

A Quick Start GUIDE



KINDERGARTEN SABBATH SCHOOL

A Quick Start Guide for the Kindergarten Sabbath School Leader

Manuscript created by Barbara Manspeaker
Managing editor: Phyllis Washington
Editor: Cassie Martsching
Design and layout: Alan Eno

Available from:
AdventSource
5040 Prescott Avenue
Lincoln, NE 68506
800.328.0525
www.adventsource.org

© 2008 North American Division Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists

All rights reserved. This book may be used and reproduced without permission in local church printed matter. It may not, however, be used or reproduced in other books or publications without prior permission from the copyright holder. Reprinting the content as a whole for giveaway or resale is expressly prohibited.

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN #: 1-57756-452-9

Introduction

Kindergarten Sabbath school is the second phase in an exciting spiritual journey for the children in your church. They had their first formal introduction to Jesus in beginner Sabbath school, and that education continues in kindergarten.

Kindergarten children are growing in their understanding of the world and God. They are ready to move beyond the beginner programs to experience God as their Friend and Savior. Now is the time to help children know that the stories they learn in Sabbath school are found in God’s Word, the Bible. Continue the work started by your church’s beginner leaders by encouraging families to form positive spiritual habits in the home, such as family worship and weekly Sabbath school lesson study.

Go to www.childmin.com for leader’s resources, training, information about certification classes and a free newsletter, The Children’s Leader.

This Quick Start Guide contains ideas to help get your kindergarten 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	birth– age 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 classes are divided)	ages 13– 14 (grades 7– 8)	2-Year Real-Time Faith Curriculum

Kindergarten Sabbath School Division Leader Job Description

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

Objective: Coordinate and lead the kindergarten Sabbath school

Time Frame: 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 kindergarten 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

Kindergarten 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

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

Ongoing Leadership Growth Through:

- Basic children's ministries certification (strongly recommended)
- Advanced children's ministries certification (ongoing)
- Leadership training (ongoing)
- Volunteer management seminar (recommended)

10 Tasks for Kindergarten Sabbath School Leaders

Read this Quick Start Guide (you are already doing this!).

Read *Children's Ministries Manual: Ideas and Techniques that Work*. It is full of great ideas and information that will make your ministry successful. This book is available from AdventSource at www.adventsource.org or 800.328.0525.

Look at the Sabbath school lessons your church is using. If you are not using GraceLink (the only curriculum produced by the Adventist Church) find out why that decision was made (for more on GraceLink see page 8).

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 the goal? If you do not have a goal, you are shooting arrows without a target.

Get an up-to-date picture of your kindergarten Sabbath school division – the children and the departmental needs. Research what has been happening; talk to current and former volunteers. Take an inventory of the supplies already available and assess what new materials will be needed. Circulate and collect your parent questionnaire (page 5).

Create a budget for the entire year (see page 19 for an example).

Plan a calendar for the year that includes all division activities. Add appropriate church and conference activities (page 21).

Consult with the children's ministries coordinator concerning expectations, needs, budget, church calendar and areas of concern.

Share your plans, calendar, budget and any other pertinent information with the children's ministries committee.

Start a program of prayer warriors who are paired with each teacher.

Seven Principles for Excellent Leaders

As the leader of the kindergarten 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.

Personal

In order to share Jesus with others, even small children, you must have a personal connection with Jesus Christ. Personal devotional time, a focus on prayer and openness to the Spirit's leading are all crucial to being a successful leader.

Excel

Do well 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 of others. Even self-motivated people are encouraged by a supportive atmosphere. Under such conditions people are 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

Participate in groups that share your interests. Do you belong to the Adventist Children's Ministry Association? 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.

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 in order to take out.

Priority #1 – Find Out Who You Are Serving

From the beginning a good leader gets to know the kindergarten children and their families. Below is a survey to adapt and circulate. The information you collect will help you in planning your programs, training, events and calendar. Another way to get to know your children is to visit in their homes. When you visit, be sure to spend quality time with the child as well as the parents.

Kindergarten 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

Phone:

Email:

3. Does your child have special needs (allergies, developmental, physical)? YES NO

What are these needs?

