how each can nurture faith in a healthy way that leads to an ever-growing, life-long relationship with Him.
Old National: Ballroom A	Ronnie Farmer + Brandon Charlton: IWU	<i>The God They See: Parenting, Discipleship, and the Image of God at Home</i>		Our parenting style shapes more than behavior—it shapes theology. This breakout explores how kids develop their view of God based on how they experience us at home. You'll be introduced to an experiential parent workshop you can lead at your church that helps families identify their parenting tendencies, reflect on the image of God they're modeling, and learn rituals that plant seeds of truth, grace, and connection. Every parent is a pastor—this session helps them live into it.
Old National: Walnut F	Kurt Brodbeck	<i>Multisite: Copy + Paste... But Make It Ministry</i>		Multi-site ministry is full of potential—but without clarity and connection, it can quickly become chaotic. In this session, we'll explore how to keep vision unified, systems efficient, and relationships strong across locations. Learn how to lead with

				consistency and creativity, so every campus feels like part of the same vibrant story.
Double Tree: Ballroom D	John Clark	<i>Leading From Within</i>		Leading upward, downward, and laterally from any box on the organizational chart, you can be the leader the Holy Spirit wants you to be.
Old National: Locust C	Indiana Wesleyan University	<i>The "Prayground"</i>		A "prayground" is an interactive, experiential space designed to foster prayer and spiritual reflection, especially for children of all abilities. Unlike traditional prayer areas, a "prayground" is hands-on and filled with multisensory stations that inspire movement, creativity, and heartfelt participation. It's not a quiet museum to observe but a space to engage—praying through touch, motion, drawing, building, and guided reflection. We invite you to explore the "prayground" anytime during the conference, with each station thoughtfully designed with accessibility and spiritual depth in mind. Don't just look—come experience, come participate, and come pray!

BREAKOUT #7: Wednesday, October 08 • 3:30pm CT

Room	Speaker	Title	Description
Double Tree: Ballroom A	Josh Zello	<i>The Case for Preschool Ministry</i>	Preschool ministry is a vital foundation for lifelong faith. In this session, we'll explore why investing in the youngest generation matters, how early childhood is a prime time for spiritual formation, and practical ways to create a gospel-centered preschool ministry that truly makes an impact.
Double Tree: Valley	Chuck Stoudemire	<i>Finding the Why</i>	Making sure your kids ministry has purpose and is in line with the mission/vision statements. By asking "Why?", you can help ensure that events and ministry stay true to the goals of your church. Let the "Why?" drive what you do.
Old National: Locust A	Megan Pullen	<i>Above and Beyond: Volunteer Appreciation</i>	Join in this breakout where powerful strategies will be shared to make your volunteers feel truly valued and appreciated. From personal touches like handwritten notes to special events just for them, a range of ideas will be covered that are designed to show your gratitude in meaningful ways. The goal? To make your volunteers feel so appreciated, they'll be overwhelmed by the love and recognition they receive!

Old National: Walnut B	Kurt Brodbeck	<i>Creating a Ministry to Parents That Actually Works</i>	Tired of parent resources collecting dust or emails going unopened? Have you put countless hours of work into an amazing parent class or program, only to reach the parents who are already actively discipling their kids? In this session, we'll explore practical, creative ways to truly partner with parents—not just inform them. You'll walk away with strategies to equip, encourage, and engage parents in a way that sticks (and actually helps their kids grow in faith).
Old National: Walnut F	Abby Koontz	<i>6 Things Foster and Adoptive Parents Want You to Know</i>	Ministering to families involved with foster care and adoption can present unique blessings and challenges. Let's explore from a foster and adoptive parent perspective what Kidmin leaders will want to know to more effectively come alongside these families and disciple children for the Kingdom.
Old National: Ballroom D	Jenny Smith	<i>Rooted in Truth, Cultivating a Love for Scripture</i>	It's easy for kids to skim the surface of Scripture, but God's Word deserves a deeper place in their hearts. In this breakout, discover practical strategies to guide children toward a genuine love for the Bible. Help them experience the power of Scripture in a way that transforms their hearts and lives, giving them a lasting foundation for faith.
Old National: Walnut D	Aaron Conley	<i>No Junior Holy Spirit</i>	Teaching kids Scripture can feel daunting—but you're not alone. The same Holy Spirit who empowers you works in kids, too. Learn how to confidently teach deep biblical truth, trusting the Spirit to bring real transformation.
Old National: Ballroom C	Sharon Stratmoen	<i>Dear God: Powerful Ways to Pray with Kids</i>	Prayer is so much more than asking God for stuff. It's an opportunity to talk with God, praise God, and join with others who trust and depend on God, too! Together, we'll explore both traditional and unique prayer experiences that help children spend time with God. Along the way, we'll rediscover how prayer helps kids and leaders grow in relationship with God and each other. You'll walk away with fresh and fun prayers to implement in your children's ministry. Plus, you'll be reminded of the power of prayer in your own life and your ministry.
Old National: Locust B	Kara Nguyen	<i>Take Your Ministry Beyond the Church Walls: 7 Game-Changing Ways to Reach YOUR Community</i>	Your ministry impact doesn't stop at the church doors! Discover seven unique ways to inspire and include your church congregation to invest in kids and families both in and outside of your church. This session will help you explore the passions and interests within your congregation while also focusing on addressing key needs facing those you seek to serve!
Old National: Walnut E	Kris Smoll	<i>Ready, Set, Gospel!</i>	Are you prepared to "Go" and make disciples this year? This begins with confidently and effectively sharing the Gospel and

