

CHILDREN'S SABBATH SCHOOL LEADER

A MINISTRY DESCRIPTION FOR LOCAL CHURCH LEADERS

Introduction

- Responsible to the children's ministries committee
- Relates closely with the children's coordinator and other children's Sabbath School division teams.
- Ministry mission: Through the ministry of Sabbath School to help children know God, to hear God's Word, and to respond appropriately; the leader fulfills the ministry mission either alone or by leading a team of volunteer teachers, depending on the size of the church.

Responsibilities

The leader of a children's division of the Sabbath School—beginner, kindergarten, primary, junior, earliteen, or combined age groups—has the following responsibilities:

- Meets regularly with the division team for planning and room preparation.
- Represents the age division on the children's ministries committee.
- Develops a division budget with the help of the children's coordinator.
- Organizes the division Sabbath School storage and room decorations; assigns general responsibilities.
- Organizes the Sabbath School time and assigns responsibilities to teachers and assistant(s).
- Demonstrates a concern for child safety by completing the volunteer ministry information form and returning it when asked, and by observing the guidelines for volunteers and caregivers.

Coordination of Sabbath School Ministry

Delegates and coordinates the following aspects of ministry

- *Record keeping:* Maintains and updates files on the children who participate in the ministry program, including their attendance; alerts the leader to current birthdays.
- *Welcoming ministry:* Greets kids at the door and recognizes visitors.
- *Mail ministry:* Sends absent member postcards, birthday cards.
- *Hospitality ministry:* Provides weekly snacks, organizes food for class potlucks and socials.
- *Family visitation ministry:* Divides the students among leaders and teachers so that each receives a home visit at least once during the year (fall suggested).
- *Music ministry:* Chooses songs, leads the singing; includes students in special music.
- *Class teacher ministry:* Assigns one teacher per five students to guide, but not to actually teach.
- *Program leader/teacher:* Models leadership of the program (which amounts to teaching Sabbath School) up front; may team teach with an assistant or delegate parts of or the whole program.

Screening Volunteers

- Evaluates written applications with the children's coordinator.
- Interviews promising volunteers and helps match their spiritual gift with a ministry need in the division.
- Allows nobody to work with children who has not successfully completed the volunteer ministry information form and been approved by the screening committee.

Leading and Teaching

- Encourages both children and volunteers to pursue personal prayer life.
- Looks for opportunities to invite children to accept Jesus; leads them through the steps to Jesus in age-appropriate ways.
- Mentors ministry team members by demonstrating ministry functions, giving clear directions, verbalizing expectations, and affirming their efforts.

- Mentors a promising assistant leader for future leadership.
- Sets a standard for classroom management and Sabbath School programming—and expects assistants to maintain that standard so teaching will be seamless.

Selecting Children's Curriculum

- Places orders with the Sabbath School secretary for Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath School materials, published by the General Conference.
- Adapts the materials as necessary to fit the local needs.
- Expects assistant leaders to use the same basic curriculum, adapting as needed.

Time Commitment:

Approximately 10 hours per week.

Length of Commitment

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

Training

- Basic children's ministries certification (on-going).
- Advanced children's ministries certification (on-going).
- A volunteer management seminar (recommended).

Qualifications

1. Volunteer Ministry 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.

2. Special Qualifications

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

Resource Materials

Beyond the Edge, by Sarah Kelnhofer. Contains 52 mission stories from the front lines, plus a three-part activity section for children following each story.

How to Help Your Child Really Love Jesus, by Donna Habenicht. A child development specialist explains how children develop spiritually and offers practical suggestions on how you can help children establish a lasting friendship with God.

Little Voices Praise Him. This delightful collection of 315 songs is part of the new GraceLink curriculum for Beginner and Kindergarten, but can be used in VBS, children's church, and at home. Available on CD.

Visit www.childmin.com for

- A volunteer ministry information form and directions for its use.
- An electronic filing system for student information.

Visit links to www.gracelink.net for Sabbath School curriculum.

Visit www.acma-online.org for a children's ministries support network.

Visit AdventSource On-Line at www.adventsource.org for a complete list of the latest resources available for local church leaders. You can place an order or request a catalog by calling 1-800-328-0525.

For information about additional resources and answers to your questions call the Adventist Plusline at 1-800-732-7587 or visit them on-line at www.plusline.org.