



*A Quick
Start*
GUIDE

CHILDREN'S
MINISTRIES
COORDINATOR

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General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

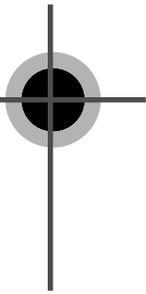
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Local Church Children's Ministries Coordinator

If you've just been invited, elected, appointed or feel a calling to serve as a local church Children's Ministries Coordinator, this Quick Start guide is for you!

What Do I Do?

As Children's Ministries Coordinator, your job is to bring together the various individuals involved in ministering to children in your church – to support them and encourage them to cooperatively develop schedules, budgets and manage supplies. According to the 2005 edition of the Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual, the Children's Ministries Coordinator:

- ✓ is a voting member of the Church Board (p 91)
- ✓ serves on the Personal Ministries Council (p 102)
- ✓ serves on the Sabbath School Council (p 104)
- ✓ may be responsible for Vacation Bible School (p 106)
- ✓ should be an individual of moral and ethical excellence (p 129)
- ✓ chairs the Children's Ministries Committee (p 143)
- ✓ is selected by the Nominating Committee (p 155)

Your church may organize ministries in different ways. In any case, your responsibility is to all the children in your congregation and community.



View complete descriptions for each of the ministries under your direction by visiting the official Children's Ministries website at www.childmin.com.

What Resources Are Available?

You can find resources for Sabbath School, Vacation Bible School, Children's Sabbath and more at www.childmin.com.

Many of your questions and needs are addressed in the Children's Ministries manual—*Children's Ministries: Ideas and Techniques that Work* (also available in Spanish and French).

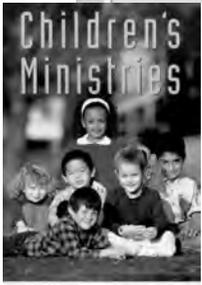
For more resources see appendix, or visit www.adventsource.org and search for "Children's Ministries".

Online Newsletter

To keep up with news about Children's Ministries, subscribe to the free quarterly Children's Leader newsletter by visiting our Children's Ministries web site. We'll keep you posted about new resources and developments.

Training

Watch for training events coming to your area. Your Conference or Union may sponsor training or there may be a national training event you want to attend. Group Publishing and other resource providers also sponsor great local training events in some areas.



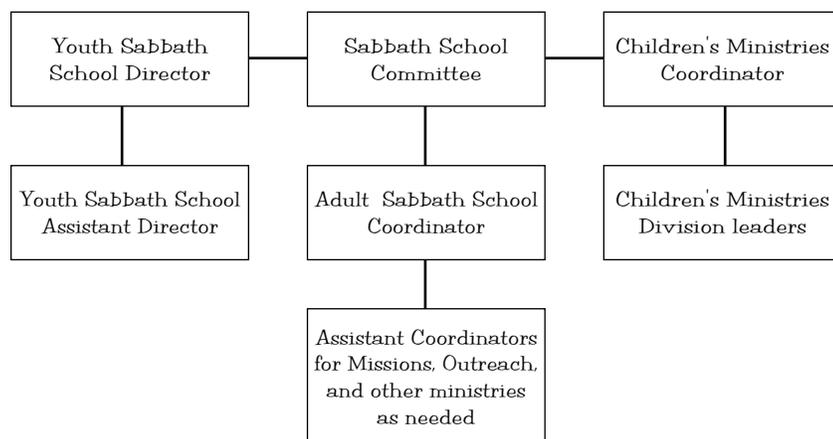
Children's Ministries Manual

How can you reach this new generation of children? This book has chapters on stages of childhood, how to lead a child to Jesus, faith development and much more. User friendly with many useful ideas and insights for working with today's children!

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, and how to recruit and keep volunteers. Features personal inventories, charts, graphs, and "disruption preventors."

Available from AdventSource
www.adventsource.org
 Catalog: #021992

Local Church Organizational Chart





Duties of the Children's Ministries Coordinator

Mission

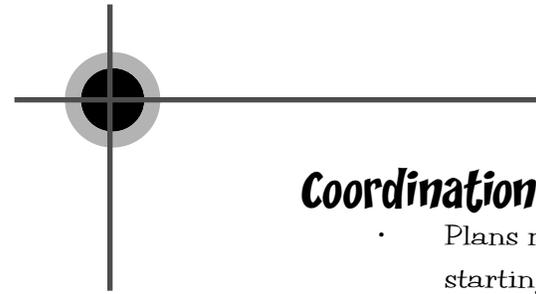
The mission of children's ministries is to lead children, ages birth through age 13, into a loving, serving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Description

- Responsible to the Church Board.
- Relates closely with the Sabbath School Council, Children's Sabbath School division teams, the VBS team and all other Children's Ministries teams.
- Ministry mission: to coordinate all ministries for children; to recruit, screen, equip and support children's leaders.
- Liaison to the local conference for sharing information and data.

Leadership Role Includes:

- Chairs the Children's Ministries Committee, made up of children's Sabbath School division leaders, VBS leader, Children's Church leader and other leaders of ministries for children.
- Represents the Children's Ministries Committee on both the Sabbath School Council and the Church Board.
- Works with children's leaders to develop a budget for each of their ministries, with a line item for each; presents the budget to the church treasurer and the Church Board.
- Takes an active interest in the strategic planning of the pastor and/or the Church Board.
- Organizes a special program for Children's Sabbath, the first Sabbath of October.
- Distributes information and communications from the conference to all children's leaders; collects information for reports and sends them to the conference.
- Oversees a permanent file of all children, with pertinent information both of church children and guests to outreach programs; shares the student files with ministry leaders who help update and maintain the records.
- Demonstrates a concern for child safety by personally completing the volunteer ministry information form and by allowing no person to work with children who has not already filled out the form and been approved; insists that guidelines for volunteers and caregivers be followed.



Coordination of Children's Ministries

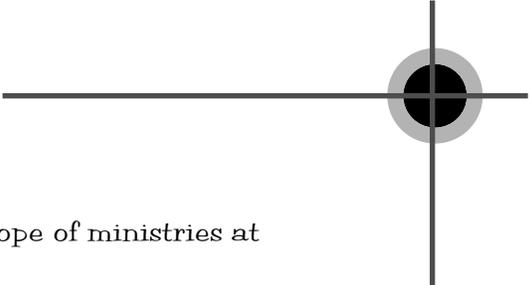
- Plans new programs as church resources permit, assigning both starting and ending dates for each.
- Develops with the Children's Ministries Committee a coordinated calendar for Children's Ministries events for the entire year, distributing it to every family and leader in the church.
- Coordinates the ministries to children so that leaders see their ministry as part of a larger team, all working together for the good of the church's children.
- Works with ministry leaders to clarify the goals of each ministry.
- In the absence of a children's pastor, works with the pastor in events such as baby dedications and baptisms of children.
- Prepares/submits statistical reports for the conference Children's Ministries and/or the division director.

Managing Volunteers in Children's Ministries

- Recruits volunteers, such as leaders, assistant leaders, teachers and support staff for the various ministries; has prospective volunteers fill out the volunteer ministry information form.
- With ministry leaders, screens volunteers by evaluating written applications and interviewing prospective volunteers.
- Submits the returned Volunteer Information Forms to the volunteer screening committee for approval.
- Works with the nominating committee to fill positions in children's ministries.
- Equips volunteers by encouraging them to attend conference training events and complete Children's Ministries certification; sees that the church provides adequate resources, materials and equipment.
- Encourages ministry leaders to mentor and lead their team members.
- Mentors a promising leader into the role of Children's Ministries Coordinator.

Selecting Children's Curriculum

- Encourages ministry leaders to use Seventh-day Adventist materials produced by the General Conference, where available.
- Reviews and evaluates support resources for content and general suitability.
- Makes selections in consultation with the ministry leader, and presents the selection for a vote of the Children's Ministries Committee and/or the Church Board.



Time Commitment

Approximately 3 hours per week, depending on the scope of ministries at your church.

Length of Commitment

One or two years, depending on the practice of the local church.

Training

- Basic Children's Ministries certification (strongly recommended).
- Advanced Children's Ministries certification (on-going).
- Leadership training (on-going).
- Volunteer management seminar (recommended).

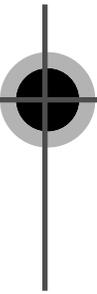
Qualifications

A Commitment To:

- Jesus Christ and to a growing personal relationship with Him.
- Christ-centered ministry to children.
- The Seventh-day Adventist Church and to its beliefs.
- A balanced Christian lifestyle.
- Teamwork.
- Cooperative ministry under the leadership of the pastor and Church Board.
- Personal growth and learning; continually upgrading methods and skills.