				including a clear invitation. If you rarely see children make decisions for Christ in your church, this is a breakout for you!
Double Tree: Ballroom B	David Rausch	<i>Story Time That Sticks: How to Involve Kids in the Bible Story</i>		Problem: Kids get bored at church when leaders talk at them. Solution: Invite them to be a part of the Biblical storytelling. Not only does interactive storytelling keep kids engaged, but it also helps them retain what they've learned. Join this session and get practical ideas for interactive storytelling methods that your elementary and preschool kids will love!
Old National: Locust D	Leah Broach	<i>Seen, Known, Loved: Empowering Children as World-Changing Disciple Makers</i>		In this inspiring seminar, children's ministry leaders will discover how to create environments where every child feels seen, known, and loved—reflecting the heart of God. Through practical strategies and biblical insights, we'll explore what kids truly need to experience God's love in meaningful ways. Learn how to nurture authentic connections that not only deepen faith but also empower kids to shine His light, bringing hope and healing to a world in need.
Double Tree: Ballroom C	Mitch Jensen	<i>The Power of Unity: Overcoming Conflict in Ministry</i>		Conflict in ministry is inevitable—office drama, double bookings, miscommunication. But how we handle it matters. In this session, we'll explore Jesus' approach to conflict, how to shut down gossip before it starts, and how to prioritize people over production. When we give grace, settle peace in our hearts, and walk in the fruit of the Spirit, God honors it!
Old National: Locust F	Patricia Garibay	<i>The Hidden Epidemic: How to Help Girls Overcome Loneliness</i>		In a world where girls feel increasingly isolated, this workshop, hosted by American Heritage Girls® Founder & Executive Director Emeritus Patti Garibay, equips ministry leaders to guide them toward an authentic, Christ-centered community. Rooted in Biblical principles, we'll explore practical strategies to help girls find fulfillment in being seen, known, and loved in God's family. Discover how the Church can nurture belonging, celebrate unique identities, and empower the next generation to thrive in their faith journey.
Old National: Ballroom B	Yancy Wideman Richmond	<i>Helping Kids Exchange Anxiety for a Garment of Praise</i>		What if we taught children from an early age how to go to God with their pain and the heartaches of life? What would it take to teach them about worship so their hiding place becomes God's presence? Yancy will share her practical wisdom and experience about becoming intentional in worship discipleship.
Double Tree: Crescent	Marie Kuck	<i>Give Them a Break: How to Host a Special Needs Respite Night in Any-Sized Church</i>		Families affected by disability often live with constant stress and exhaustion—and few chances to rest. Your church can be a source of hope and relief! Come learn how to plan and host a Respite Night or Parents' Day Out for children and teens with