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:

Understanding Kindergarten-Age Children

In order to understand kindergarten children, ages three through five years, it is helpful to note the characteristics of their growth and development.

Physical

- Start developing large muscle coordination
- Lack a sense of balance
- Are extremely active
- Tire easily, but soon revive after resting
- Lack fine muscle coordination
- Are curious and like to explore their environment
- Learn by exploring

Mental

- Are capable of limited learning and understanding without the help of a visual cue, such as seeing the object being discussed
- Have a quick memory
- Memorize things they don't understand
- Enjoy repetition – provided they don't tire
- Are beginning to reason from simple cause to effect
- Learn best by active participation
- Have a short attention span – 3-6 minutes

Emotional

- Cry easily
- Are capable of verbalizing emotional responses
- Experience the full spectrum of negative emotions
- Learn ways to express negative emotions

Social/Relational

- Are self-centered – the world revolves around them
- Play alone in the presence of their friends, rather than playing with their friends
- Like to make friends and be with friends

Developmental Needs

- Freedom – to choose and explore within limits
- Power – to have some autonomy in learning situations
- Limits – safe boundaries that are set by parents and teachers
- Fun – learning through play; enjoying success
- Discipline and training – to provide safety and structure in their lives

Spiritual Needs

Kindergarten children need to know:

- God loves and cares for them
- How to show respect for God
- How to respect themselves; this comes from knowing God made them, knows them and values them
- The difference between right and wrong
- How to choose the right with God's help

For more information about learning read *Children's Ministries Manual: Ideas and Techniques That Work*, chapter 6.

Faith Development for Kindergarten

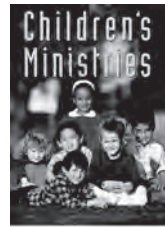
In Luke 2:52 we read that Jesus grew in wisdom (mental) and stature (physical) and He also grew in favor with God and man. These last two areas suggest both spiritual and social growth.

The key to experienced faith in early childhood is observation and reaction. Children observe love and faith in their interactions with adults and react to what they experience. At this stage they are too young to consciously think about faith, but nevertheless, demonstrate unwavering faith. The needs at this stage are to experience trust, love and acceptance. Little children need a few trusted and loving adults in their lives.

What does this mean for your kindergarten Sabbath school class? Foster faith at this stage through warmth, hugs, active listening and countless experiences of unconditional love.

For more about faith development see Chapter 4 of the *Children's Ministries Handbook* available from *AdventSource*.

Find more information on reaching beginners in *Children's Ministries Manual: Ideas and Techniques that Work*.



Available from *AdventSource*. Call 800.328.0525 or visit www.adventsource.org. *Catalog #021992*

Kindergarten Sabbath School Lessons – GraceLink

The kindergarten Sabbath school is the second step in 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.

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 Our Little Friend take-home papers 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.

The GraceLink curriculum is a Bible-based, Christ-centered series of lessons that leads children to grow spiritually and learn Seventh-day Adventist beliefs. In each lesson you will find age-appropriate activities that are fun and bring the Bible to life. Most importantly, these lessons show children how 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 and also accommodate 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 provide total time teaching where every activity focuses on the central message of the Sabbath school lesson for that day. This allows for children to learn the same lesson many different ways (see more on this in How Children Learn, page 11).

The kindergarten curriculum consists of a two-year cycle. This creates the possibility of some repetition. However, a five-year-old will not mind hearing again the story of Elijah and the Window of Zarahemla he studied when he was three.

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 – 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 which makes sure that all of the major Bible stories are taught (some of them more than once) as the child moves from one division to the next.

Much More Online

Find Sabbath school curriculum resources, puzzles, music, PowerPoint presentations, materials list, discussion and more at www.gracelink.net

Why were these Bible stories chosen?

Some leaders want to know why the lessons are not taught in chronological order. These stories were chosen so children would spend more weeks in the year learning about Jesus and His birth, life, death and resurrection than about any other Bible story. As you review the curriculum, you will see that every year during the Christmas and Easter seasons each Sabbath school division studies the birth and then the death and resurrection of Jesus. While many Adventists choose not to make a big deal of celebrating Christmas or Easter, these seasons present a “teachable moment” when much of society is focused on spiritual things. It 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.

