

Start or revitalize a ministry in your church

QUICK START GUIDE



BEGINNER SABBATH SCHOOL



Quick Start Guide for Beginner Sabbath School

Available from:

AdventSource

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Introduction

Beginner Sabbath School is the start of an exciting spiritual journey for the children in your class. It's the place where parents can bring their children for their first formal introduction to Jesus and their church family. Through Sabbath School children get to know God, hear God's Word, and respond. Sabbath School provides a religious education that leads children to Jesus and draws them into a relationship with Him.

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

Beginner Sabbath School is a completely new experience for many first-time parents. Many young people quit attending church and return when their first child is born. Beginner leaders have a great opportunity to reconnect with these parents! You can minister to young families and help them form positive spiritual habits in the home, such as family worship and Sabbath School lesson study.

This Quick Start Guide contains ideas to help get your beginner 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



Beginner 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 beginner leaders.

Objective: To coordinate and lead the beginner Sabbath School

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 beginner 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

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)

BEGINNER 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 Beginner 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 beginner 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 17 for an example.)
7. **Plan a calendar** for the year that includes all division activities. Add appropriate church and conference activities. (See page 19.)
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.

Seven Principles for Excellent Leaders

As the leader of the beginner 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.

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.



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.

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.

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.

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?

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.

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 beginner 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.



Beginner 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 type of toys interest your child? _____
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 Beginner-age Children

In order to understand beginner children (ages birth to two), it is helpful to note the characteristics of their growth and development. Beginner children...

Physical

- Vary greatly in their physical development
- Are growing rapidly
- Tire easily
- Cannot sit still for long

Mental

- Have an attention span of only one or two minutes
- Learn by active involvement and imitation
- Learn best by taking one mini-step at a time
- Focus their attention on what they can see and/or touch

Emotional

- Are centered in themselves
- Fear separation from parents
- Cry easily
- Express their needs by crying
- Become attached to adults who show love and acceptance of them

Spiritual

- Can sense attitudes of respect, joy, and anticipation in other people in connection with church, the Bible, and Jesus
- Can identify pictures of Jesus
- Will fold their hands and kneel (briefly) for prayer

Developmental

- Have the ability to manipulate objects, events, and even people
- Need the freedom to make choices and interact in learning situations
- Need the independence to do some things unaided
- Need to feel safe

How Beginner Children Learn

The children in your beginner Sabbath School class learn through exploring and using all of their senses. Here are some ideas for ways you can reach all the children in your class.



Visual: Pictures, hand held objects, a live aquarium, colors. This can be anything the beginner child can see that will connect them to the lesson.

Auditory: Stories, songs, and sounds, and memory verses set to music that the children can sing over and over. Beginner children love repetition!

Tactile: Things the children can touch, build, and color. Things the children can manipulate but you can clean easily are good.

Movement: Songs with motions, moving around the room, drama, and play. These children learn by experiencing, so they will want to be right in the middle of the story!

MUCH MORE ONLINE

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

Faith Development for Beginners

In Luke 2:52 we read that Jesus grew in wisdom (mentally) and stature (physically), and also grew in favor with God and man. These last two areas suggest both spiritual and social growth.

When we talk about faith development, the focus is usually on daily strengthening through prayer, Bible study, and all the choices we make. From birth to age two, children learn mostly from the important people in their life—parents, aunts and uncles, grandparents, and Sabbath School leaders.

Beginner-age children gain faith by experience. Children observe love and faith in their interaction with adults and react to what they experience. They may not consciously be thinking about faith, but they certainly demonstrate unwavering faith in the people who have demonstrated they are trustworthy.

What does this mean for your beginner Sabbath School class? Since children experience trust, love, and acceptance, they need a few trusted and loving adults they can connect with. Beginner Sabbath School leaders should be warm, welcoming, and have good active listening skills. Giving smiles, handshakes, and high fives to every child is a great way to show them unconditional love.

GraceLink Beginner Sabbath School Lessons

The beginner Sabbath School is the start 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 lead 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 the Bible stories can be applied to their lives.



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 beginner curriculum consists of a two-year cycle. This means there will be some repetition for some of the children; however, due to developmental and cognitive changes, a lesson they hear at two months will mean something entirely different at twenty-two months! Children this age need and enjoy repetition, so instead of studying a new story each week, the beginners will have one story per month.

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.

LAST-MINUTE PLANNERS

Take time during the week to study the lesson you'll be giving on Sabbath. Remember, 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-term planner, look ahead to what is needed. Purchase or prepare it at the beginning of the quarter. Then you'll be all set and ready to share God's message when the time comes!