				special needs. You'll discover how to create a safe, welcoming space that gives parents a much-needed break and powerfully demonstrates the love of Christ to the entire family. No matter your church's size, budget, or experience - you can do this!
Old National: Terrace Lounge	José, Aileen, + AJ Rodriguez	<i>Recruiting, Equipping, and Keeping Volunteers (Reclutando, Equipando y Manteniendo a los Voluntarios)</i> <i>*Presented in Spanish*</i>		<p>Description in English: In this breakout session, leaders will discover effective strategies to recruit and retain dedicated volunteers for long-term service in children's ministry. We will explore how to equip them with the right tools, vision, and encouragement to fulfill their calling with excellence. Additionally, we will share practical insights on building a strong, united team that works with a shared passion for blessing children and nurturing their spiritual growth.</p> <p>Descripción en Español: En esta sesión, los líderes descubrirán estrategias efectivas para reclutar y retener voluntarios comprometidos con el servicio a largo plazo en el ministerio de niños. Exploraremos cómo equiparlos con las herramientas, la visión y el ánimo necesario para que cumplan su llamado con excelencia. Además, compartiremos ideas prácticas para formar un equipo sólido y unido, que trabaje con una pasión compartida por bendecir a los niños y guiarlos en su crecimiento espiritual.</p>
Old National: Walnut A	Aleshia Ruehl	<i>Strength Like Deborah, Bravery Like Esther, Patience Like Leah, and Faith Like Mary: What We Can Learn About Leadership from Women in the Bible</i>		God gives us many examples of women in the Bible who He chooses to walk alongside in leadership. In this breakout, we will dive into the qualities and characteristics God uses to help women lead with confidence.
Old National: Ballroom A	Natalie Runion	<i>Sacred Sisterhood</i>		Navigating the complicated relationships between women and ministry: Have you ever said the words, "I don't even like women?!" You aren't alone. Together, we will unpack the 12 common lies women believe about other women and how God wants to redeem them into His truth, so we can work together and lead one another not just as friends but sacred sisters united for Kingdom purpose.
Old National: Walnut C	Hannah Augustine	<i>The Big Ask: Delegate > Despair</i>		Tired of doing everything on your own? You're not meant to! Wish you had more time to do what only you can do? It's possible! Join this breakout to learn how to multiply yourself by finding, recruiting, and training high-quality leaders for every aspect of your ministry!

Old National: Locust E	Madi Hackworth	<i>Let's Tok: Why the Church Should be Present on Social Media, and Where to Focus our Efforts to Make the Best Impact</i>	My dad said he'd never be on "instasnapfacechat" - yet, even he, at 65 years old, would be caught sending memes in the family group chat. Social media is dominating our culture right now, and we, as the Church, have an unprecedented opportunity to influence the daily lives of more people than ever before. Sooooo....where do we start?? As a KidMin social media manager for over a decade, I'd like to spend some time helping you create a tailored social media strategy that is simple, doable, and effective. Bring a pencil! This is going to be a very hands-on and practical breakout.
Double Tree: Ballroom D	Brian Dollar	<i>Under Pressure: Leading in Seasons of Stress</i>	Leading a ministry is stressful enough in "normal" times. But when everything seems to be turned upside down, it can become overwhelming to the point of exhaustion. In this session, Brian Dollar will share personal stories and principles from his own seasons of stress that will help you reevaluate your priorities, refocus your thinking patterns, and replenish your energy and passion.
Old National: Locust C	Indiana Wesleyan University	<i>The "Playground"</i>	A "playground" is an interactive, experiential space designed to foster prayer and spiritual reflection, especially for children of all abilities. Unlike traditional prayer areas, a "playground" is hands-on and filled with multisensory stations that inspire movement, creativity, and heartfelt participation. It's not a quiet museum to observe but a space to engage—praying through touch, motion, drawing, building, and guided reflection. We invite you to explore the "playground" anytime during the conference, with each station thoughtfully designed with accessibility and spiritual depth in mind. Don't just look—come experience, come participate, and come pray!

BREAKOUT #8: Wednesday, October 08 · 4:30pm CT

Room	Speaker	Title	Description
Old National: Locust A	Stanley Mearse	<i>Syrup and Waffles: Sharing the Gospel</i>	Understanding and sharing the gospel with kids!
Old National: Ballroom A	Josh Denhart	<i>Effective Event Management - Start to Finish</i>	Ministry events can be effective, but let's not fool ourselves. Events are extra work on top of our regular load. No matter

