

Start or revitalize a ministry in your church

QUICK START GUIDE



PRIMARY SABBATH SCHOOL



Quick Start Guide for the Primary Sabbath School Leader

Available from:

AdventSource

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Introduction

Sabbath School provides a religious education that leads children to Jesus and helps them build a relationship with Him. Primary Sabbath School offers opportunities to help children learn to use the Bible and understand God's Word.

Go to **ChildMin.org** for leader's resources, training, information about certification classes, tips for working with kids with special needs, and the NAD's children's ministry blog, *Kids Ministry Ideas*.

Primary Sabbath School lessons link God's amazing grace to children's everyday lives. While in primary Sabbath School, many children may accept Jesus into their lives. Look for ways to help them make this important decision.

This Quick Start Guide contains ideas to help get your primary Sabbath School ministry started. As you read, think about how you can adapt these suggestions for your local church. Use this material as a starting point for your own creativity.

Sabbath School Divisions		
Beginner	ages birth-2	2-Year GraceLink Curriculum
Kindergarten	ages 3-5	2-Year GraceLink Curriculum
Primary	ages 6-10 (grades 1-4)	4-Year GraceLink Curriculum
Junior	ages 10-14 (grades 5-8)	4-Year GraceLink PowerPoints Curriculum
Earliteen (if junior and earliteen divisions are divided)	ages 13-14 (grades 7-8)	2-Year Real-Time Faith Curriculum



Primary Sabbath School Division Leader Job Description

Your job description may vary as determined by your children's ministries council or your church. The following information is a general guideline for the primary leader.

Objective: To coordinate and lead the primary Sabbath School class

Timeframe: One or two years, depending on the practice of your local church

Accountable To: Children's ministries coordinator and children's ministries council

Specific Responsibilities:

- Set the goal for your division
- Organize and lead the primary Sabbath School division
- Equip and coordinate the assistant leaders
- Recruit other needed volunteer staff
- Order your curriculum needs through the church secretary
- Prepare and execute weekly programs
- Plan outreach to parents
- Meet with the children's ministries council or other governing church body
- Encourage volunteers to complete children's ministries certification
- Provide opportunities for volunteer training in your church or at conference events
- Encourage volunteers with thank you notes, gifts, or parties
- Be early to your department each Sabbath. Pray for the children God is sending to your Sabbath School.

Time Commitment: Approximately 4-6 hours per week, depending on the size of your department

Ongoing Leadership Growth Through:

- NAD children's ministries certification
- Volunteer management seminar (recommended; check with your local conference for children's ministry training events)

PRIMARY LEADERS MUST BE COMMITTED TO:

- Jesus Christ and a growing relationship with Him
- Christ-centered ministry to children
- The Seventh-day Adventist Church and its beliefs
- A balanced Christian lifestyle
- Teamwork
- Cooperative ministry under the leadership of the pastor, church board, or children's ministries council
- Personal growth and learning



Top 10 Tasks for Primary Sabbath School Leaders

1. **Read this Quick Start Guide.** (You are already doing this!)
2. **Get a copy of *Children's Ministries Manual*.** It is full of great ideas and information that will make your ministry successful. This book is available from AdventSource at AdventSource.org or 402.486.8800.
3. **Look at the Sabbath School lessons your church is using.** If you are not using GraceLink, the only curriculum produced by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, find out why that decision was made. (For more on GraceLink, see GraceLink.net.)
4. **Call your staff together** for an organizational meeting. With their help, determine the goal of your department. What do you want the children to know and do before they move on to the next level? What do you have to do to help them reach that goal? If you do not have a goal, you are shooting arrows without a target.
5. **Get an up-to-date picture of your primary Sabbath School division**—both the needs of the children and your department. Research what has been happening; talk to current and former volunteers. Take an inventory of the supplies already available. Assess what new materials will be needed. Circulate and collect your parent questionnaire. (See page 5.)
6. **Create a budget** for the entire year. (See page 18 for an example.)
7. **Plan a calendar** for the year that includes all division activities. Add appropriate church and conference activities. (See page 20.)
8. **Consult with the children's ministries coordinator** concerning expectations, needs, the budget, the church calendar, and any areas of concern.
9. **Share your plans, calendar, budget, and any other pertinent information** with the children's ministries committee.
10. **Start a program of prayer warriors** who are paired with each leader and teacher. Plan to arrive early each Sabbath morning and encourage your staff and teachers to arrive early for prayer time together before the children arrive.