Special Qualifications:

- An attitude of servant leadership.
- A passion for children and Children's Ministries.
- Leadership experience in a ministry to children.



Top 10 Things the Children's Ministries Coordinator Should Do

1. Read this booklet and join Adventist Children's Ministries Association (ACMA). See appendix for more information or visit acma-online.org.
2. Get an overall picture of Children's Ministries in your church—research what's happening; talk to leaders and former leaders; take the "How Family Friendly is MY Church" quiz online at www.family-friendlychurch.com.
3. Discover what needs have not yet been met; talk to ministry leaders, teachers, parents and members.
4. Talk to the pastor:
 - Ask for the pastor's vision for your church
 - Report what you have found so far
 - Promise to figure out how Children's Ministries can support this mission/vision
 - Ask for representation on committees and boards (as specified in the Church Manual)
5. Call the Children's Ministries Committee together:
 - Assess the needs of Children's Ministries in your church
 - Have the committee members take the "How Family Friendly is MY Church" quiz
 - Set the calendar for the year
 - Print a copy for every family
 - Present budget requests/needs
 - Share the vision and pledge your support
6. Take inventory of supplies.
7. Talk to the church treasurer and find out what budget is already available for your ministries. (Investigate the possibility of a "lamb's offering" for Children's Ministries if none exists.)
8. Take the calendar and budget to the Church Board.
9. Start a program of prayer warriors who are paired with each leader/teacher.
10. Plan for change — don't announce something until you have planned it carefully and have the support of the Children's Ministries Committee.

Children's Ministries Calendar

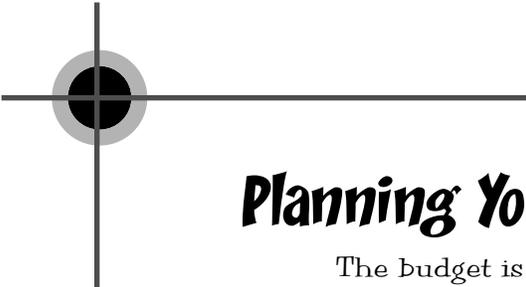
The Children's Ministries Committee should plan a yearly calendar of events to include items such as:

January	February	March
April ♦ TV Turnoff Week ♦ Easter	May ♦ Mother's Day	June ♦ Campmeeting ♦ Father's Day
July ♦ Vacation Bible School	August	September
October ♦ Children's Sabbath	November ♦ Thanksgiving	December ♦ Christmas

Other events to include in your calendar:

- ♦ Community Projects
- ♦ Children's Nature Camp/Retreat
- ♦ Children's Prayer Group
- ♦ Craft Day
- ♦ Parenting Seminar
- ♦ Training Seminars for Leaders and Staff
- ♦ Children's Church monthly or bi-monthly

See page 45 for a photocopiable yearly calendar.



Planning Your Budget

The budget is your ministry vision expressed in money. A budget is, at best, simply an estimate as to the amount of money you think you will 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 each department's goals
- What worked or did not work last year?
- Consider the financial conditions of each department
- Can you afford "new ideas"?
- When possible, set figures reasonably high

2. Identify your categories.

- Books and other resources
- Printing and photocopying
- Supplies and other materials
 - a.) Equipment
 - b.) Programs

3. Evaluate the past budgets of the department.

- Did you accomplish all the plans as budgeted?
- Were there areas that require a carry-over into the new year?

4. Set your figures.

- Prioritize each department's needs and programs.
- Be a visionary and set bigger budgets for your programs.

5. Itemize and justify your figures.

6. Discuss the budget with the appropriate person/committee.

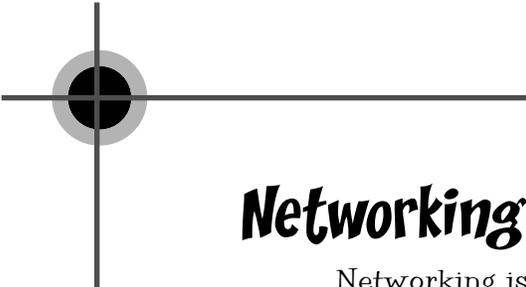
7. If the Budget Committee returns the budget to you with the recommendation to reduce the bottom line, you will need to put each category and figure through a rigorous examination. For every figure, ask yourself these questions:

- 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?
- Does past experience support such a purchase?
- Are we willing to bend on this purchase?
- How might we raise the money elsewhere to accomplish our vision?

8. Evaluate and adjust your budget on a regular basis.

Budget Worksheet for Children's Ministries

Ministry Area		Yearly Budget Amount
Sabbath School:	Weekly papers & quarterlies	
	Division operation	
	Beginner	
	Kindergarten	
	Primary	
	Juniors	
	Earliteens	
Nurture Activities	Retreats	
	Children's Sabbath	
	Easter drama	
	Christmas play	
	Teacher training seminars	
	Children's Church	
Outreach Activities	Crafts day	
	Community project	
	Neighborhood Bible clubs	
	Vacation Bible School	
Miscellaneous Ideas: Baby dedication baskets, Children's devotional books, Mother's Day flowers, Leader appreciation gifts, etc		
Total Children's Ministries Budget:		
	Sabbath School	
	Nurture activities	
	Outreach activities	
	Equipment	
	Miscellaneous	
TOTAL BUDGET		



Networking Know How

Networking is essential in today's work world, especially in Children's Ministries. Many of us work in "isolated" areas, or are relatively new to Children's Ministries and need support, ideas and direction. Others have been doing this for years, but may need a fresh look, new ideas and motivation. We all can benefit from the support of a network.

The way you present yourself to others affects your opportunities to create a sound network. If others perceive you as effective, organized, supportive and on-the-ball, they are more likely to take notice of you and be willing to offer their support.

"Great! So tell me how to do it," you may say.

Everyone networks differently, yet there are certain universal principles.

Excel

Do well at what you do. It's not 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.

Nurture

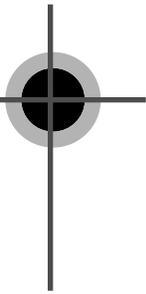
Be supportive to others. Even self-motivated people are encouraged and spurred on by a supportive atmosphere. Under such conditions people are also more likely to open up and share ideas.

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 – sharing ideas, solutions and support. Expand your network to include coworkers, church members, neighbors and employees of companies where you do business.

Be Visible

Join and participate in various groups who share your interest. Do you belong to ACMA? (see p. 36 for more information) How about local community groups? Seek out and join other people with similar interests and needs.



Personalize

Learn other people's unique qualities. When you meet people, 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. It also makes it easier for them to relate to you.

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 in if you want to take out.



Recruiting and Keeping Volunteers

Recruiting Volunteers

- Keep a viable relationship with current workers to create a friendly atmosphere.
- Approach prospective volunteers in a kindly, positive manner.
- Allow them total freedom in the decision to join your team.
- Provide a printed job description.
- Explain the benefits of volunteering with Children's Ministries.

Lay a foundation for volunteer service by creating an atmosphere where volunteers feel part of a successful program.

They need to feel that God will bless in the work they do.

Some ways to lay this groundwork are:

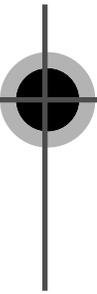
1. Find members who have children's work at heart. Ask them to pray for Children's Ministries.
2. Select people who have had experience working with children. Ask them to pray for and with a specific volunteer.

Recruiting Volunteers For Ministry the High Impact Way
 This invaluable DVD resource teaches you the in's and out's of making the most of your ministry with volunteers. Learn about the eight most common mistakes in recruiting volunteers, how to craft your message, how to develop a recruiting strategy and much more.

People want to volunteer!
 Now you can find out how to connect people with needs for a successful partnership that benefits everyone!

Available from **AdventSource**
www.adventsource.org
 Catalog: #416770



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3. Hold a dedication service that includes both volunteers and their prayer partners.
 4. Explain to volunteers that honor in service pays greater rewards than cash wages – especially if you are ministering where you have been gifted by God.
 5. Encourage current workers to recruit helpers who love working with children. Groom and mentor them.
 6. Inspire adult Sabbath School classes to adopt or sponsor "missionaries" to the children's division.
 7. Adult classes can pray for, affirm and encourage children. A great idea is to remember each child's birthday.
 8. Ask the nominating committee to consult you and the children's division leader before appointing people to their ministry.