			when an event happens, Sunday is always coming! An effective event shouldn't kill you or your team. Learn HOW to break down every aspect of an event, from planning, to execution, to follow-up. In this breakout, you will learn the six steps of event management, plus a simple and repeatable process to win at EVERY event, regardless of the size or scope. After this breakout, you will be able to elegantly execute ministry events with calm and poise.
Old National: Ballroom D	Esther Moreno	<i>Where Do We Go From Here?</i>	Where Do We Go From Here? is designed to help children's ministry leaders turn all the valuable insights gained at a conference into actionable steps for their ministries. In this session, you'll create a personalized action plan that focuses on integrating new ideas and overcoming challenges specific to your ministry. Leave with a clear, practical roadmap to implement what you've learned and drive lasting change in your children's ministry at home.
Old National: Ballroom B	Catherine Fereday	<i>Team Building Time!</i>	Unifying a team takes lots of prayer and intentionality! Grab your team (or some new connections from the conference) and join in on the fun as we participate in some team-building exercises! This will NOT just be a "sit and listen" session, however, it will be friendly for those of all physical abilities. You'll leave closer to those you came with, as well as with some new ideas to try with your staff and/or volunteer team when you get back home!
Old National: Locust D	Vicki Abbott	<i>The 3, 2, 1 Game Plan: A Fun & Simple Way to Care for Your Volunteers!</i>	Get ready to embrace an easy, effective approach to supporting your volunteers—this week and beyond! With the 3, 2, 1 structure, you'll have a practical and engaging way to show appreciation, build relationships, and keep your team energized for the long haul. When you care for your volunteers, they'll go further, stay longer, and serve with joy!
Old National: Locust E	Jodie Slongo	<i>Host Parenting Classes to Embrace Family Discipleship</i>	Learn how to host impactful parenting classes that equip families to embrace discipleship in everyday life. This training will provide practical strategies, biblical foundations, and engaging resources to help parents grow in faith and lead their children spiritually. Whether you're a ministry leader or a passionate volunteer, you'll leave with the tools to cultivate strong, faith-filled families.
Old National: Locust F	Anthony Hunt	<i>AI in Action: Practical Strategies to Supercharge Your Kids Ministry (AI 201 level content)</i>	You've heard about AI—now it's time to put it to work! This hands-on workshop will equip you with practical, real-world strategies for using AI to streamline curriculum planning, enhance communication with parents, create engaging kids' content, and maximize volunteer effectiveness. Bring your

			device and get ready to explore AI tools that will save you time, increase impact, and revolutionize the way you lead in Kids Ministry.
Old National: Ballroom C	Kim Botto	<i>Rethinking Discipline: A Connected, Compassionate, and Curious Approach</i>	Traditional discipline methods often focus on control and compliance, but children thrive when discipline is rooted in connection, compassion, and curiosity. This workshop will help you shift from reactive discipline to proactive support, equipping you with strategies to respond effectively and prevent future behavioral struggles.
Double Tree: Valley	Shannon Teague	<i>Understanding Biblical Milestones</i>	In this breakout session, you will explore biblical milestones for ages birth-6th grade. You will learn about these milestones to develop a clear framework that parents and teachers can use to guide children on their spiritual journeys.
Old National: Terrace Lounge	Andrae Jones	<i>Thinking Beyond the Weekend</i>	If we're going to reach the next generation, it's going to take more than a weekend. Learn how to build momentum through services, events, and more
Old National: Walnut D	Debbie Rhoads	<i>The VBS Report Card</i>	In this breakout session, we will explore the VBS report card. (Planning, decorations, volunteers, programming, atmosphere, family follow-up, etc.) Is our event "average" or "A+"? Before we begin planning and preparing for our next VBS season, let's break down where we are and where we need to go.
Old National: Walnut E	Sean Sweet	<i>Raising Young Leaders: A Proven Plan to Develop Preteens as Kingdom Leaders</i>	What if your preteens weren't just attending church but actively leading in it? For over a decade, we've developed a program that's helped hundreds of preteens at over 200 churches step into leadership roles in their churches and beyond. Discover a strategy that will equip your preteens to lead with confidence, impact their peers, and develop a lifelong commitment to the Church.
Old National: Walnut B	Avery Foley	<i>Climate Change for Kids</i>	Kids are growing up on a diet of climate alarmism. Discover the biblical and scientific truths about the climate and how we can calm fears and encourage wise biblical stewardship.
Old National: Walnut A	Tish Striegel	<i>Chopped: A Recipe for Faith – Helping Kids Taste and See That the Lord is Good</i>	Teaching kids biblical truths has never been this fun (or delicious)! Chopped is a four-week, hands-on cooking series that lets kids experience God's goodness through teamwork, creativity, and interactive lessons. If Jesus used meals to teach, why can't we? This breakout will equip you with everything you need to bring this fresh, faith-filled experience to your ministry. Get ready for practical tips, creative ideas, and a full set of lessons—yours for free!