Seven Principles for Excellent Leaders

As the leader of the primary Sabbath School division you need to commit to setting a high standard. Here are seven principles that will serve you well. Think of them as a guide to a successful ministry.

1. Be Personal

In order to share Jesus with others, you must also have a personal connection with Him. Personal devotional time, a focus on prayer, and openness to the Spirit's leading are all crucial to successful leadership.



2. **Excel**

Do what you do well. It's not about how much you do, but how well you do it. Show people that you are reliable, accurate, and able to anticipate and deal with problems. Eventually they will develop trust, respect, and appreciation for what you do. People are more likely to help someone who represents excellence.

3. **Nurture**

Be supportive of others. Even self-motivated people are encouraged by a supportive atmosphere. Under such conditions people are more likely to feel comfortable and share ideas.

4. **Diversify**

Get to know many different kinds of people (with diverse interests, opinions, and backgrounds). The more people you know, the more opportunity for networking you'll have—sharing ideas, solutions, and support. Expand your network to include coworkers, church members, neighbors, and employees of companies where you do business.

5. **Be Visible**

Participate in groups and seek out other people who share your interests and needs. Does your conference have a children's ministry network? Check if they have a newsletter you can read or social media group you can join. Are there any local community groups you can get involved with as well?

6. **Personalize**

Learn other people's unique qualities. When you meet people, try to remember more about them than their name. What are their backgrounds, interests, experiences, personalities? The more you know about a person, the easier it is to relate to them.

7. **Organize**

Make a networking plan. How can you best make use of these principles? Who can you add to your network list? Start by going through lists of participants in conferences and workshops you've attended.

In your networking efforts, remember that you must be willing to give at least as much as you receive from networking, whether that be through experience and resources or old-fashioned elbow grease. You must put effort into it in order to receive.

Priority #1 – Find Out Who You Are Serving

From the beginning, a good leader gets to know the primary children and their families. Here is a survey you can adapt and circulate to the families. The information you collect will help you in planning your programs, training, events, and calendar.



Primary Sabbath School Survey

Please take a few moments to answer the following questions. The results of this survey will be used to assist us in organizing programs and developing resources for you and your children.

1. Child's name: _____ Birthday: _____

2. Parent or guardian's name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State/Prov: _____ ZIP/PC _____
Cell: _____ Email: _____

3. Does your child have special needs (allergies, developmental, physical)? YES NO
If yes, what are they? _____

4. What does your child like to do? _____

5. What does your child like to play? _____

6. What type of program, other than Sabbath School, would you like us to organize for you or your child? _____

7. What type of program or class would you be interested in attending? _____

8. Additional comments: _____

Permission to adapt and copy for local church use.



Understanding Primary-age Children

In order to understand primary children (ages six to nine), it is helpful to note the characteristics of their growth and development. Primary children...

Physical

- Show good muscle coordination and balance
- Behave in a boisterous and energetic manner
- Learn eye-hand coordination for fine-muscle skills
- Willingly practice to learn new skills
- Are somewhat far-sighted until eight years old
- Like to sing

Mental

- Like to demonstrate their newly-acquired reading skills; however, many through age nine need help finding and reading Bible texts
- Are literal thinkers; need objects and pictures in order to understand
- Are learning to distinguish between fact and fiction
- Are curious and observant, asking lots of questions
- Learn best from hands-on experience with concrete objects
- Are capable of prolonged interest and concentration
- Apply simple, logical thought to practical situations
- Memorize easily
- Show an interest in events that took place long ago and far away
- Have limited understanding of time and historical sequence
- Are strongly committed to fairness; want those who break the rules to be punished
- Enjoy discussing experiences and new ideas
- Are fond of stories
- Like using new words

Emotional

- Appreciate variety within a fairly stable routine; a complete change of program can upset younger primary students
- Are learning to control negative emotions, expressing them in socially acceptable ways
- Need adults to model self-control
- Fear death and divorce
- Are motivated by recognition