Retaining Volunteers

Retaining volunteers doesn't happen by accident. You must plan carefully. Show workers that you care about their efforts. You can do this in several ways:

1. Stop by a classroom. Ask how things are going and what needs they have.
2. Alert the church communications secretary of division events to be mentioned in the church newsletter and/or community newspaper.
3. Find substitute leaders and teachers who will work in an emergency so volunteers won't have to worry if they need to be absent.
4. Feature each children's division during the church service once or twice a year. Volunteers feel encouraged when they realize that the church members know what they are doing.
5. Visit the volunteers at home so they know you really care.
6. 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 for division meetings:

- Volunteers expect that meetings will benefit them: , involve them in the planning.
- Humor, energy and creative touches guarantee that volunteers won't miss meetings.
- Begin programs with ice-breaker techniques to relax those who attend.
- Make the event spiritual in nature.
- Seek to increase effectiveness and satisfaction in the volunteer's work.

- Present methods that will improve skills.
- Teach how to meet the needs of children.
- Retain the church's shared vision as the center of your ministry.

In-services can occur as one big event each year, or at regularly scheduled times. But if meetings are to be successful you'll need to consider the time, place and location. Take into account your workers' schedules and places of residence when choosing a meeting place. To get a good turnout you need to advertise and have a central attraction – a guest speaker, film or potluck.

Remember that many attendees have children, so arranging on-site child care is helpful. (Usually teenagers will volunteer, or you can finance it by taking an offering.)

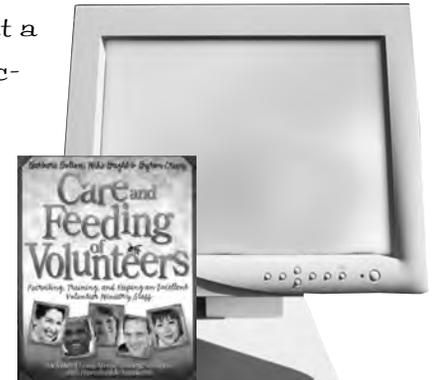
Keeping volunteers will be easier if the Church Board supports the children's divisions. Find church leaders who will act as mentors for one division or ministry. Each person can keep up with leaders' needs and present them to the board. Such mentors can also help by encouraging volunteers and affirming them in their work.

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

Guidelines for Volunteers and Caregivers

Because our society is filled with pain, problems, and litigation caused by improper conduct of adults working with children and youth, it is imperative that those working with children at church have meaningful guidelines for conduct – to protect both themselves and those under their care. As a ministry volunteer, you want parents and others to feel comfortable and confident with you. Here are some practical guidelines:

1. Never leave a child or group of children for whom you are responsible unattended. Provide adequate supervision at all times, no matter what.

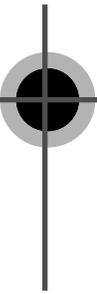


The Care and Feeding of Volunteers

This book is a step-by-step, discipleship-minded handbook that focuses on biblical principles of spiritual growth, accountability, encouragement, and excellence.

This book seeks to counter the widely used “warm body” method of recruitment and volunteer development by helping ministry personnel model excellence in their ministry to their volunteers who in turn will develop and model excellence to the people in their ministries.

Available from **AdventSource**
www.adventsource.org
 Catalog: #010370

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2. Never be the only adult serving as a caregiver. Always have at least one other person 18 or older with or near you.
 3. Always ask a person's permission before touching him/her anywhere, even when responding to an injury or problem. This is especially true for any area 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 you provide care.
 4. Physical and verbal attacks are inappropriate and should never be used as discipline. "Time out" or "sit-in-that-chair" may be helpful methods with children.
 5. Kids need to be touched appropriately. However, keep hugs brief and "shoulder-to-shoulder" or "side-to-side." Always keep your hands at or above the shoulder level. A caregiver kiss is to the forehead or cheek only. For small children who like to sit on laps, encourage them to sit next to you.
 6. When taking small children to the bathroom take another adult along or leave the door open.

Be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse; be aware of the legal requirements in your locality for reporting child abuse. In nearly all places, a caregiver can be held legally responsible for failing to report suspected or actual child abuse. Working with children and youth at church is not only a privilege it is also a deep responsibility that must be handled with utmost care. Adventist Risk Management, Inc. and the North American Division Secretariat outline the following rules for leaders. These serve as a protection to you and your ministry against charges of abuse:

The volunteer screening rule: All volunteers must complete the screening process described on the Volunteer Ministry Information Form (see appendix or go to www.childmin.org).

The six-month rule: Do not recruit a volunteer who has been a church member for less than six months.

The two-person rule: Have at least two adults present at all times.

The glass window rule: If the door to a classroom does not have glass in or around it, the door should be left open so that the teacher is in full view.

Volunteer Ministry Screening

Why the need for Volunteer Screening?

Because of our society's abuse and litigation, churches and other service organizations are urged to screen all volunteers. The screening process is meant to safeguard children and youth from sexual predators and the church from litigation.

Knowing that the church has this process in place gives community families confidence that their children are safe with us. If a person has had a prior conviction and yet is appointed to a position in a church, that church could be liable for negligence. The resulting emotional, publicity and financial costs to the church would be substantial.

What is Volunteer Ministry Screening?

Volunteer Ministry Screening is a process of gathering information about prospective volunteers through the use of a 2-page Volunteer Ministry Information Form (VMIF) that includes the following:

- ✓ 2 pages of general information questions
- ✓ Screening questions and permission to do a criminal record check
- ✓ A set of guidelines that volunteers agree to abide by

Who is screened?

Every person who fills a ministry position in the church needs to 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 volunteer to fill out the forms as an example to others. Teens who volunteer to teach younger children may be screened as well.

Whether screened or not, teens should never be left to work with children alone.



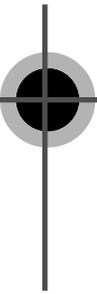
Better Safe than Sued

Here's information on topics like insurance, screening volunteers, proper safety planning, games, retreats, and more. You'll also get sample medical release forms, vehicle information forms, and publicity photo release forms.

Available from **AdventSource**

www.adventsource.org

Catalog: #012010



The Process for Screening Volunteers

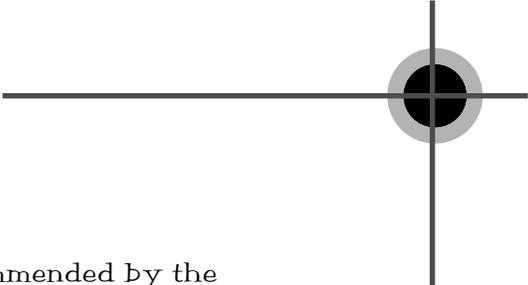
The screening stage begins with receiving the completed VMIF and proceeds as follows:

1. Check that the required signatures are in place and make a copy of the front page of the VMIF form for the applicant.
2. Make certain that the applicant's name does not appear on a published list of registered sex offenders for your state, available for most states at www.sexualpredators.com. (Also check listings for surrounding states and states of previous residence.)
3. Contact all individuals listed as references, asking the questions found on the **Reference Interview** sheet.
4. Interview the applicant in person at a time when at least three members of the committee can be present, covering questions provided on the **Screening Interview** sheet. Record notes of the interview on the sheet.
5. Photocopy both pages of the VMIF for the leader of the ministry in which the applicant will serve.
6. Check that notes and backup materials are attached to the application form and filed in a locked cabinet in the church office.

The final step in volunteer screening, an analysis of the applicant's general information, is done by the leader of the ministry for which the applicant is being considered. For instance, the primary Sabbath School leader would review the application for a primary teacher. This step involves checking the information for the seven C's: Calling, Character, Chemistry, Competence, Congruence, Commitment and Condition.

Who does the screening?

The Volunteer Screening Committee conducts all but the last step of the screening process. This team consists of three exemplary church members appointed by the Church Board, and is chaired by the pastor. Committee members should be people (already passed through the screening process) who are trusted for their good judgment and ability to keep confidence. The committee meets on an as-needed basis; all discussion and decisions of the committee are kept completely confidential. They either approve or disapprove the candidate, and mark their decision at the top of the front page of the VMIF.



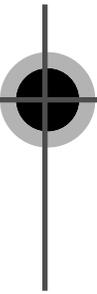
Implications of screening

The following will become practice in churches:

1. No person may serve as a volunteer until recommended by the Volunteer Screening Committee.
2. As a rule, members should attend for six months before being asked to volunteer for ministry (especially a ministry that works with children).
3. Volunteer Screening Committee members, when questioned about the status of a volunteer, may reveal only whether the person was "recommended," "not recommended," or "recommended with conditions noted."
4. The committee will not approve a known sex offender for church office.