Month	Theme (from GraceLink.net)	
	Year One	Year Two
January	Creation Week (Genesis 1:1-2:3)	Jesus as a Boy (Luke 2:21-51)
February	Noah (Genesis 6-9)	Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)
March	Baby Isaac (Genesis 18:1-16; 21:1-8)	The Triumphal Entry (Luke 19:28-44)
April	Breakfast by the Sea (John 21:1-13)	David the Shepherd (I Samuel 16:7,11,12)
May	Jesus in Church (Luke 4:16-30)	Daniel and the Lions (Daniel 6:1-23)
June	Feeding 5000 (Matthew 14:13-21)	Joseph (Genesis 37-46)
July	Young Samuel (I Samuel 3:1-10)	Joash, the Boy King (2 Kings 11, 12)
August	Elijah and the Ravens (I Kings 17:1-16)	Naaman's Little Maid (2 Kings 5:1-17)
September	Shunammite's Son (2 Kings 4:8-37)	Baby Moses (Exodus 1, 2)
October	Jairus's Daughter (Mark 5:21-43)	Peter and the Lame Man (Acts 3:1-10)
November	Good Shepherd (Luke 15:4-7)	Paul and the Shipwreck (Acts 27, 28)
December	Baby Jesus (Luke 2:1-20)	Shepherds' View of Christmas (Luke 2)

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 on 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.

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 *Our Little Friend* for the children to take home also! Order directly from your Adventist Book Center or ask your church secretary to place an order using the Standing Quarterly Order Form each quarter.



When Using the 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.
- Beginner children are very young—birth to two years of age. Their attention span is very short (one minute per year plus one). Keep every part of the program short, use words that are easy to understand, and repeat yourself often. Don't try to give them all the details an older child or adult would require. A full hour is too long for most beginner-age children. Consider doing a shorter program, then permitting the children to play while you teach or communicate with the parents.
- It's OK to be creative and resourceful, but stay with the main points and the Bible lesson the curriculum is using.

We want to teach children about sharing and mission as soon as possible, but please remember that a beginner child can only understand what he or she has experienced, and that's very little. The context of their world is limited to their immediate family, neighbors, Sabbath school, playground, or park. When we tell beginner children they are giving money to Jesus, they have no concept of what we are talking about. Choose a way to say it that the child can understand, such as, "We give money to help others. Jesus loves for us to help others. Can you help by putting your money in the (box, jar, etc.)?"

Remember that it isn't necessary to cram everything into these early years of Sabbath School. You may think the Bible is being watered down, but the beginner child won't. It is far better that they learn in little steps. Repetition may be boring to adults, but to a small child it provides reinforcement and a feeling of comfort and safety.

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.

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?

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.

It's important to sanitize the toys and other objects that the children in your beginner class touch each week. Kids at this age are especially likely to place things in their mouths, so it's important to disinfect those items each week using bleach or another sanitizing agent. After you soak toys in water and disinfectant, it's important to let them air dry rather than using a towel—a towel will soak up and redistribute germs. Also, be sure to spray chairs, shelves, and vinyl surfaces with disinfectant each week. Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at CDC.gov to find current guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting.

Next, look at the chairs you expect the children to sit in. Do they fit the size of the children? Here are some alternatives to chairs that are too large:

- Booster seats
- Carpet squares
- Bouncer Chairs for babies
- Bumbo® chair for babies
- Small rugs or wall-to-wall carpet

What is the height of the illustrations and pictures? Sit scrunched down in a child's seat. What do you see? This is what a child sees, too. How uncomfortable it is for them when all they see is nothing but teachers' legs, piano legs, heaters, felt board stands, etc. Lower everything until it's at a child's eye level—not yours.

If you have decorated your ceiling with something like flying birds, snowflakes, eggs, and sea creatures, etc., take a look at those too. Do they appeal to the beginner or to his or her caregiver? Remember that decorations that are too busy can make children nervous and uncomfortable. They may cry more and withdraw from participation.



Simple Discipline Techniques

If you are new to beginner leadership, be prepared to be flexible from the beginning. Little ones have trouble sitting still, and sometimes even on chairs at all! Many will try to take off their shoes (and maybe more). They are going to cry, balk, and generally embarrass their parents or caregivers. This is all part of being a small child.

Sometimes it's the adults who need a little guidance. You may need to remind them to be quiet so their child can hear, that they should allow their child not to participate if he or she doesn't want to, or that they should allow their child to hold onto the last handout they took if it makes them feel comfortable and secure.

You may want to consider creating posters placed in strategic places that say things like, "If you must whisper, please whisper a prayer," or "Shh! Remember we are doing faith development training for your baby."

Some of the things we tend to look at as discipline problems are merely typical of children at this age. As a leader you need to:

- Stay calm, cool, and collected
- Encourage sitting by gently, quietly leading children back to their seat as you continue giving the lesson (helpers can do this as well). Sometimes parents are too frazzled (or too busy talking) to do this. If there are parents who are not paying attention to what is going on, you can say very quietly and gently, "I think your child needs you right now."
- Allow children to continue holding onto whatever they have until they are comfortable giving it up. Offering them a new item sometimes helps.
- Prepare a short handout of guidelines for parents to help them know what to do in trying situations. Assure them of their value and your need for them. This might include statements such as:
 - Please help your child participate in the program, but be flexible with them.
 - If you need to speak to your child, do so as quietly as possible. For the benefit of all our children, please save your visiting time until the end of the program.