Social

- Enjoy group games, projects, quizzes, and activities
- Are naturally boisterous and energetic
- Like adults and seek relationships with them; want to please them
- Want to know the rules and to apply them to other people
- Want to belong to clubs and groups; family and church are important to them

Spiritual

- Understand some simple religious symbolism
- Have an interest in God
- Willingly believe what the church teaches
- Want to be told what to believe
- Understand enough about sin and salvation to choose Jesus
- Want to please God
- Make prayer a part of daily life if encouraged to do so
- Willingly accept their responsibility as stewards if given the opportunity
- Imitate models of Christian living

Developmental Needs

- To develop a sense of responsibility
- To develop a sense of accomplishment
- To grow in self-esteem
- To learn social and academic skills
- To balance personal freedom with parental limits

Spiritual Needs

- To know God loves and cares for them
- To develop a personal relationship with Jesus and see Him as their Friend
- Ready access to God through prayer
- To experience forgiveness and mercy
- Assurance of acceptance with God – without it, they experience fear and guilt
- To know the law of God; they will apply it as a standard of living
- To offer mercy and forgiveness to those who wrong them



Faith Development for Kids in Primary

In Luke 2:52 we read that Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and He also grew in favor with God and people. This includes both spiritual and social growth.

The key to faith for primary-age children is a sense of belonging. Children of this age enjoy order and joining groups and activities. They are excited about the prospect of belonging to a worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church family. They are also excited about joining groups within the church, such as the Adventurer Club.

The needs for children at this stage of faith development are:

- A sense of authority. They are satisfied to have their “why” questions answered, “because the Bible” or “because the Adventist Church” says so.
- To hear the story of the worldwide church. Stories of God working in Bible times and in the beginning of their church feed the children’s growing faith.
- Experiences of awe and wonder, which are part of worship.
- To sense that they are wanted at church, accepted by their teachers and peers, and missed when absent.

What does this mean for your primary Sabbath School class? Foster faith by filling the above needs through stories, drama, art, and creative worship experiences in a warm, accepting atmosphere.

GraceLink Primary Sabbath School Lessons

The primary Sabbath School is a part of a spiritual journey for the children in your class. To assist the leaders and teachers in Sabbath Schools around the world, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists developed an Adventist curriculum called GraceLink.

The GraceLink curriculum is a Bible-based, Christ-centered series of lessons that leads children to grow spiritually and learn Seventh-day Adventist beliefs. In each lesson you will find age-appropriate activities that are fun and bring the Bible to life. Most importantly, these lessons show children how Bible stories can be applied to their lives.

MUCH MORE ONLINE

Find Sabbath School curriculum resources, puzzles, music, PowerPoint presentations, materials lists, discussions, and more at GraceLink.net.

You will want to order a teacher’s guide for each adult leader and a student Bible study guide for each child in your Sabbath School class. Don’t forget to order copies of *Primary Treasure* for them to take home also! Order it directly from your Adventist Book Center or ask your church secretary to place an order using the Standing Quarterly Order Form each quarter.



One important factor for Sabbath School teachers is that these lessons allow for flexibility in the size of your group as well as the amount of time that you have. This allows for small and large classes to all use the lessons effectively.

The GraceLink Sabbath School lessons only provide activities that focus on the central message of the lesson for that day. This allows for children to learn the same lesson many different ways.

The primary curriculum consists of a four-year cycle for children in grades 1-4. The stories are written at a fourth-grade reading level. This means parents are expected to study with younger children. Some of the daily study questions will be too difficult for first-graders; it's okay for parents to omit those questions. Because the Sabbath School is activity-based, there will be no problem involving everyone in class.

All of the lessons in the GraceLink curriculum focus on one of the following themes:

- God loves us and sent His Son to die in our place so we can live forever with Him.
- Our response to God's love is that we love Him, too. We show this by worshipping Him.
- We love the people around us, too—our family, church family, and friends.
- We serve people who may not know and love Jesus, and give them an invitation to be a part of the family of God.

These four themes are the pillars that will help each child incorporate Seventh-day Adventist beliefs into their lives as they grow in their Christian experience.

Additionally, the planners of GraceLink have followed an overall plan that ensures a child will hear all of the major Bible stories (some more than once) as they move from one division to the next.

Why Were These Bible Stories Chosen?