The rights of volunteers

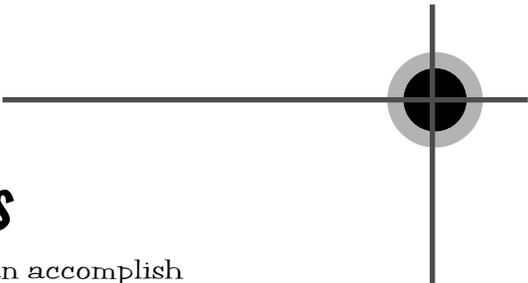
1. Any person refusing to participate in the screening process or to give permission for a background check forfeits the right to work as a volunteer with children at church.
2. If the committee withholds approval, an applicant may request a further hearing before the screening committee plus two elders.
3. A previous offense by a sex offender means that person has permanently relinquished his/her right to work in any ministry for children or youth.
4. If an applicant indicates a previous false accusation of improper conduct, the committee will conduct a criminal record check. If the record check discloses no conviction and if, after contacting people from the church concerned, the committee feels confident that the accusation had no basis, they may approve the application.



Guidelines for Choosing Curriculum

As you examine materials produced by the many other fine publishers for use as supplementary material either in your training or for personal use, consider the following questions. If you cannot answer the questions positively, you will either need to make adaptations or evaluate other available materials. There are so many fine materials on the market, it is unnecessary to use inferior ones.

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



Children's Programs and Activities

As you begin to envision what Children's Ministries can accomplish through God's power, it is essential to plan effective programs for children. However, do not over plan! Start out slowly and meaningfully. It is best to strengthen existing programs and add new ones as the need arises, keeping in mind the availability of funds and volunteer help.

Programs that Reach Children within the Church

Children's Sabbath School

Purpose:

To provide religious education for children that helps them build a loving, serving relationship with Jesus.

Description:

A total hour Sabbath School program based on a weekly Bible lesson. Children are involved in a variety of activities that appeal to all learning styles.

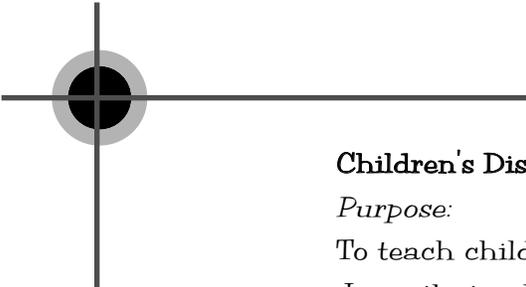
Unique features:

This is the only ministry that reaches all Adventist children. It provides a great opportunity to study the Bible with the children and help them relate these truths to everyday life. Children's Ministries Coordinators work with division leaders to make sure that Sabbath Schools are age-appropriate.

Resources:

Children's Ministries: Ideas and Techniques that Work (AdventSource)

GraceLink Curriculum Resource for Teachers (Review and Herald)



Children's Discipleship

Purpose:

To teach children and their families how to maintain a daily walk with Jesus that will become a lifetime practice for them.

Description:

Small group Bible lessons for children and their parents — 10 for parents, followed by 42 for children and their families.

Unique features:

Children learn to make a lifelong commitment to Jesus, to explore the meaning of Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, and learn how to share their beliefs with others.

Resources:

Footprints in the Sand: Footprints for Parents & Mentors (AdventSource)

Footprints in the Sand: Footprints for Kids (AdventSource)

Children's Church

Purpose:

To provide children with the opportunity to worship in an age-appropriate setting, learning at their level of understanding, and participating in worship.

Description:

Children's Church begins at the same time as adult church. It is usually for ages 2-8. Children's Church is scheduled according to the needs of each church, usually once or twice a month. It incorporates all the elements of regular worship: praise, prayer, sharing or testimony, studying the Word, a children's sermon, and drama or skits that apply Scripture to everyday life.

Unique features:

Children are given opportunities to participate in worship and to understand the elements of worship.

Resources:

101 Ideas for Children's Church by Jolene Roehlkepartain (Group)

Children's Church: Responding to God's Love (AdventSource)

Children's Sermons: Using the 5 Senses to Tell God's Story, by Philip D. Schroeder (Abingdon Press)



Children's Prayer Meeting

Purpose:

To involve children in a meaningful prayer experience.

Description:

A short talk based on scripture to strengthen the children's belief in and understanding of prayer. It includes songs, prayers, and an activity or craft. Children can also meet in a home instead of the church.

Unique features:

It offers children a special opportunity for spiritual growth and fellowship with other peers.

Resources:

Forever Stories Funpack (Review and Herald)

52 Ways to Teach Children to Pray (Rainbow Books)

100 Creative Prayer Ideas for Kids by Karen Holford (Pacific Press)

Children's devotional books; Week of Prayer children's devotionals
(www.childmin.org)

Children's Baptismal Class

Purpose:

To prepare children who have expressed a desire to be baptized.

Description:

The children study the fundamental beliefs of Christianity and the Seventh-day Adventist Church to understand their relationship and responsibilities to God and to the community of believers.

Unique features:

Children's baptismal lessons are presented on a child's level of understanding. They can take as long as they need in preparation for baptism.

Resources:

"It's My Choice" Baptismal Guide by Steve Case (Review & Herald)

Christ Wise: Discipleship Guide for Juniors by Troy Fitzgerald
(Review & Herald)

Footprints in the Sand: Footprints for Kids lessons 10 - 26 (AdventSource)



Children's Choir

Purpose:

To give children an experience of worship through music and to train them in singing and in understanding music as a ministry outreach.

Description:

A musical group for kids that performs in churches as well as in the community. It can be a long-term or a short-term project in preparation for Easter, Christmas, or Children's Sabbath. Community children can be invited to join the choir and their parents invited to the performance. Choir devotionals, the music itself, the performance, and the relationships formed can all be a great witness.

Unique features:

This ministry brings together church school, public school, and community children. It provides a great opportunity to teach children quality music and influence their musical tastes.

Children's Sabbath

Purpose:

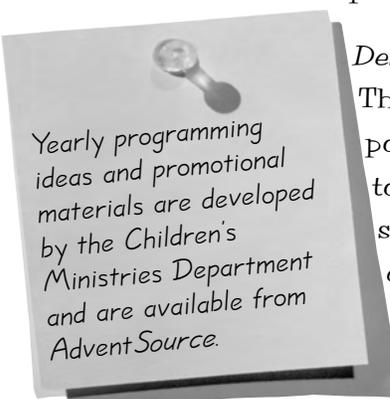
To provide children with the opportunity to use their gifts and talents by participating in the worship service.

Description:

This is a special yearly program on the first Sabbath in October (if possible) to promote awareness of children's needs and our responsibility to meeting their needs as a church. Children participate in the worship service by praying, reading Scripture, leading song service, preaching, collecting offering, and doing special music.

Unique features:

This special program provides a great opportunity to train children as leaders in the church. Children feel included as members of the church by being involved.



Yearly programming ideas and promotional materials are developed by the Children's Ministries Department and are available from AdventSource.



Children's Retreat

Purpose:

To provide spiritual evangelism and nurture for children in a camp setting.

Description:

Children get together for 2-3 days at a campsite or a retreat center for interactive activities that encourage spiritual, physical, social, and mental growth. A specific theme is chosen and the program is then planned around this theme. Programs can include stewardship, Adventist heritage, Bible-time-experiences, and Bible heroes.

Unique features:

Offers weekday programming as well as Sabbath programs. Children are given opportunities to develop their leadership as well as their spiritual, physical, and social skills.

Resources:

Jesus, Then and Now (AdventSource)

Children's Evangelistic Meeting

Purpose:

To help children make a commitment to Jesus, and to understand the plan of salvation and the fundamental beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists.

Description:

A series of meetings for children that present truths in an age-appropriate way while parents are attending the adult evangelistic meeting. The programs include Bible stories and doctrine, memory verses, songs, prayers, activities, and crafts.

Unique features:

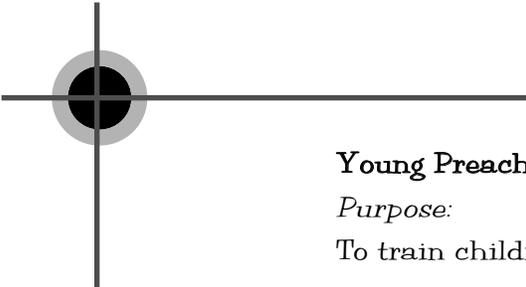
Presents a concentrated study of the plan of salvation and the distinctive beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists on the level of the children.