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.
- 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.



- If your child loses control, please walk them outside until they feel better.
- Physical and verbal attacks are always inappropriate and should never be used as discipline.

Children can be aggressive even at this early age. If you have an aggressive child in your classroom, try the following ways to stop the behavior:

- Act immediately to remove them from the situation by saying, “No, we don’t do that.”
- Distract the child with something else.
- Empathize with the child’s feelings. Verbally express such things as, “You’re angry, sad, etc.”
- Have helpers keep an eye out for potential situations and deal with them before they escalate.

There are many good books available on discipline. Consult your local Adventist Book Center.

Ministering to Parents

Look for ways to help parents get through one more week with their schedules, finances, and family relationships. Instead of spending your entire hour on Sabbath morning with the children’s program, include 10-15 minutes after your program for time with the parents while the children play. Here are some subjects worth thinking about:

- Help a parent learn how to find a few minutes a day to minister to their child spiritually.
- Encourage them to share with one another and the group, and brainstorm how to help in specific situations.
- Share a short, encouraging book or article.
- Do a study on Jesus and how He met people’s needs.
- Ask them about their 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.
- Start a social media site just for the parents in your class.
- Just let the members of the group talk about whatever is on their hearts.

Most importantly, be sure Sabbath School interests the parents and meets their needs. Make sure it encourages them to get through another week and helps them to learn how to rely on Jesus.



Volunteers – The Key to Success

Recruiting Volunteers

The parents in your room may be your best source of volunteers. They will be coming to your Sabbath School every week with their child and will have an interest in the programs and activities that their child is involved in. Here are some ideas for recruiting:

- Approach the potential volunteer in an appropriate place at an appropriated 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 beginner-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 beginner department.
- Pray with the person. They need to feel that God has called them and will bless the work they do.
- Allow them total freedom in deciding whether to join your team.

12 TIPS FOR KEEPING VOLUNTEERS

- Start them slow—immerse them in your vision
- Be a model—be real and transparent
- Build trust—believe in them
- Invest your time in them—be a coach and encourage them
- Ask for commitment—check on them systematically
- Set goals for growth
- Supply the tools they need—conduct regular equipping meetings
- Communicate on a regular basis
- Care enough to confront
- Ask for ideas and opinions when appropriate
- Thank them
- Give them someone to work with

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



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. Groom 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 about their efforts.

- Ask how things are going and what needs they have.
- 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 children.
- 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 NCSRisk.org/Adventist to begin the screening process and ChildMin.org/childrens-safety for more information about child safety.



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 GraceLink teacher's guide.

Resource Needs for the Beginners Department:

- 1. Adventist Book Center materials
 - GraceLink teacher's guides _____
 - GraceLink student quarterlies _____
 - Copies of *Our Little Friend* to take home _____
- 2. Supplies to be purchased
 - Craft/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.



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
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.



Building a Calendar

Communication is important to the success of your beginner 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
April Screen-Free Week	May Children's church, Worldwide Day of Prayer for Children at Risk	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!

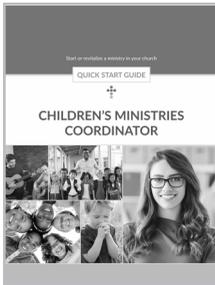


Conclusion

We hope this Quick Start Guide has provided you with a good starting point for your work in Beginner 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.

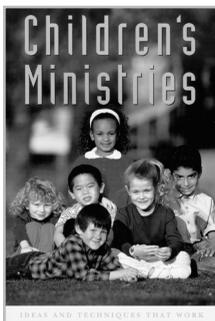


Quick Start Guide for Children's Ministries

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



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



Beginner Membership Certificate

Prepare one certificate for every child who begins attending your Beginner Sabbath School class.

English Product #021115

Spanish Product #021113

French Product #021117





Beginner Promotion Certificate

Give a special certificate to each child who moves on to Kindergarten Sabbath School.

English Product #021116

Spanish Product #021114

French Product #021118

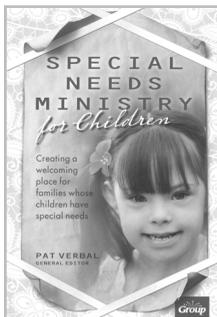


Children's Ministries Pocket Guide to Discipline

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



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



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.



Beginner Sabbath School

This Quick Start Guide for Beginner 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
- Kindergarten Sabbath School
- Primary Sabbath School
- Junior Sabbath School
- Earliteen Sabbath School
- Family Ministries

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



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