Double Tree: Ballroom A	Tyler Bates	<i>Creativity in Content</i>	Creativity is the key to shaping the future of content. In this workshop, we'll explore how blending innovative ideas with cutting-edge technology can create powerful, lasting impact. We'll dive into the core values that drive creative content development and share how leaders can use fresh, inventive approaches to engage and influence the next generation.
Old National: Locust B	Rachel Davidson	<i>From Trauma to Transformation: A Ministry Framework for Identity-Based Care</i>	Share in the conversation around Identity-Based Trauma-Responsive Care as a holistic approach to supporting children, which integrates trauma-informed principles with a deep respect for each child's unique identity, coupled with encountering God's love, healing, and identity as a known and beloved child of God.
Double Tree: Ballroom B	Byron Ragains + Courtney Weaver	<i>Awaken Life - How to Declare Truth and Speak Blessings</i>	Our words can be used to awaken life. In scripture, declarations and blessings are inked many times. What might our ministries look like if we began stirring the hearts of our staff, volunteers, and parents with the beauty found in blessing children? This posture can give life to a child who desires to know what God says is always true about them. Walk through why blessing children is important and give you practical ideas for these life-giving declarations.
Double Tree: Crescent	Beth Golik	<i>Creating Sensory-Friendly Spaces on a Limited Budget</i>	Looking for ways to create a sensory space without a dedicated room or an unlimited budget? In this session, participants will get ideas for how to create calming environments within their existing children's ministry space and what must-have items to include.
Double Tree: Ballroom C	Melia Warren	<i>HIGH FIVE Children's Ministry: The Power of Building Connections and Relationships Within Your Ministry</i>	How welcoming is your ministry environment? How do you create a HIGH FIVE culture within Children's Ministry to be a place where everyone is seen, celebrated, valued, loved, encouraged, and sent forth to be that for others? In this breakout, we will explore how to create a HIGH FIVE culture where everyone feels valued and loved as they encounter the transforming Gospel and then are encouraged to live out their faith in their lives.
Old National: Walnut C	Deborah Addington	<i>Strengthening Resiliency by Introducing Children to God's Presence</i>	As leaders in children's ministry, we recognize the importance of nurturing resilience in children's faith while teaching them the value of worship. What if these two elements were interconnected? In this session, you'll explore new insights on authentic worship, its role in building resilience in children's faith, and practical ideas to implement in your ministry.

Old National: Walnut F	Lauren Jackson	<i>How to Have Your Voice Heard Without Having a Seat at The Table</i>	We can all recall a time we wish we had been invited to that one meeting or were included in that one conversation. Many of us can recall having a seat at the table, but still feeling like our voice is not heard. What if having a seat at the table isn't the goal? Learn how to navigate staff tensions and expectations proactively and humbly, all working toward greater unity.
Double Tree: Ballroom D	Corey Jones	<i>Ministry Launchpad: Taking it All Back Home</i>	You've soaked in ideas, inspiration, and insights all week—now what? Join us for a fun, reflective session focused on helping you reframe and reapply what you've learned to your own ministry context. Leave with practical steps, renewed energy, and a plan to launch forward with purpose.
Old National: Locust C	Indiana Wesleyan University	<i>The "Prayground"</i>	A "prayground" is an interactive, experiential space designed to foster prayer and spiritual reflection, especially for children of all abilities. Unlike traditional prayer areas, a "prayground" is hands-on and filled with multisensory stations that inspire movement, creativity, and heartfelt participation. It's not a quiet museum to observe but a space to engage—praying through touch, motion, drawing, building, and guided reflection. We invite you to explore the "prayground" anytime during the conference, with each station thoughtfully designed with accessibility and spiritual depth in mind. Don't just look—come experience, come participate, and come pray!