Resources:

Bible Treasures by Aileen Sox (Pacific Press)

Forever Stories Funpack ages 4-11 (Review and Herald)

Come Meet Jesus-ages 8-11 (Review and Herald)



Young Preacher's Club

Purpose:

To train children who have the gift of preaching to preach God's Word.

Description:

Children who have an interest in preaching join this club, which meets once or twice a week. They receive training in sermon preparation, delivery and other public speaking skills. After several months of training, the child preachers get to practice these skills in real settings such as worship service, evangelistic meetings, children's church, etc.

Unique features:

Children get to be trained as young preachers when they have an interest and the gift of preaching. There is also the opportunity to fellowship and work with their peers in a great spiritual experience.

Children's Music Festival

Purpose:

To give children the opportunity to use their musical talents in areas of singing, playing instruments, participating in musical mimes, etc.

Description:

Children gather for a day of music extravaganza. Programs include exhibitions and short demonstrations of musical instruments, mimes, choral works, etc. followed by musical performances of the children. Community children can be invited to join the festival.

Unique features:

This ministry brings together children with various musical talents and abilities as they use these gifts for praise and appreciation. It provides a great opportunity for children to learn quality music and how they can reach out through music ministry.



Children's Nature Camp

Purpose:

To inspire and lead children into energized, enjoyable appreciation of the natural world.

Description:

Get-away to a camp or place out in nature for a couple of days where children participate in nature activities that will uplift, motivate, and inspire them to appreciate the Creator God.

Unique features:

Children get the opportunity to explore the natural world through fun activities, games, video presentations, and nature study. This is a great time for group dynamics and bonding.

Resources:

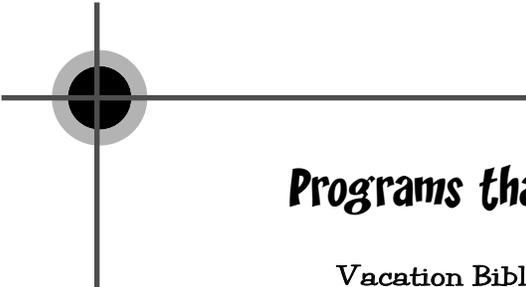
Sharing Nature with Children I and II by Joseph Cornell (Dawn Publications)

A Family Guide to Sabbath Nature Activities by Eileen Lantry (Pacific Press)

Four Seasons...Five Senses; 52 Weeks with Nature by Thais Randall Baer (Pacific Press)

Other Programs:

Children's health fair; stewardship camp; children's Bible camp; weekly Bible classes for children not attending Adventist schools; week of prayer; children's story at worship; children's small groups.



Programs that Reach Community Children

Vacation Bible School

Purpose:

To reach out to children in the community and lead them to Jesus.

Description:

Vacation Bible School (VBS) is the most popular community outreach program. It is generally held during the summer vacation time, lasting 5-10 days. It can start in the morning from 9:00 to 12:00 or any other time suitable to the needs of the community. The program involves a general session, Bible stories, crafts, and games. Teens can be great helpers here.

Unique features:

Children in the church are given the opportunity to meet with children in the community, and they learn how to be friends to these visitors.

Resources:

Friends Forever (AdventSource) *Jesus' Kids in the Kitchen* (AdventSource)

Amazing Creation Station (AdventSource)

Lava Lava Island (Review and Herald)

Check with your Adventist Book Center to see what their program is for next year

Neighborhood Bible Club

Purpose:

To continue as a follow-up from VBS.

Description:

This is a 1-2 hour program of Bible stories, songs, crafts, and games that could be conducted in a home, car porch, or backyard. A family of the church can volunteer to host the Bible Club and invite the children who have attended VBS as well as others.

Unique features:

It's a wonderful family outreach project for kids who have attended VBS. Encourage them to invite their community friends.

Resources:

Forever Stories Funpack (Review and Herald)



Play Groups

Purpose:

To reach out to young mothers in the community and introduce them to God.

Description:

Invite mothers with small children to bring them to the church for play and socialization. They will get to meet with other young mothers of the church, giving them an opportunity to form friendships and network with each other. This program can be conducted in a large room where there is space for toy cars, a jungle gym and other activities. Provide refreshments for mothers and children. Later, these mothers can be invited to parenting classes, small groups, etc.

Unique features:

It offers young mothers some time to get away from the house to meet other mothers in the community. There is time to chat over refreshments as they share parenting tips and issues.

Resources:

Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) (Group Publishing)

Craft Weekend

Purpose:

To involve kids in fun activities by learning and making a variety of crafts.

Description:

Children in the community are invited to participate in a fun activity of creative craft making. This program can be conducted on a Sunday morning from 9:00 to 12:00 or at a time most convenient for parents to bring their children. Getting acquainted with the children and their parents is essential for building better relationships.

Unique features:

Children are given opportunities to learn new crafts and make new friends. It is another opportunity to know parents in the community.

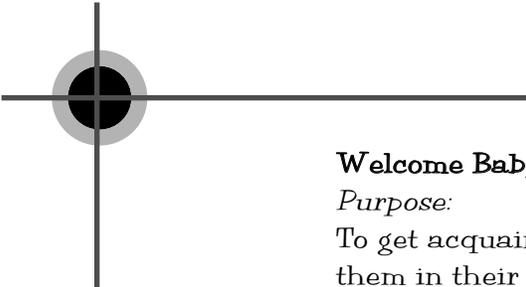
Resources:

Encyclopedia of Bible Crafts for Children (Group Publishing)

Bible Story Crafts and Projects Children Love (Group Publishing)

Creative Can-do Crafts by Lois Keffer (Group Publishing)

Creative Bible Learning Activities for Primarys (AdventSource)



Welcome Baby

Purpose:

To get acquainted with new mothers in the neighborhood and to support them in their early months of motherhood.

Description:

Women of the church get together to visit mothers who have new babies. They could be friends, relatives, or neighbors of the church women. They bring food, gifts for the baby, and materials on childcare for the new mother to read.

Unique features:

This is an excellent outreach program for new mothers who need encouragement and support in the early months. Good friendships established can lead to further witnessing opportunities.

Resources:

Welcome Baby Program by Kay Kuzma (AdventSource)

Mobile Library Ministry

Purpose:

To reach out to the children in the community and introduce them to Jesus through books and stories.

Description:

Each week the mobile van library travels to specific rural towns to provide the children with books and other Bible story materials. Each child can borrow one or two books for a week and exchange them for other books when the van returns the following week. The mobile library also offers a puppet show, a Bible story and songs for children.

Unique features:

This is an appealing outreach program for children in the outlying villages where they have little access to books and materials. It opens up avenues of meeting the children's needs as well as giving them an opportunity to learn about the Bible and the gospel. In many cases, parents are also attracted to this mobile library.

Resources:

Visit www.adventistbookcenter.com to find children's stories published by Pacific Press and Review and Herald and available from your Adventist Book Center.



Rainbows

Purpose:

To provide an effective intervention for grieving children so that they understand their emotions and how to process them.

Description:

The Rainbows program is one of small group, peer support.; Studies show that peer support groups can prove just as effective as counseling for most children. Children with severe emotional problems will be referred to a counselor. To start a Rainbows program, churches need a team of trained facilitators and a coordinator, and a place where groups can meet separately. Rainbows is a non-denominational program with great name recognition in North America. Churches offering Rainbows have a wonderful opportunity to minister to grieving families in society as a whole.

Unique features:

Facilitators see the difference that their intervention can bring to children; grateful families become friends of the church. This program provides an entering wedge for the church that cares enough to stay in touch.

Resources:

The Rainbows organization provides all the materials needed in their start up kit. The kit includes the consumables for 25 children. These are the only things to be replaced in subsequent years and cost about \$10 per child. Go to www.rainbows.org for more information about Rainbows International and to get started through them. Or, go to www.Childmin.com for information about Adventist training opportunities and support and starting up through them.

Summer Bible Studies

Purpose:

To provide an opportunity for children to learn specific Bible lessons.

Description:

The focus is on active learning in special locations that relate to the Bible topics.

Unique features:

Children experience the Bible lessons in real life situations. They sit at the beach and review the Red Sea experience; tour a courtroom and study God's justice; walk in a wheat field and explore the parable of the wheat and the weeds. Children create project-oriented Bible study programs, such as developing a Creation museum after a study of Genesis featuring fossils, bones, and dinosaur replicas.

Other Programs:

Puppet ministry; community story hour; radio programs.