What about the memory verse?

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

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

When using the GraceLink curriculum, keep a few things in mind:

More material is provided than you can use on one Sabbath. Choose what you are most comfortable with and don’t try to cram it all in.

When the crafts that are suggested don’t work for you, change to one that does and still teaches the same lesson. Many excellent crafts books are on the market.

If music is a problem, substitute other music that fits.

Kindergarten children are three to five years old. Their interest span is very short (one minute per year plus one). That means that activities, music and stories should last between four and six minutes – then they need to change to something else.

Use words children can understand. Repeating what you said is sometimes helpful. Don't try to give them all the details an older child or adult would require.

We want to teach children about sharing and mission as soon as possible, but please remember a kindergarten child still only understands what he or she has experienced. When teaching about mission, it needs to be something they can identify with in the local surroundings.

The context of their world is immediate family, neighbors, Sabbath school, their playground or park. When we tell a child this age they are giving their money to Jesus, they have still have little concept of what we are talking about. Phrase it so children can understand, such as, "We give money to help. Jesus loves for us to help others. Can you help by putting your money in our (box, jar, etc.)?" Making something to give to others has more impact than money.

Speak in terms kindergarteners can understand. You may think the Bible is being watered down but the kindergarten child doesn't. It is far better that they learn in little steps. Repetition helps them remember.

A Guide for Evaluating Non-Adventist Resources

It is recommended that you begin with GraceLink, the only Adventist curriculum for kindergarten, and use other materials to enhance its use. 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, 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?

If you are not using GraceLink or 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.

Last-Minute Planners

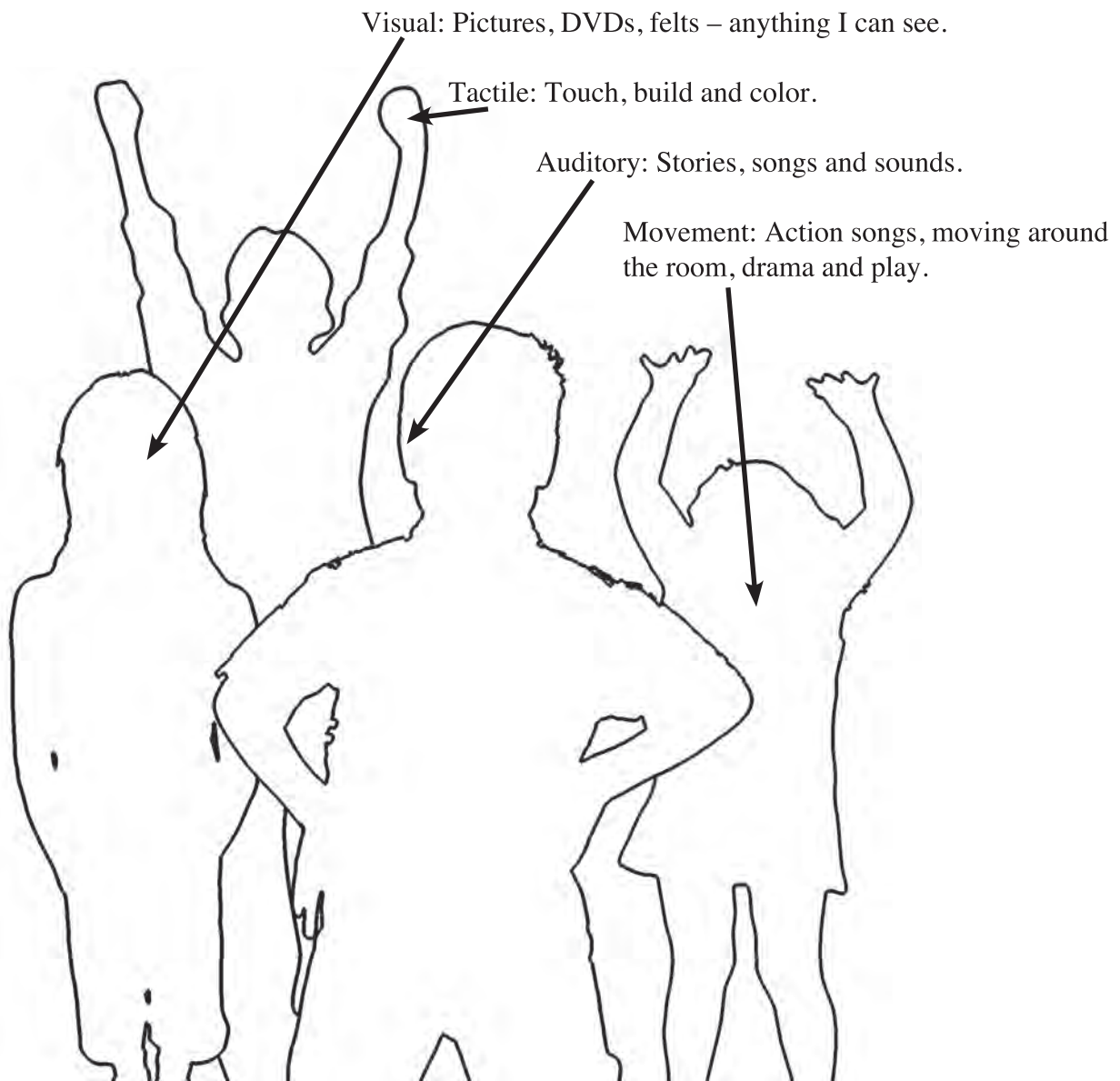
We sometimes find ourselves on Friday evening with nothing ready for our Sabbath program. GraceLink has your answer. If you have set up your department in advance with the basic program supplies, all you need to do is grab your teacher's guide and find the parts you can do easily. It's all written out for you – even what to say.