Some leaders may want to know why the lessons are not taught in chronological order. This is so children spend more weeks in the year learning about Jesus and His birth, life, death, and resurrection than any other Bible story. As you review the curriculum, you will see that all of the divisions take time to study the birth and then the death and resurrection of Jesus during the Christmas and Easter seasons, when much of society is already focused on spiritual things. This means that each year, parents and Sabbath School teachers can take advantage of these times to focus children's attention on what the Bible says about these all-important events.

The Memory Verse

Remember when children came to Sabbath School and were ready to recite their memory verse and answer questions about the lesson? Now the lesson and memory are introduced in Sabbath School and the parents or guardians review the lesson and the memory verse with their kids every day during the week. Here is why:



1. When kids were expected to come prepared, teachers expressed concern that often only one or two kids in a class would know the Bible story and others not at all. When the lesson is first taught at church, all the kids are at the same place. As you teach the lesson, you can encourage kids to study more about it during the week and share what they learn with the whole family.
2. This model also challenges parents and guardians to personal prayer and Bible study as a way to stay close to Jesus and to model this to their children. Teachers still ask how many times kids studied the lesson and record their responses, not in order to reward them, but to chart their progress. After a while kids will begin to study for themselves. Encourage them to increase their study.

When Using GraceLink, Keep a Few Things in Mind:

- More material is provided in the teacher's guide than you can use in one Sabbath. Choose what you are most comfortable with and don't try to cram it all in.
- When crafts are suggested that don't work for you, change to one that does and still teaches the same lesson.
- If music is a problem, substitute other music that fits.
- Primary children are six to nine years old. Their attention span is longer than younger children (one minute per year plus one). Keep each part of the program in that time limit.
- Use vocabulary they can understand. You can use longer words, but explain their meaning.
- Few primary students will be good readers. Don't expect them to read long passages or Bible verses. Choose a Bible version that is easy for them to understand. Reading should not be a requirement for being in primary.
- Primary students will enjoy more details than younger children, but not too many. They enjoy action in the storyteller and being included by name.
- It's okay to be creative and resourceful, but stay with the main points and the Bible lesson the curriculum is using.
- Experiencing grace is vital to this age group to help them to make a decision for Jesus.

LAST-MINUTE PLANNERS

Take the time during the week to study the lesson for the next week... God has a message for you to share with the children. GraceLink is designed to help you provide the best Sabbath School with as much ease as possible. If you have set up your department in advance with the basic program supplies, all you need to do is grab your teacher's guide and find the parts you can do easily. It's all written out for you – even what to say.

If you can turn yourself into a long-range planner, look ahead to what is needed. Purchase or prepare it at the beginning of the quarter. Then you are all set and ready to share God's message.



We want to teach children about sharing and mission as soon as possible. Primary children are enthusiastic about getting involved in both local and foreign missions. Though their concept of foreign mission may be limited, they love to get involved in local mission such as nursing home visitation and making food baskets. Don't miss the opportunity to teach children about helping others during these years.

A Guide for Evaluating Non-Adventist Resources

It is recommended that you begin with GraceLink and use other materials to enhance rather than substitute it. As you examine other materials, here are some questions to consider:

- Is the material Bible-based?
- Is it Christ-centered and doctrinally sound?
- Does it reinforce spiritual growth?
- Is it attractive and fun, and does it make the Bible come alive?
- Can it be applied to a child's life today?
- Is it age-appropriate?
- Is it well-organized yet flexible?
- Does it actively involve children?
- Is it consistent with Adventist beliefs?

GraceLink is the only children's Sabbath School curriculum approved by the North American Division and developed in partnership with the General Conference. If you are considering a change to a different curriculum, it would be best to get approval from your children's ministries committee or the church board. This will protect you from potential problems that can come from using materials that do not agree with the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

How Children Learn

The children in your primary Sabbath School class learn through exploring and using all of their senses. Here are some ideas that will help you to reach all the children in your class.

Visual: Pictures, DVDs, felts

Tactile: Objects to touch, build, and color

Auditory: Stories, songs, and sounds

Movement: Action songs, moving around the room, drama, and play



Learning Styles

Educational research has determined that we each prefer a particular style of learning. These learning styles demonstrate themselves in children at a very young age and teachers need to make sure they allow for children to learn in multiple ways. Here are some ideas on how the children in your Sabbath School class learn.