Baptismal Guidelines for Children

What response do we give children when they ask to be baptized? What resources do we use to get them ready?

"While there is no stated age for baptism, it is recommended that very young children who express a desire to be baptized should be encouraged and entered into an instruction program that may lead to baptism." The Church Manual, p. 29

Ellen G. White also recognizes that children do make serious decisions for baptism. She counsels the church in *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 169 that:

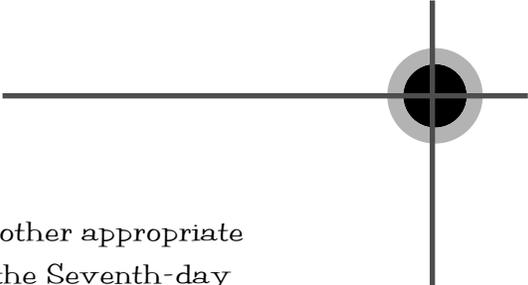
"Children of eight, ten or twelve years, are old enough to be addressed on the subject of personal religion. Do not teach your children with reference to some future period when they shall be old enough to repent and believe the truth. If properly instructed, very young children may have correct views of their state as sinners, and of the way of salvation through Christ."

Linda Koh of the General Conference Children's Ministries Department advises:

"When a child makes a decision to become a follower of Christ, the Children's Ministries Coordinator should encourage the church leadership to arrange a service of Affirmation of Faith for that child. Such a ceremony helps to affirm the child's decision and shows that the congregation rejoices with him/her for making such a commitment."

Noelene Johnsson of the North American Division Children's Ministries department adds:

"We must not in any way put off baptism for small children who insist that they want to be baptized. Instead, begin a series of Bible Studies that may progress for a year or two. The first series may teach Adventist beliefs through Bible stories. Follow up with Footprints in the Sand: Footprints for Kids."



Baptismal Bible Study

Select and use a child's baptismal study guide, or any other appropriate Bible study material for children that is approved by the Seventh-day Adventist church. The following study guides are recommended:

Bible Treasures edited by Aileen Sox (Pacific Press) 2004

ChristWise: Discipleship Guide for Juniors by Troy Fitzgerald
(Review & Herald) 2002

ChristWise: Discipleship Guide for Teens by Troy Fitzgerald
(Review & Herald) 2002

It's My Choice by Steve Case (Review & Herald) 1996

Baptismal Vows

After the child has completed the Bible study and is ready to become a church member, his or her request for baptism should be presented to the Church Board. On the day of baptism when the child will be examined publicly, ask the pastor to use the "Simplified Baptismal Vows". These may be found at www.childmin.com.

Children's Simplified Seventh-day Adventist Baptismal Lessons

Adapted by Pastor Victoria Harrison and Noelene Johnsson

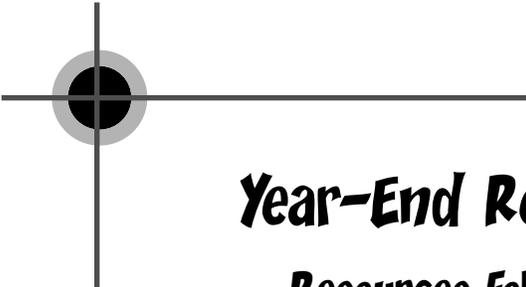
Introduction:

When talking to small children we must use simple language and concrete illustrations. In the left column below are listed the simplified vows, in order—the belief. On the right are listed Bible stories that the children already know and that teach the beliefs. Say: Remember the story about...(give them the general idea of the story). Then explain what the story tells us about the belief. At their baptism, you can choose whether or not to read these vows.

Vows	Bible Stories
I believe in God the Father, in His Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit, and that they have always been and always will be.	<i>Lesson 1</i> Trinity explained by a 3 strand cord. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The baptism of Jesus when all were present • Father, just like Jesus • Spirit called Comforter
I believe God created the world and everything in it, including the first two people, in six real days -- and that I too am created by God.	<i>Lesson 2</i> Creation Story
I believe God set apart the seventh day as holy time, a Sabbath to remind me that He is Creator and that He wants to spend time with me.	<i>Lesson 3</i> Creation of Sabbath <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus and the Sabbath
I accept the death of Jesus on the cross to save me from sin; I believe that He rose again and that He is now in heaven preparing a special home for me.	<i>Lesson 4</i> Crucifixion & Resurrection stories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorize John 3:16
I accept the change of heart that God gives me when I receive Him; because of this the Holy Spirit can help me live as His child.	<i>Lesson 5</i> Steps to Jesus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Coming to Jesus" (the first half)
I believe that Jesus is in heaven as my Best Friend, High Priest, and Savior; God gives me the Holy Spirit so I can be willing, forgiving, loving, and obedient--just like Jesus was as a boy.	<i>Lesson 6</i> Living God's way <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Coming to Jesus" (last half) <i>Lesson 7</i> Jesus as a boy (see EGW: DA)
I believe God gave me the Bible, His Word, to guide me as I grow more like Jesus.	<i>Lessons 8-9</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stories about Daniel's dreams, Isaiah's vision and John on Patmos • The protection of the Bible through the centuries.



I accept and obey the Ten Commandments, which show me how to respect God first and then all of His creation, including His Sabbath, the seventh day of the week.	<i>Lessons 10-11</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Giving of 10 Commandments• Jesus and the law• The Holy Spirit's role in helping us keep the law
I accept my responsibility to help people prepare for the Second Coming of Jesus to take His people to heaven; I will participate in Communion Service because it reminds me that Jesus died to save me, so I can live with Him forever.	<i>Lessons 12-13</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first communion• The ascension• Promise of the second coming• Memorize 1 Thes 4:16
I believe that people who die are sleeping in the grave where their bodies turn to dust; at the Second Coming Jesus will give them new bodies that will never die.	<i>Lessons 14-15</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jesus' death and sleep in tomb• Jarius' daughter• Jacob's death, blessing & prophecy, then buried in Elisha's tomb.
I believe God gives special gifts to His people and that the Gift of Prophecy is one of the gifts given to the church to help us have confidence in God and in His Word. I am designed by God with special gifts to help other people know Him.	<i>Lesson 16 Pentecost</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spiritual gifts• Fruit of the Spirit
I honor God's love for me by offering Him my time, talents, and treasure; I am making God the Lord in every area of my life, which includes returning God's ten percent tithe and an offering.	<i>Lesson 17-19</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Abraham & Melchizedek• The widow's mite• The Faithful Steward
I accept only healthy and pure things in my body and mind because the Holy Spirit lives in me now, and a healthy mind and body prepare me to serve God the best I can.	<i>Lesson 20-21</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daniel & friends• EGW health visions• John Harvey Kellogg
With God's power, I accept the principles of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, as found in God's Word, and promise to make them part of my life.	<i>Lesson 22</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Life of Samuel who made God first in his life; compare with Saul, who did not.
I choose to be baptized, as Jesus was, to show that I love and serve Him and to share the good news that Jesus died for me and is coming soon to take me to heaven.	<i>Lessons 23-24</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Philip & the Ethiopian• The Little Captive Maid
I choose to be a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and I want to be part of the special remnant church; I promise to help take the God-given message of the Seventh-day Adventist church to all the peoples of the world.	<i>Lessons 25-26</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heritage stories of the Great Disappointment• Heritage mission stories



Year-End Reporting

Resources Follow Results

We believe that Children's Ministries is our "secret weapon" for reaching out to unchurched families. The information you provide on your year-end report helps increase the support available to you—budgetary and otherwise—to grow your ministry in your community.

Besides, when you pour your energies into a program, you want someone in leadership to notice! The items on these year-end reports provide goals to achieve. If churches grow in each area, they will bring a balance to Children's Ministries. Thanks for your support.

Following is the Year-End Report form. Complete and return to:

North American Division Children's Ministries

Children's Ministries Year-End Reporting

12501 Old Columbia Pike

Silver Spring, MD 20904

or fax to 301-680-6464, Attention: NAD Children's Ministries

Updated forms are available at www.childmin.com.

This form may also be submitted electronically.

For the calendar year of



LOCAL CHURCH CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES YEAR-END REPORT

Complete this report online if you prefer;
see www.childmin.com/Resources.