If you can turn yourself into a long-range planner, look ahead to what is needed. Purchase or prepare it at the beginning of the quarter. Then all you need to do is pick it up and go.

If you're not quite that organized yet, ask someone in the church to be your partner. They may not want to get up front but they can have everything ready for you to do. Working two by two is much more fun and efficient.

How Children Learn

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



For more information about modes of learning read *Children's Ministries Manual: Ideas and Techniques that Work*, chapter 6, page 65.

Learning Styles

Dynamic

Experiential learner
 Enjoys holding and using things while listening to a story
 Will insist on doing it their way
 Needs action and involvement

Application

I'll probably try to take apart what you hand me
 I may want to use what you hand me in different ways
 I need to be kept busy and involved

Innovative

Learns by listening and observing
 Good imaginations
 People-oriented, likes to be affirmed
 Enjoys arts and crafts, pretending
 May want to talk about incessantly about almost anything

Application

I will be sociable and come into your class with ease
 I will probably like to touch or get close to other children
 I may wander around a bit and need to be reminded to find my seat
 I will want to show-and-tell to my teacher

Common Sense

Likes to touch, feel
 Enjoys crafts
 Likes to pretend
 Likes to make choices
 Likes to apply what they learn

Application

I want to be a part of everything that happens
 Waiting for my turn may be difficult
 I will probably want to complete what I start, though my attention span may be a problem
 Don't confine me by making me color in the lines or cut on the lines

Analytic

Likes stories with some detail
 Likes routine
 Likes things organized
 Likes to see how things work
 Likes to ask questions

Application

I will probably be a bit shy about joining your group
 I like my surroundings to look about the same every week
 Following a routine in Sabbath school is more comfortable for me

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? Do you feel safe and comfortable or shy and nervous about being there?

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 children in your kindergarten 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 spray each week. Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.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? Alternatives to chairs that are too large:

- Carpet squares
- Small carpet or wall-to-wall carpet

What is the height of the illustrations, felt boards and pictures? Sit scrunched down in a child's seat. What do you see without breaking your neck? That's what a child sees, too. How uncomfortable to see nothing but teacher's legs, piano legs, heaters, felt board stand, etc. Lower everything to the child's comfort level – not yours.

Look up at the ceiling at all those beautiful decorations which may include flying birds, snowflakes, eggs and sea creatures. Does this appeal to the kindergarten or to his or her caregiver? Remember that too much busyness makes children nervous and uncomfortable. They may cry more and withdraw from participating.