	Description	Application
Dynamic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative and experiential learner • Good leaders • Results-oriented • Insists on doing it their way; will take risks • Needs action and involvement • Lots of ideas on how to do something differently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes dramatics • Likes to produce creative projects • Enjoys real-life simulations and case studies • Engages in reflective thinking
Innovative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs to know why they need to learn something • Good imagination • People-oriented, likes to be affirmed, likes to talk • May be the conscience for the group • Sociable; wants everyone to be happy and win 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes to do arts and crafts • Enters into small group discussions • Enjoys role play and drama • Prefers working in a group
Common Sense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes to immediately use what they learn • Not interested in details • Likes to make choices • Wants to get involved • Good at problem solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoys crafts • Enjoys role playing involving the application of the lesson • Enjoys debates and experiments • Likes to write and plan
Analytic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes to know facts and details • Likes to have things done in the same order • Likes things organized • Likes to study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes demonstrations • Likes competitions • Likes quizzes and puzzles • Likes discussions



Attracting Children to Your Room

Sit down and take a good look at your room. Would you like to be there if you were a child? Is it warm and inviting? Is it interesting? Would it make you feel safe and comfortable or shy and nervous? Do you feel secure? Does it make learning fun? Does it convey positive spiritual messages?

It's important to assess these questions. For children to learn, they must be in a safe, comfortable, warm, and friendly environment.

Number one on the list – is your room clean and orderly? Even the smallest, darkest room in the lowest level of the church can be made attractive with light colors, cleanliness and organization.

What is the height of the illustrations, felt boards, and pictures? Sit scrunched down in a child's seat. What do you see without breaking your neck? That's what a child sees, too. Lower everything to the child's comfort level – not yours.

Are your decorations child or adult-oriented? How many messages are you trying to send simultaneously? Think carefully about what your room is saying to the children who come there on Sabbath.

Simple Discipline Techniques

If you are new to primary leadership, be prepared to be flexible from the beginning. Don't expect total silence or children only speaking when spoken to. Determine in the beginning how much noise is tolerable. Role play, crafts, and activities are going to create a certain amount of noise. Be reasonable in your limits.

As a leader you need to:

- Stay calm, cool, and collected. Keep your voice down.
- Remember that some discipline problems may be attributed to maturity level.
- Prepare a short handout of guidelines for helpers with instructions for trying situations. Encourage them to intervene rather than expecting the leader to fix the problem from in front of the group.

What if You Don't Have Your Own Sabbath School Room?

Does your class meet in a space that you need to move in and out of each week? If so, here are a few ideas to make it easier:

- Use plastic boxes that can fit in your vehicle's trunk, if possible. These are for all those handouts and other needed supplies.
- Decorate a fold-out cardboard display board to fit the season, theme, or whatever is appropriate. Keep it in your trunk with the plastic boxes.
- Use carpet squares for seats and store them in the same storage place.
- A folding tabletop felt board for interactive Bible learning for early arrivals can also sit on the floor.
- On Sabbath morning, unload the storage boxes, display board, and carpet squares, and you'll be ready to go. Use things repeatedly rather than switching often.



- Establish basic rules.
- Physical and verbal attacks are always inappropriate and should never be used as discipline or at any other time.
- Have helpers keep an eye out for potential situations and deal with them before they escalate.
- Keep the program moving and keep kids involved so you don't exhaust their attention span.

Children can be aggressive. If you have an aggressive child in your classroom, try the following:

- Act immediately by removing them from the situation as you tell them, "No, that is not acceptable. It (hurts, annoys, disrupts, etc.) the rest of the class."
- Place a gentle hand on the child who is disrupting.
- Empathize with the child. Say, "You're angry, sad, frustrated," etc.

There are many good books on the market to help you in this area. Check your local Adventist Book Center.

