

- Family Night on Wednesday night. Some churches find better attendance earlier in the week because on Fridays everyone is off for the weekend. Everything is already decorated and the family night is centered around the week's theme. A person was designated to take photos and videos all week and put together a slide/video show for the Family Night. Parents love to see their child on the "big" screen!"
- Plan a musical using your music from VBS. For your church kids, you might consider starting early. Kids who come to VBS pick up the songs much quicker when kids around them already know the songs and motions. Use the musical to present an overview of the entire week of VBS and plan to use it at your family night and maybe even at a church worship service shortly after VBS. Promote your musical in the local paper and on social media and invite people to attend.
- Plan a carnival ... with games, prizes, snacks and special entertainment. Make sure you have lots of your church family mingling and getting to know the kids and their families.
- If you have VBS near Father's Day, consider using your family night a celebration of fathers. How about a lawn mower race: someone builds a course and someone rides on his lawn mower racing another person on his or hers. Other ideas might include: a dunking booth, a "Dad's Diner," a 50's theme, etc. Be sure to include a bounce house. Food could be a barbeque or just hamburgers and hot dogs.
- Encourage parents to wear their favorite sports team's jersey or shirt. Plan some type of "tail gate" experience for the meal. Include in the worship type a "pep rally" feel. Consider having a local sports hero speak. Serve "concession stand type food."
- Tom said, "We had a Family Lunch on Friday and parents didn't have to come back in the evening."
- Plan to have a game time for families to participate in together. Do this after a large group experience that gives parents a peak into a day of VBS — worship rally, music, performances by the kids, awards, and lots more. Be sure to include some food that families can make together, i.e., individual pizzas, ice cream sundaes, etc.
- If your church has an annual church picnic, try and connect the two. Invite families for the worship service that is focused around VBS and then move them right into the church picnic. Be sure to make sure that church leaders are interacting and getting to know the kids and their families better.
- Instead of doing family night offer an alternative: a parenting course throughout the 5 days of VBS. As the kids
  are having fun at VBS... parents now have a place to come and have practical teaching for parenting skills. Be
  sure to use this time to build relationships with parents. Be sure to plan some follow up class or a fun "reunion"
  activity so that you can continue the connection.
- Plan a movie night and invite families to come and enjoy a family friendly movie with free snacks and games that will sure to open the door to getting to know families.
- Use your family night to focus on missions. Use your VBS missions material to plan a full program with videos, music, food, games and even invite a local missionary to come and speak about their ministry. Take up a love offering or plan to have a designated amount to give to the missionary's work.