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? 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.
- A cardboard display board that folds. Decorate it to fit the season, theme or whatever is appropriated. Keep it in your trunk with the plastic boxes.
- Carpet squares for seats – same storage place.
- A folding tabletop felt board that can also sit on the floor.
- On Sabbath morning, unload storage boxes, display board, felt board and carpet squares and you're ready to go. Use things repeatedly rather than often switching.

Simple Discipline Techniques

If you are new to kindergarten leadership, be prepared to be flexible from the very beginning. Kindergarteners cannot sit still for long periods. (Sometimes keeping them on a chair is a challenge.) They are still at an age where being dressed up for long periods grows tiresome. They are probably still going to take off their shoes (and maybe more). They are going to cry easily when frustrated and have difficulty with any activity that requires fine muscle coordination. It's all a part of being a small child. They have matured enough to learn some appropriate emotional responses and the difference between right and wrong. Your need to discipline may vary based on whether or not you have parents in the class.

Sometimes it's the adults who need the discipline – like being quiet so the child can hear, allowing a child not to participate, or allowing a child to hold on to the last handout if it makes them comfortable and secure.

Some discipline problems may be attributed to the children's maturity levels.

As a leader you need to:

- Stay calm, cool, collected and carry on.
- Encourage sitting by gently, quietly leading them back to their seat as you continue (helpers can do this as well). Sometimes a parent is too frazzled (or too busy talking) to do it. You might say to a parent who is not paying attention to what is going on – very quietly and gently – “I think Jon or Susan needs you right now.”
- Allow children to continue to hold onto whatever they have until they are comfortable giving it up. Offering a new item sometimes helps.
- Prepare a short handout of guidelines for parents to help them to know what to do in trying situations. Assure them of their value and your need for them. This might include:
 - 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.
 - 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 by removing them from the situation as you tell them, “No, we don't . It .”
- 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.

Ministering to Parents

Depending on the practice of your local church, parents of kindergarten students may or may not accompany their kids to class. Some of these parents may have quit attending church until they had children, so you have an exciting opportunity to help reclaim them.

Instead of spending your entire hour on Sabbath morning with the children's program, include parent time while the children play. Here are some subjects worth thinking about:

- Help a parent know 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 about their needs. Plan a class that they would be interested in attending during the week. Let them work out the time and place.
- Help them with parenting problems and skills.

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

Parenting Newsletter

In each issue of ADVENTIST PARENTING you will find addressed issues of family faith and practical advice by age category to help you raise confident, God-centered kids. ADVENTIST PARENTING also points you to resources to help answer your questions about topics such as instilling values like honesty and kindness, building your child's self-esteem, developing your child's relationship with Jesus, and discipline, as well as uniquely Adventist topics such as making Sabbath fun for you and your child. Sign up at www.adventistparenting.org

Volunteers – The Key to Success

Recruiting Volunteers

- Approach the potential volunteer in an appropriate place at an appropriated time.
 - Never between church services
 - Ask when and where it would be convenient to meet
 - If you choose calling, ask when would be a good time
- Approach prospective volunteers in a kind, positive manner.
- Provide a printed job description.
- Explain the benefits of volunteering in the kindergarten department.
- Pray with the person. They need to feel God has called them and He will bless in the work they do.
- Allow them total freedom in the decision to join your team.

Who Do You Recruit?

- Find members who have children’s work at heart. Ask them to pray for your department.
- Select people who have had experience working with children. Ask them to pray for your search and then with a specific volunteer.
- Encourage current workers to recruit helpers who love working with children. Groom them as future volunteers.
- Inspire adult Sabbath school classes to adopt or sponsor “missionaries” to the children’s division.
- 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.

Join the Adventist Children’s
Ministries Association for
networking, ideas and a
members-only newsletter.
www.acma-online.org



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.
- Hold a dedication service that includes both volunteers and their prayer partners.
- Find substitute leaders and 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.
- 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:

- Volunteers expect that meetings will benefit them, and want to be involved in the planning.
- Be respectful of their time by beginning on time, ending on time and keeping it relevant.
- Use humor, energy, creative touches and involvement.
- Begin programs with ice-breaker 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 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. Photocopy the following page for each helper in your division. Make it into a poster to display in your classroom.