Please return this form to
NAD Children's Ministries

Due by January 31

Conference _____

Name of church _____

Children's Ministries Coordinator _____

Address _____ Phone _____

_____ E-mail _____

1. Our church has a children's ministries coordinator YES NO
2. We conducted a Vacation Bible School program YES NO
3. We reported our Vacation Bible School program
(see www.childmin.com) YES NO
4. This year our church sponsored a Branch Sabbath School
with classes for children YES NO
(Branch Sabbath School is an outreach ministry--not the regular
Sabbath School.)
5. Our church conducts at least one baptismal class for children YES NO
6. Number of children under age 14 who were baptized this year _____
7. Number of outreach/service opportunities* in which
children from our church participated _____
*Such as making sandwiches for a homeless shelter, collecting and
delivering food baskets or blankets, etc.
8. Our church uses the GraceLink Sabbath School curriculum
in the following divisions: Beginner
 Kindergarten
 Primary
 Junior-Teen
 Combined division

Who is ACMA?

Since 1997, the Adventist Children's Ministries Association has provided support and networking opportunities for leaders in children's ministries around the world.

Membership is open to any person whom God has called to minister to children in the family, the church, or the neighborhood.

Do you...

- ❖ NEED ideas to jump-start your ministry?
- ❖ WANT to connect with other leaders?
- ❖ HAVE a program or brainstorm that's just begging to be shared?
- ❖ BELIEVE strongly in what your ministry is all about?

... then ACMA is for you!

To see what's new with ACMA visit

www.acma-online.org

Membership Benefits

For a one-time registration cost of US\$50, you will receive:

- ❖ Lifetime membership in the Adventist Children's Ministries Association
- ❖ Membership card and lapel pin
- ❖ Special registration rate for Children's Ministries training conventions

Plus, access to the members-only ACMA website which includes:

- ❖ ACMA resource lending library
- ❖ Online networking tools
- ❖ Database of members and presenters
- ❖ E-newsletter with discount coupons, and cutting edge information and ideas
- ❖ and much more!

Photocopy this form and send in your registration today!

YES!

I want to become a lifetime member of the ACMA network.

Name (please print) _____

Street Address _____

(city)

(state)

(zip/postal code)

Daytime Phone (____) _____

E-mail _____

I DO NOT give my permission for the above information to be included in the ACMA member directory

Conference _____ Local Chapter _____

Send this completed form to: North American Division Children's Ministries (ACMA)
12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD 20904 USA
FAX (301) 680-6464, PH (301) 680-6425



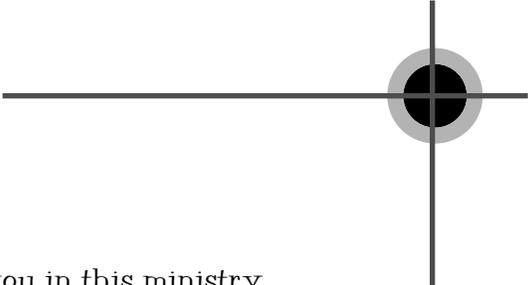
I have enclosed my check for US\$35.

Please charge my credit card: (circle) VISA MC AMEX DISC

Card # _____

Exp date _____

Signature _____



Web Resources

There are many great resources available to support you in this ministry. Here are a few:

www.childrensministries.gc.adventist.org

The Children's Ministries department of the General Conference. Its goal is to serve those who work with children by providing ideas, resources and information. There is also a section Just For Kids with devotionals, activities and craft ideas for children.

www.childmin.com

The official Children's Ministries web site for the North American Division.

www.gracelink.net

The only Sabbath School curriculum produced by the Seventh-day Adventist church.

www.acma-online.org

Children's Ministries support network.

www.adventsource.org

Leadership resources for Children's Ministries

www.adventistbookcenter.com

Magazines and Gracelink curriculum orders.

www.hiskidz.org

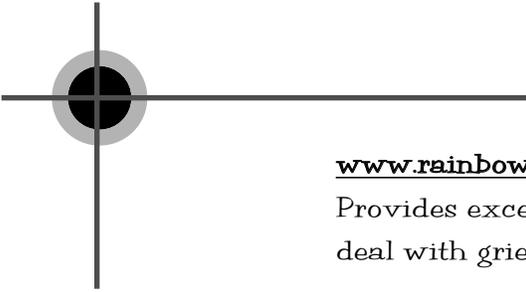
Especially for kids ages 6-12. Contains stories, Bible search, nature, computer, games, knowing about God and more. The site aims to be dynamic, contemporary, biblically accurate, denominationally non-specific, culturally accessible and appropriate to children regardless of background.

www.4kids.ag.org

The National Children's Ministries Agency, which exists to serve the local church, its pastors and laity in their pursuit of excellent ministry to the children of their church and their communities.

www.kidology.org

Aims to equip and encourage those who minister to children by providing practical training, creative teaching resources and personal consultation.



www.rainbows.com

Provides excellent resources, tips, articles and ideas on helping children deal with grief and hurt.

www.nadrainbows.org

North American Division Rainbow support website.

www.kidsindiscipleship.org

Curriculum, training & support for parents who want to teach their children to become disciples of Jesus.

For information about additional resources and answers to your questions call *AdventSource* at 1-800-732-7587.

www.childmin.com/Resources/Volunteer_Screening.htm

Complete information about the volunteer screening process

Children's Ministries Needs Assessment Survey

In order to better serve you and your children, we have designed this 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, developing resources and setting goals for our overall ministry to children.

1. How many children do you have? _____
2. What are the ages of your children? _____
3. Do you have a child with special needs? NO YES Ages: _____
4. What type of programs would you like us to organize for your child(ren)?
Check (X) as many as apply.
 retreat choir cooking picnic health fair
 crafts day/weekend prayer group Bible quiz/game
 service project puppet ministry preaching club

Other ideas _____

5. What kind of activities would you like us to organize for parents?
___ Lending library of parenting books/videos
___ Family Life speakers
___ Family Life video presentations
___ Parenting seminars
___ Family socials
___ Parenting and family relations tips in sermons
___ Parent class in Beginner (Cradle Roll) division

Family Support Activities

- ___ Child Care during parenting events
- ___ Mother's Day or Night Out
- ___ Support groups (divorce, loss, 12-step programs, etc.)
- ___ Families affirmed at church
- ___ Family retreats
- ___ Parents welcome in children's programs

Volunteer Children's Ministry Application

Date: _____ Position Application is for _____

Name: _____

Personal Information

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Birthdate: _____

List your formal education above high school: _____

Employed: Full Time / Part Time Position: _____

Student: Full Time / Part Time Year: _____

Employer Name: _____ School: _____

What type of ministry for children might you be interested in doing? _____

Why would you like to be involved in this ministry? _____

List any type of Christian work or previous volunteer experience: _____

List any information or other experiences relevant to a volunteer position
(e.g. special training, leadership): _____

Your Spiritual Journey

Please describe your past and present spiritual journey with God. _____

Are you willing to submit to a background check? Yes _____ No _____

I affirm that the information contained in this application is true.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Volunteer Ministry Information Form

SECTION I		Personal Information		
Name:		Email:		
Address:				
Home phone:		Work phone:		Volunteer position(s) interested in:
Church membership:				
Churches attended in the last 5 years:				
Previous residence(s) for last 10 years (list dates at each address):				
Dates:		Address:		
Dates:		Address:		
Dates:		Address:		
Name of Emergency Contact & Relationship:			Phone:	
SECTION II		Health Information		
List any injury/disability/health factor that might limit your involvement in ministry activities, or impact the health of children (i.e., communicable diseases, physical limitations).				
SECTION III		Education/Training Information		
Highest level of formal education and area(s) of study:				
Certification(s)/license(s) held that may reflect on your skills and abilities in working with children or as a volunteer:				
Church offices held or Special Ministry Training:				
SECTION IV		Personal References		
List below three individuals (other than family members) who could recommend you for this volunteer ministry.				
Name	Street Address	City/State	Zip	Phone
1. Pastor				
2. Other				
3. Other				
*** OFFICE USE ONLY ***				
<input type="checkbox"/> Guidelines for Volunteers signed (attached, and copy given to applicant)				Date
				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Date VMIF Received:		<input type="checkbox"/> Recommended		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Recommended
Date of committee decision:				
Signature of chairperson:			Church Name:	

SECTION V

Background

Birthdate:

Driver's License #:

State:

Exp. Date:

Car Insurance

Yes

No

Willing to Provide Transportation

Yes

No

As a result of our concern for the safety and protection of children and youth, we require all potential volunteers to 1) complete and return this Volunteer Ministry Information (VMI) form, 2) consent to a voluntary criminal record check, and 3) read & agree to follow the **Guidelines for Volunteers**.

Have you ever been convicted of a felony?

YES

NO

Have you been denied legal custody of your children in any legal proceedings, including divorce decrees or settlements?