Ministering to Parents

By the time kids are in primary, parents no longer stay in their children's classes throughout the Sabbath School hour. However, you can still look for ways to minister to the parents of your students. Here are some ideas to consider:

- Help a parent learn how to find a few minutes a day to minister to their child spiritually. Check your local children's ministries department and **ChildMin.org** for resources.
- Encourage them to attend a Sabbath School class or small group where they can share with one another and the group and brainstorm how handle specific situations. (Be sure there's such a class available, led by a loving, accepting, grace-oriented leader.)
- Share a short, encouraging book or article.
- Encourage them to attend a class or study on Jesus and how He met people's needs.
- Plan a class they would be interested in attending during the week. Let them work out the time and place.
- Help them with parenting problems and skills. Offer parenting classes, family night out, and other events for families.

Most importantly, be sure whatever you do interests them and meets their needs. Make sure it encourages them to get through another week and helps them to learn how to rely on Jesus.



12 TIPS FOR KEEPING VOLUNTEERS

1. Start them slow—immerse them in your vision
2. Be a model—be real and transparent
3. Build trust—believe in them
4. Invest your time in them—be a coach and encourage them
5. Ask for commitment—check on them systematically
6. Set goals for growth
7. Supply the tools they need—conduct regular equipping meetings
8. Communicate on a regular basis
9. Care enough to confront
10. Ask for ideas and opinions when appropriate
11. Thank them
12. Give them someone to work with

Adapted from “Volunteers that Stick” by Jim Wideman, *Ministry Today*, Jan./Feb. 2008

Volunteers—The Key to Success

Recruiting Volunteers

- Approach the potential volunteer in an appropriate place at an appropriate time.
 - Never approach them between church services.
 - Ask when and where it would be convenient to meet.
 - If you choose to call them, ask when would be a good time.
- Approach prospective volunteers in a kind, positive manner.
- Let them know that volunteers for primary-age Sabbath School need to be able to get up and down from the floor so they can interact eye to eye with the children.
- Provide a printed job description.
- Explain the benefits of volunteering in the primary department.
- Pray with the person. They need to feel that God has called them and He will bless the work they do.
- Allow them total freedom in deciding whether to join your team.



Who Do You Recruit?

- Find members who have children's work at heart. Ask them to pray for your department.
- Select people who have had experience working with children. Ask them to pray for your search and then with a specific volunteer.
- Encourage current workers to recruit helpers who love working with children. Train them as future volunteers.
- Look for volunteers among members of the adult Sabbath School classes.
- Be creative in your search. Don't forget youth and seniors.
- Ask the nominating committee to consult the children's division leader before appointing leaders in the department.

Retaining Volunteers

Retaining volunteers doesn't happen by accident. You must plan carefully. Show workers that you care truly about their efforts.

- Develop a caring relationship with your staff/teachers. Ask how things are going and what they need.
- Remember birthdays, anniversaries, and other important events in the lives of your volunteers.
- Hold a dedication service that includes both volunteers and their prayer partners.
- Find substitute teachers who will work in an emergency so volunteers won't have to worry if they need to be absent.
- Visit volunteers at home so they know you really care. Do a kind deed for them.
- Put up a bulletin board in the hall and display pictures of volunteers.

In-service education also helps hold volunteers. People like to feel that they're growing. Here are a few suggestions:

- Remember that volunteers expect that meetings will benefit them, and want to be involved in the planning.
- Be respectful of volunteers' time by beginning on time, ending on time, and keeping it relevant.
- Use humor, energy, creative touches, and involvement.
- Begin programs with icebreaker techniques to relax those who attend.
- Make it spiritual in nature as well as educational.
- Present methods that will improve skills.



- Teach them how to meet the needs of teens.
- Retain the church's shared vision as the center of child training.

Recruiting and holding volunteers in the children's division is an all-year effort. Build a program that makes your volunteers proud, and they'll tell others. Then when recruiting time comes, those who have worked will want to stay, and others will count it a privilege to join.

Volunteer Ministry Screening

Why the need for volunteer screening?

The screening process is meant to safeguard children and youth from sexual predators and the church from litigation.

Volunteer screening gives the families in your community confidence that their children are safe with us. If a person has had a prior conviction and is still appointed to a position in a church anyway, that church could be liable for negligence. The resulting emotional, social, and financial costs to the church would be substantial.

Who Should be Screened?