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. If you suspect a problem, consult with the children's ministries coordinator before moving forward.

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 – 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

An Important Message for Adults in Kindergarten Sabbath School

Never leave children you are responsible for unattended. Provide adequate supervision at all times, no matter what.

Never be the only adult serving as a caregiver. Always have at least one other person present.

Always ask a child's permission before touching him or 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 shorts. If an injury is within this area, make sure another adult works with you as you provide care.

Kids need to be touched appropriately. However, keep hugs brief and shoulder-to-shoulder or side-to-side. Always keep your hands at (not below) 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 or stand next to you with your arm around them in an appropriate manner.

When taking small children to the bathroom take another adult along or leave the door open.

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

Planning Your Budget

The budget is your ministry vision expressed in money. A budget is, at best, an estimate as to 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 departments' 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

3. Discuss the budget with the children's ministries coordinator and committee.

4. 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?

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

Sample Budget

Here is a sample form for computing a budget. It can be adapted easily to fit your needs. Always check what is already in the department before adding new items to the list. Also consider what 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:

1. Publishing House Materials
 - GraceLink teacher's guide _____
 - GraceLink student Bible Study Guides _____
 - Our Little Friend take-home papers _____
 - Kid's Ministry Ideas magazine _____
 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** _____

Building a Calendar

Communication is important to the success of your kindergarten 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. Consider the following possibilities:

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

Add your division events to the calendar. You may also want to include the lesson theme or memory verse for each week along with techniques for parents to help their children assimilate the lesson into their lives.

Get Started!

We hope this Quick Start Guide has provided you with a good starting point for your kindergarten Sabbath school class. You are part of the Master's plan! Remember that God has a plan for you and each of the kindergarteners that will be touched by your ministry.

Recommended Resources

Children's Ministries Manual: Ideas and Techniques that Work (also available in Spanish and French). Quantity discounts are available (*catalog #021992*). For a complete listing of children's ministries resources visit *AdventSource* at www.adventsource.org. You can place your order or request a catalog by calling 800.328.0525.

The Adventist Book Center offers magazines, **GraceLink materials**, books and much more. Visit www.adventistbookcenter.com or call 800.765.6955 to reach the ABC that is closest to you.

Join the **Adventist Children's Ministry Association** and receive benefits such as a newsletter, special deals on Children's Sabbath school materials and online training. A lifetime membership only costs US\$50. To sign up go to www.acma-online.org.

Find Sabbath school programs online, answers to your questions, podcasts and everything you need to know about the GraceLink curriculum at **www.GraceLink.net**.

Sign up for the free quarterly **Children's Leader** newsletter at www.childmin.com. You'll also find a lot of great ideas on this site.

Kid's Ministry Ideas, a quarterly magazine with lots of ideas for children's Sabbath school, is available as a standing order from the Adventist Book Center or from Review and Herald at www.reviewandherald.com.

Visit the General Conference Children's Ministries website at www.childrensministries.gc.adventist.org. Its goal is to serve those who work with children by providing ideas, resources and information. There is also a section called "**Just for Kids**" with devotionals, activities and craft ideas for children.

To see events and programs that help **children with special needs** visit www.NathanielsHope.org.

The **National Children's Ministries Agency** 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. Visit www.4kids.ag.org.

www.kidology.org aims to equip and encourage those who minister to children by providing practical training, creative teaching resources and personal consultation.

Kindergarten Sabbath School

This Quick Start Guide for Kindergarten 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 a seasoned volunteer, this Quick Start Guide will inspire you with lots of great ideas you can immediately put to use in your local church.

Other Children's Ministry titles in the Quick Start Guide Series

- Children's Ministries Coordinator
- Beginner Sabbath School Leader
- Primary Sabbath School Leader
- Junior Sabbath School Leader
- Earliteen Sabbath School Leader

For a complete listing of Quick Start Guide titles visit www.adventsource.org



AdventSource

ISBN 1-57756-452-9

9 0000



9 781577 564522