BREAKOUT #9: Thursday, October 09 • 12:45pm CT

Room	Speaker	Title	Description
Old National: Ballroom C	Josh Zello	<i>A Theology of Play</i>	Play isn't just fun—it's a God-designed way for young children to learn, grow, and experience His truth. This session will explore how play reflects God's creativity, fosters spiritual development, and provides opportunities for meaningful discipleship. Learn how to intentionally use play to teach biblical truths and engage preschoolers in a way that shapes their faith.
Old National: Locust A	Deborah Addington	<i>Turning Chaos into Control</i>	This classroom management breakout focuses on practical strategies to minimize disorder and maintain order. Every teacher or director, regardless of experience, benefits from having a repertoire of effective techniques. You'll learn methods that not only enforce discipline but also guide and disciple, whether

				you're teaching 5 or 50 children!
Old National: Walnut E	Anthony Hunt	<i>Creating a Safe and Secure Ministry: Essential Policies & Best Practices to Protect Kids and Your Church</i>		A safe ministry is a thriving ministry. In today's world, Kids Pastors must be proactive in protecting children, volunteers, and the church by implementing strong safety policies and procedures. This session will equip you with essential security measures, volunteer screening processes, emergency response plans, and best practices to ensure your ministry is both welcoming and protected. Learn how to create a culture of safety that gives parents confidence and allows kids to experience Jesus in a secure and distraction-free environment.
Double Tree: Ballroom C	Jordan Davis	<i>Recruiting an Overworked Generation</i>		"Recruiting an Overworked Generation" explores practical strategies for engaging and retaining volunteers in today's fast-paced world. This session will unpack flexible ministry models, the power of purpose-driven service, and how to create a culture of grace that prevents burnout. Attendees will leave with actionable insights to help volunteers find joy and balance in serving, ensuring long-term ministry impact.
Old National: Locust B	Andrae Jones	<i>Engaging Parents Inside and Outside Your Church</i>		What if it wasn't that parents don't care, but rather we don't have a great plan to engage them? Learn practical tips to connect with parents, gather with parents, and get them to serve.
Old National: Walnut D	Alysia Gonzales	<i>Raising Up Church Leaders in KidMin</i>		Our kids have unique gifts and abilities that are beneficial and necessary to church! Learn how to help them discover their own spiritual gifts as well as explore and understand different areas of ministry that they see exercised within the church. Familiarize them with leadership and ministry in an age-appropriate way that is relevant and useful to them right now.
Double Tree: Ballroom A	Coming soon!!			
Old National: Locust D	Hunter Williams	<i>How to Share the Gospel With Kids</i>		If a child asked you to share the gospel, would you be ready to respond with clarity and confidence? In this breakout session, you'll be given essential tips, practical tools, and a clear framework to effectively share the gospel with kids.
Old National: Walnut F	Debbie Rhoads	<i>The VBS Volunteer Experience</i>		Imagine a world where you have so many volunteers for VBS that you have a wait list! A wait list....to volunteer...for VBS! It is possible! In this breakout session, we will explore the VBS Volunteer experience and how it directly affects the experience of the child.

Old National: Ballroom B	Yancy Wideman Richmond	<i>What Forrest Frank Can Teach Us About Preteen Worship</i>	Cool Rules, Lame Drools. Do you want to connect with preteens and lead them in true, authentic worship? You will learn steps to build a dynamic worship ministry for Preteens, whether you're using soundtracks or a live band. Yancy will share steps you can take to teach preteens to be the worshippers God created them to be.
Old National: Locust E	Jamie Doyle	<i>Tricky Messages for Kids</i>	Audience-tested presentations that play successfully, especially for groups of children. Using various illusions as the vehicle to carry that message, Jamie shows some of his signature routines to demonstrate how to take simple tricks and turn them into illustrated messages.
Old National: Locust F	Kris Smoll	<i>Strategies for Scripture Memory</i>	Too often, children memorize simply to earn a prize or an award, turning the process into a race or burden rather than a way to rest in God's presence and know Him more deeply. This workshop is designed to shift the focus—making memorization both fun and meaningful. Through engaging activities and practical strategies, we'll help children (and adults!) embrace memorization as a joyful experience that strengthens their faith and deepens their understanding of Scripture.
Old National: Walnut C	Collin Hamm	<i>How to Thrive in a Small Church</i>	Being in a smaller church has its unique problems. Join us in this breakout as we dive into 3 unique ways to grow your ministry and have a thriving children's ministry.
Double Tree: Valley	Sam Fowler	<i>Mental Health & Ministry: Taking Care of Yourself & Family so You Don't Burn Out</i>	After being in kids ministry for 26 years, I've learned it's easy to put on a show and continue to pour yourself out for others and not fill back up. Let's journey through scripture as we see how to put our boundaries on our lives for the sake of ourselves, our families and our ministry God calls us to.
Double Tree: Ballroom B	Scott Turansky	<i>Helping Children Deal with Anger</i>	A heart-based approach to anger management is powerful. It's not about reward and punishment strategies. It's about getting into the heart of a child and helping a child develop new tendencies and patterns to address the internal challenges they face. This session is biblical, practical, and focused on the heart. Managing emotions is important at any age. I've dedicated myself to equipping parents to address the challenges their children face. Anger is a big one, and when parents understand the process of change, they can equip their children to self-regulate emotions.