Every person who fills a ministry position in the church should be screened—particularly those who volunteer to work with children or youth. For many young people, any ministry position in the church carries the weight of respect and authority. Pastors and other leaders in the church should go through the screening process first as an example to others. Teens who volunteer to teach younger children may be screened as well. Teens should never be left to work with children alone. Visit NADadventist.org/asv to begin the screening process and ChildMin.org/childrens-safety for more information about child safety.



Planning Your Budget

The budget is your ministry vision expressed in money. A budget is, at best, an estimate of the amount of money you think you will need to spend during a specific time. It is better to estimate too high than too low.

Steps to Creating Your Budget

1. Consider the needs.
 - Look at your department's goals
 - Inventory what you already have
 - Determine your additional needs
 - Consult your GraceLink teacher's guide supply list for help
 - Prioritize your immediate and long-range needs
 - Identify your categories of needs:
 - Curriculum
 - Books and other resources
 - Printing and photocopying
 - Supplies and other materials
 - Equipment and furniture
2. Discuss the budget with the children's ministries coordinator and committee.
3. If you need to reduce your budget, ask yourself these questions:
 - Can we accomplish the same goal less expensively?
 - Is this purchase vital to our ministry vision?
 - Is the timing right for this purchase or expense?
 - Have we done all we can to justify this expense?
 - Are you willing to bend on this purchase?
 - How might we raise additional money to accomplish our vision?
4. Evaluate and adjust your budget on a regular basis.



Sample Budget

Here is a sample form for computing a budget. It can be adapted easily to fit your needs. Always check what is already in the department before adding new items to the list. Also consider if anything can be donated or borrowed. Search the internet and stores for freebies. Keep your supplies organized so they can be used repeatedly. Try to build up the basic supplies recommended in the Real-Time Faith teacher's guide.

Resource Needs:

1. Adventist Book Center materials

GraceLink teacher's guides _____

GraceLink student quarterlies _____

Copies of *Primary Treasure* to take home _____

2. Supplies to be purchased

Crafts/art supplies _____

Paper products _____

Program supplies recommended
in the teacher's guide _____

3. Equipment or major additions needed _____

4. Outreach activities _____

5. Additional nurture activities _____

6. Printing and photocopying _____

7. Other _____

TOTAL _____

Permission to adapt and copy for local church use.



Building an Primary Calendar

Communication is important to the success of your primary department. Keeping everyone informed helps avoid conflict between other church programs, leaders, and parents. A monthly calendar keeps everyone informed of what is going to happen, when, and where.

When planning your calendar, consider other events in your church or conference that may impact your division. Include these in your finished calendar. Below is a sample calendar with possibilities you can adapt to fit your needs.

January Craft day	February Training seminars (both in-house and conference sponsored)	March Worldwide Day of Prayer for Children at Risk
April Screen-Free Week	May Children's church	June Camp meeting
July Family nature camp/retreat	August Children's prayer group	September Community projects, church evangelistic meetings
October Children's Sabbath	November Parenting seminar	December Holiday programs

In addition to adding your division events to the calendar, you may also want to include the lesson theme or memory verse for each week along with techniques parents can use to help their children assimilate the lesson into their lives. Be creative!

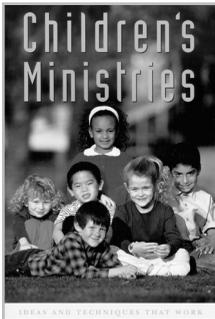
Conclusion

We hope this Quick Start Guide has provided you with a good starting point for your work in primary Sabbath School. You are part of the Master's plan! Remember that God has a plan for you and each of the children who will be touched by your ministry.



Resources

The following resources are available from AdventSource. For a complete list, visit AdventSource.org or call at 402.486.8800.

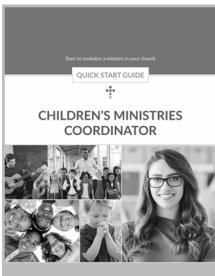


Children's Ministries Manual

Edited by Ann Calkins (AdventSource)

Discover the ages and stages of childhood learning, simple steps for leading a child to Jesus, preferred learning styles, exciting Bible learning activities, ministering to children with special needs, how to recruit and keep volunteers, and more.

