



Educators Workshop
conducted by
Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs
Intermarriage/keruv Initiative

Sensitizing Teachers Who Work with the Children in Interfaith Families Teaching the Children of Today's Interfaith Families

Purpose: Create a greater awareness of the intermarried families already and potentially in our religious and preschool population

Goals: To be prepared to react in a sensitive, supportive, and welcoming way which leads to understanding and inclusiveness

Methods: Provide the opportunity through dialogue, role play and enacting scenarios to be responsive to the diversity of today's "Jewish Family" who are present and future congregants. Divide into groups which are facilitated by our "staff". Time needed: two hours

Cost: Minimal, to be determined with FJMC coordinator/presenter Lynne Wolfe lwolfe@fjmc.org

How to get Educators/Staff there: Use/adapt pr releases, flyers, letters we have prepared for you. Inform/invite Rabbi, lay leaders, funders, as appropriate, with the info we provide; adapt as needed.

Agenda:

- Welcome:
- What is KERUV – FJMC, partnership: lay volunteers "consultants" with Rabbis
- Demographics: more intermarried families will be in our synagogues
- How workshop evolved
- How do they welcome/ facilitate an interfaith family's entrance into their religious school
- What are some of the "stumbling blocks" these families encounter...solutions...successes
- Attitudes in synagogue/school
- Actual role-play
- Further discussion regarding awareness of these issues by school/synagogue staff
- Follow-up:

Results:

Those who participated attended voluntarily because they understood this to be an important relevant workshop that they needed to best serve their religious school populations. Attendees came from synagogues in different parts of the country with few children of intermarriages or the opposite; a large percentage of children coming from intermarried homes. This difference in demographics resulted in concrete discussion/dialogue.

Anecdotal feedback from our workshops, when asked: ***What are the most valuable things you learned from this workshop?***

- Validate what the children are saying, give them value
- Open mindedness - be inclusive and think before you speak
- Hearing others experiences –dialoging with your peers
- Learning different ways interfaith issues pop up in classroom
- To be sensitive about indirect signals that kids might interpret negatively
- The scenarios were helpful in thinking through what we might be doing
- Encouraged to help develop programs that make us a more welcoming community
- Keep the conversation going!