Old National: Walnut A	Meghan Graham	<i>Loving Through the Struggle: Navigating Violent and Difficult Behaviors in Kids Ministry</i>	In this breakout, we will explore practical approaches to managing violent behaviors in kids ministry, focusing on understanding the root causes and how to respond with love and empathy. Through real-life scenarios, we'll discuss how parent-teacher collaboration, recognizing warning signs, and creating a supportive environment can help children with challenging behaviors thrive in a church setting. Participants will leave with actionable strategies to ensure all kids feel safe, valued, and included in your ministry.
Double Tree: Crescent	Coming soon!!		
Old National: Terrace Lounge	José, Aileen, + AJ Rodriguez	<i>How to Present the Gospel to Children (Cómo presentar el Evangelio a los Niños)</i> <i>*Presented in Spanish*</i>	<p>Description in English: The greatest calling of every Children's Ministry teacher and leader is to help every child understand the Gospel and put their faith in Jesus as their Savior. In this session, we'll provide you with simple, effective, and practical tools to present the Gospel clearly and in a way that connects with a child's heart.</p> <p>Descripción en Español: El mayor llamado de todo maestro y líder del Ministerio de Niños es ayudar a cada niño a entender el evangelio y poner su fe en Jesús como su Salvador. En esta sesión, te daremos herramientas prácticas, efectivas y sencillas para presentar el evangelio de forma clara y conectada al corazón del niño..</p>
Old National: Walnut B	Catherine Fereday	<i>God-Sized Dreams and Innovations Together!</i>	One of the best ways to get your staff or volunteer team passionately on mission in unity is to invite them into dreaming alongside you. God created us for community and has given us varying gifts, so coming together means your dreams are bigger, greater innovations are brought forward to address challenges in your ministry, and you are bonded together more closely! You will be participating in a portion of this process as well as taking home a framework that you can utilize or adjust for your ministry setting and needs as you dream God-sized dreams- together!
Old National: Ballroom D	Melanie Hester	<i>Who Are These Kids?! Understanding & Discipling Gen Alpha</i>	Kids today face anxiety, identity struggles, family instability, and constant cultural shifts. Who are the kids in your ministry, and how can you disciple them well? This breakout unpacks the biggest influences shaping them where they are and leads them toward lasting faith.
Old National: Ballroom A	Brittany Nelson	<i>PIE Your Volunteers in the Face with Effective Volunteer Training</i>	It's not enough to recruit a rock star team of volunteers. We have to train them too! Effective volunteer training will prepare, inspire, and equip your team for success, and this breakout session will

				cover practical ideas for implementing those strategies in a variety of training settings.
Double Tree: Ballroom D	Anvita Elder	<i>Implementing Prayer and Fasting in Kids Ministries</i>		What if prayer and fasting were a way of life for kids? In this breakout, you'll learn how to teach these spiritual disciplines in ways that are simple, impactful, and tailored for young hearts. Get ready to spark a hunger and passion for God that lasts a lifetime!
Old National: Locust C	Indiana Wesleyan University	<i>The "Prayground"</i>		A "prayground" is an interactive, experiential space designed to foster prayer and spiritual reflection, especially for children of all abilities. Unlike traditional prayer areas, a "prayground" is hands-on and filled with multisensory stations that inspire movement, creativity, and heartfelt participation. It's not a quiet museum to observe but a space to engage—praying through touch, motion, drawing, building, and guided reflection. We invite you to explore the "prayground" anytime during the conference, with each station thoughtfully designed with accessibility and spiritual depth in mind. Don't just look—come experience, come participate, and come pray!