Product #021992

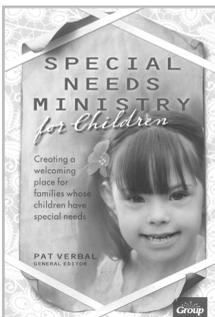


Quick Start Guide for Children's Ministries

Created by NAD Children's Ministries (AdventSource)

The children's ministries coordinator is vital to a dynamic children's ministry in your church. The Quick Start Guide is an overview of the responsibilities for the coordinator and ideas for how children's ministries can become vital in your church.

Product #026060



Special Needs Ministry for Children

By Pat Verbal (Group Publishing)

There's perhaps no better way to share and receive God's love than through a special needs ministry to children. Do you know what it takes to make these kids—and their parents—feel welcome in your church? This practical, insightful book is your guide to answering all those questions and more.

Product #043340



Children's Ministries Pocket Guide to Discipline

By Group Publishing

The pocket guide is packed with practical ways to avoid most discipline issues—plus tips for tackling any problems that do arise. These are the best-ever solutions from the front-line teachers who have mastered the art of keeping their classrooms stress-free and fun—for both kids and leaders!

Product #012007

NAD - YOUTH/CHILDREN'S MINISTRY VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

Acknowledgment Because I want the best possible environment for our children and youth to grow up in, it is important that those working with children have guidelines for conduct in order to protect both themselves and those under their care. As a ministry volunteer, I want parents and others to feel comfortable and confident with me.

My Commitment to Volunteer Ministry

As a Youth/Children's Ministry Volunteer, I will:

1. Provide appropriate adult supervision at all times for the children for whom I am responsible.
2. Have at least one other adult, eighteen (18) years of age or older, to help with the supervision of children. If I find myself in a situation where I am the only adult present, under no circumstances will I allow myself to be alone with one child (the "two-person rule"). This protects the child as well as protecting the adult from possible allegations.
3. Ask a child's permission before physically touching him/her anywhere, even when responding to an injury or problem. This is especially true for any areas that would normally be covered by a T-shirt and/or shorts. If an injury is within this area, make sure another adult works with you as care is provided.
4. Refrain from physical and verbal attacks and corporal punishment which are inappropriate behaviors and should never be used as discipline. "Time outs" or "sit-in-that-chair" may be helpful discipline methods to use with children.
5. Affirm children with appropriate touching by keeping hugs brief and "shoulder-to-shoulder" or "side-to-side." I will keep hands at (not below) the shoulder level. For small children who like to sit on laps, I will encourage them to sit next to me.
6. Provide extra care when taking small children to the restroom. I will take another adult along, or leave the door open.
7. Be aware of conducting activities in rooms that do not have an interior viewing area, or I will leave the door open during the activity to allow easy observation by others.
8. Cooperate with the volunteer screening process and complete the Volunteer Ministry Information form, as required by the church.
9. Be aware of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and aware of the legal requirements for reporting suspected cases of abuse. In addition to any legally required reporting, I agree that if I become aware of any behavior by another individual which seems abusive or inappropriate towards children I am supervising, I will report that behavior to the church pastor, elder, or directly to the Conference Treasurer's or Risk Management Director.



10. Cooperate with church leadership in conducting children and youth ministries by being a volunteer who is loving, kind, firm, and always a thoroughly professional person. Working with children and youth is not only a privilege; it is also a serious responsibility that must be approached with utmost care.
11. Participate in orientation and training programs conducted by the church.
12. Uphold the standards of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

* In the event I find it impossible to comply with the above, I will comply as closely as possible with the Code of Conduct and act in good faith for the welfare of the people involved.

Thank You for your service as a Youth/Children's Ministry Volunteer Please retain a copy of this document and keep it for reference.



Primary Sabbath School

This Quick Start Guide for Primary Sabbath School is full of important information to help you start or revitalize a ministry at your local church. This guide contains a job description, instructions for getting started, tips for maintaining a successful ministry, troubleshooting suggestions, recommended resources, and more. Whether you're new to this ministry or an experienced volunteer, this Quick Start Guide will inspire you with lots of great ideas you can immediately put to use in your local church.

Other titles in the Quick Start Guide series:

- Children's Ministries Coordinator
- Beginner Sabbath School
- Kindergarten Sabbath School
- Junior Sabbath School
- Earliteen Sabbath School

For a complete list of Quick Start Guide titles visit AdventSource.org



AdventSource

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