YES

NO

Have you ever been accused of, charged with, disciplined for, or convicted of any unlawful sexual conduct, abuse, child abuse, child neglect, and/or child sexual abuse?

YES

NO

Have you been required to register as a sex offender in any jurisdiction?

YES

NO

If you answered yes, please supply the date, place, type of conduct, disposition, and sentence, as applicable.

SECTION VI

Statement of Accuracy

The information contained in this form is current to the best of my knowledge. I understand that this is strictly a volunteer position, and I expect no remuneration for services and time volunteered.

I authorize any persons giving a reference or churches listed in this form to disclose information that they may have regarding my character and fitness for serving in a volunteer ministry that may involve children or youth. I hereby release any individual, church, or organization from any and all liability for damages which may result to me, my heirs, or family for compliance with this authorization, and agree that the church may maintain this information. My signature on this form confirms my understanding and agreement that: In the event that allegations of criminal or sexual misconduct arise regarding my conduct while I serve in a volunteer capacity, the church will fully cooperate with any investigation. I further state that I have carefully read the foregoing release and understand the contents thereof, and that I sign this release as my own free act. This is a legally binding agreement, which I have read and understand.

Further, I have read and agree to follow the **Guidelines for Volunteers** and I give my consent for a voluntary criminal record check.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE:*

Date:

*Please be sure you have answered every question and signed your name above. Application cannot be accepted without a signature. Return this completed form to the pastor of your local church.

Purpose

The Volunteer Ministry Information Form assists churches in appointing the best possible individuals to serve within the various ministries the church offers. This form is part of a screening process which protects the volunteers, while also serving to protect children and youth from predators and the Church from liability. This record, once turned in, becomes the property of the local church. Applicants may request that a copy of their Volunteer Ministry Information Form be forwarded to another church should they move their membership.

Procedure

Copies of this Volunteer Ministry Information Form are available from the church office, or from www.adventistrisk.org. Ministry leaders are responsible for distributing forms to prospective volunteers, and making certain that they have completed the screening process prior to serving.

The completed forms are returned to the church pastor, who passes them on to the Volunteer Screening Committee. This group, appointed by the church board, determines volunteer eligibility. The committee interviews applicants, checks references, and **may** request a criminal record check. The committee's recommendation, marked on page 1, is signed and dated. The committee gives a copy of the first page of this form to the ministry leader. The Applicant agrees to participate in any orientation or training programs conducted by the church or conference. The Volunteer Ministry Information Form shall be shared with another church entity only upon the applicant's written request. Any such requests will be attached to the original document and kept on file.

Policy

All information on this Volunteer Ministry Information Form is required by the North American Division. The information on this form shall be kept confidential and become a permanent record of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Volunteer records should be updated every three years. In the event of accusations against the applicant, opportunity shall be given for response by the accused. Such a response will also become a part of the record and must be attached to this form.

North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists

12501 Old Columbia Pike

Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600

Telephone: 301-680-6400

Fax: 301-680-6464

www.adventistrisk.org

Guidelines for Volunteers

Because our society is filled with pain, problems, and litigation caused by improper conduct of adults working with children and youth, it is imperative that those working with children in the churches have meaningful guidelines for conduct—to protect both themselves and those under their care. As a ministry volunteer, you want parents and others to feel comfortable and confident with you. Here are some practical guidelines:

1. **Never leave a child or group of children for whom you are responsible unattended.** Provide adequate supervision at all times, no matter what.
2. **Always have at least one other adult 18 or older with you when ministering to children.** If you find yourself in a situation where you are the only adult present, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES should you allow yourself to be alone with one child.
3. **Always ask a person's permission before touching** him/her anywhere, even when responding to an injury or problem. This is especially true for any area 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 you provide care.
4. **Physical and verbal attacks are inappropriate** and should never be used as discipline. "Time out" or "sit-in-that-chair" may be helpful methods with children.
5. **Children need to be touched appropriately.** However, keep hugs brief and "shoulder-to-shoulder" or "side-to-side." Always keep your hands at or above the shoulder level. A caregiver kiss is to the forehead or cheek only – not elsewhere. For small children who like to sit on laps, encourage them to sit next to you.
6. **When taking small children to the bathroom** – take another adult along, or leave the door open.

Be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse; be aware of the legal requirements in your locality for reporting child abuse. In nearly all places, a caregiver can be held legally responsible for failing to report suspected or actual child abuse.

Be loving, kind, firm, and always thoroughly professional as a caregiver. Working with children and youth at church is not only a privilege; it is also a deep responsibility that must be approached with utmost care. As a volunteer you are expected to participate in orientation and training programs conducted by the church or conference.

Adventist Risk Management and the North American Division recommend the following rules for leaders. These serve as a protection to you and to your ministry against charges of abuse:

- **The volunteer screening rule.** The volunteers must complete the screening process described on the Volunteer Ministry Information Form. (available at www.childmin.org).
- **The six-month rule.** Do not recruit a volunteer who has been a church member for less than six months.
- **The two-person rule.** Have at least two adults present at all times.
- **The glass window rule.** If the door to a classroom does not have glass in or around it, the door should be left open, so that the teacher is in full view.

I, the undersigned, have read the guidelines listed above and agree to abide by them. I will obtain a copy of this signed form and keep it for reference.

Date _____ Signed _____

Sample Parental Consent and Release Form

Field Trips and Off-campus Outings

Emergency Contact Numbers:

Name _____ Home Phone _____
Age _____ Birthdate _____ Work Phone _____
Address _____ Cell Phone _____

Pager _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

To Whom It May Concern:

The undersigned does hereby give permission for my child, _____, to attend and participate in activities (described in the Youth Brochure) sponsored by the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

In case of accident or injury, I authorize an adult, in whose care the minor has been entrusted, to consent to the X-ray examination, anesthetic, medical, surgical, or dental diagnosis or treatment, and hospital care, to be rendered to the minor under the general or special supervision and on the advice of any physician or dentist licensed under the provisions of the Medical Practice Act on the medical staff of a licensed hospital, whether such diagnosis or treatment is rendered at the office of said physician or at said hospital.

I request that the supervising adult make efforts to call me at the emergency phone numbers listed above, however this request is not to prevent emergency medical treatment when necessary.

Furthermore, I, on behalf of my child hereby assume all risk of personal injury, sickness, death, damage and expense as a result of participation in recreation and work activities involved therein. We agree to apply for any insurance benefits, if necessary on behalf of our child, with insurance that already covers my child.

The undersigned does also hereby give permission for my child to ride in any vehicle designated by the adult in whose care the minor has been entrusted while attending and participating in the above marked activities sponsored by the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The undersigned individually and on behalf of their child, assumes all risk associated with participation in the above marked field trips and outings and agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless and fully and forever release and discharge the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, its employees, agents, camp counselors, volunteers and insurers from any and all claims, demands, actions, cause of actions, suits and liabilities of any kind and nature whatsoever relating to personal injury or property damage sustained directly or indirectly from the above marked field trips and outings. The undersigned understands that this release, indemnification, defend and hold harmless agreement includes any claims based on negligence, action or inaction, or any of the above parties.

Hospital Insurance Yes ___ No ___ _____
Participant's Signature Date

Insurance Company _____
Participant's Signature Date

Policy Number _____
Legal Guardian's Signature Date

Child's Physician's Name _____ Child's Physician's Phone _____

List any medication, insulin, etc. taken by child that medical personnel should know about. _____

Children's Ministries Calendar of Events for 20_____

January	February	March
April <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ TV Turnoff Week◆ Easter	May <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Mother's Day	June <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Campmeeting◆ Father's Day
July <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Vacation Bible School	August	September
October <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Children's Sabbath	November <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Thanksgiving	December <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Christmas

Sample Children's Ministries Budget

Children's Ministries Outreach Activities	
Vacation Bible School	900
Children's Evangelistic Meetings	
Neighborhood Bible Clubs	
Other	

Children's Ministries Nurture Activities	
Weekly Church Bulletins	
Baptismal Classes/Candidate Book Bag	50
Children's Church	100
Adventurer Club	
Pathfinder Club	
Children's Camp Meeting	1,800
Children's Summer Camp	3,500
Other	

Miscellaneous	
Baby Dedication Baskets	75
Children's Sabbath (1st Sabbath in October)	60
Christmas Devotional Books (Children & Leaders)	720
Mother's Day Flowers	100
Leader's Appreciation Gifts	100

TOTAL Children's Ministries Budget	
Children's Ministries Outreach Activities	900
Children's Ministries Nurture Activities	5,450
Miscellaneous	1,055
Other	

TOTAL BUDGET	7,405
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Advent *Source*

