

# Sabbath School Handbook



## Guidelines for Sabbath School Personnel

Prepared by

Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department  
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

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## Preface

This *Handbook* is a guide for Sabbath School personnel worldwide. It is based on policies and procedures established by worldwide Sabbath School advisories and the administrative entities of the world Seventh-day Adventist church, as well as suggestions and ideas from Sabbath School personnel around the world. It offers guidelines designed to help organize and run efficient and productive Sabbath Schools in the local church.

While the *Handbook* contains some policies set by the world Seventh-day Adventist Church and applicable to all Seventh-day Adventist churches throughout the world, it is not designed to be an inflexible policy book. It also contains many ideas and suggestions that may be used in a way that best

suits the circumstances of local churches in different areas of the world.

Boxes and sidebars are used to explain which sections of the *Handbook* apply to all churches and which refer to ideas and suggestions.

### **Contents of the *Handbook***

This *Handbook* contains statements of the purpose and mission of the Sabbath School, worldwide Sabbath School policy, Sabbath School organizational outlines and procedures, job descriptions for Sabbath School personnel in the local church, resources for teacher certification and training, outlines and ideas for Sabbath School programs, and information on how to involve the Sabbath School in the soul-winning activities of the church.

## The Mission and Objectives of the Sabbath School

### The Mission of the Sabbath School

The mission of the Sabbath School is to be a system of local church religious education that builds faith and practice. The Sabbath School is based at the local church. It builds faith through the study of the Scriptures and the doctrines and teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It builds practice through the application of biblical principles and the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to the individual lives of the Sabbath School members.

### Objectives of the Sabbath School

The Sabbath School has four specific objectives:

1. Study of the Word
2. Fellowship
3. Community Outreach
4. World Mission Emphasis

These four objectives are the basis for every activity of the Sabbath School in all divisions.

**1. Study of the Word.** The Sabbath School will help the students understand the gospel and make a personal commitment to it. It will help them grow spiritually through study of

the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. It will help students develop a prayer program and teach them how to interpret and apply the principles of the Scriptures to their lives.

**2. Fellowship.** The Sabbath School will foster fellowship among members in the weekly Sabbath School program, develop projects for recruiting new members and integrating them into church life, and find ways of restoring inactive members.

**3. Community Outreach.** The Sabbath School will help its students catch a vision of the church's mission in the community, train them for service, and inspire them to witness. It will develop programs to involve them in soul-winning activities.

**4. World Mission Emphasis.** The Sabbath School will present a clear vision of the global mission of the church. It will promote a personal, systematic, and self-denying commitment to the support of world missions, and foster in all a desire to help fulfill the gospel commission.

## History of the Sabbath School

Adventist Sabbath School work, the general equivalent of Sunday schools of other denominations, began in 1852 when James White wrote the first Sabbath School lessons. A Sabbath-keeping former Millerite preacher and one of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist church, White organized the first regular Sabbath School around 1853 in Rochester, New York; another was organized by John Byington in Buck's Bridge, New York in 1854; and the third was organized in 1855 by M. G. Kellogg in Battle Creek, Michigan.

Early Sabbath Schools had only two divisions, one for children and one for adults, called the Bible Class. Teachers placed much emphasis on the memorization of Scripture. In 1863, the first series of Sabbath School lessons adapted for children appeared. The same year the first adult Sabbath School lessons, written by Uriah Smith, another early Adventist pioneer, appeared in the *Review and Herald*.

There was little organization until G. H. Bell, a pioneer teacher in Battle Creek, became editor of the *Youth's Instructor* in 1869. He introduced two series of lessons, one for children and the other for youth. He also published a plan of organization providing for a

staff of officers and regular reports of attendance. He later introduced articles for teachers and officers. After demonstrating success in Battle Creek, Bell traveled to other places organizing Sabbath Schools and counseling officers.

Organization of Sabbath Schools began in California in 1877 with the formation of the first state Sabbath School Association. The formation of this society was followed in the same year by the organization of the Michigan State Sabbath School Association. In March 1878 the General Sabbath School Association was organized.

The first association outside North America was formed in 1883 in Switzerland and another in 1886 in England. In 1886 the name was changed to the International Sabbath School Association. When the General Conference was reorganized in 1901, the International Sabbath School Association became the Sabbath School Department of the General Conference.

In 1878, in Battle Creek, Michigan, the first division for smaller children was formed called "the Bird's Nest." In 1886 this became the kindergarten division. In 1879 the first Branch Sabbath Schools were organized.

A major reorganization of the Sabbath School Department took place at

the 1985 General Conference session when it became a part of the newly created Church Ministries Department. At the 1995 General Conference session, the Church Ministries Department was dissolved and the Sabbath school department was reestablished in combination with Personal Ministries. Today it is known as the Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

### **Sabbath School Publications**

From the beginning, Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath Schools have had their own lessons and papers. The first set of lessons appeared in 1852 in the *Youth's Instructor* with a single set of lessons designed for "children," a term including everyone except adults. Today, Sabbath School lessons are produced by the General Conference Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department and published in many languages.

**Adults.** The first Sabbath School lessons were written by James White. He published the first four in the initial issue of the *Youth's Instructor* in 1852. According to some historians, White, while eating lunch beside the road, used the top of his hat for a table on which to write material. The series begun by White consisted of 19 Sabbath School lessons. In 1853 17 lessons on Daniel from a publication of J.V. Himes, another early Millerite preacher, were used. These were followed by eight les-

sons on the sanctuary doctrine. In 1854 R.H. Cottrell prepared a one year set of lessons in book form, entitled *The Bible Class*. William Higley wrote a series of lessons on Daniel in 1859. No new lesson appeared until 1861 when Uriah Smith authored a series of 32 lessons for adults, again dealing with biblical prophecy.

In 1886, a series of lessons designed for adults began publication. These became the *Senior Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly* in 1889. In 1973, the name was changed to *Adult Sabbath School Lessons*, and in 1996 to *Adult Bible Study Guides*. The most studied Bible book from 1886 to the present has been The Acts of the Apostles. The most studied topic has been the life and teachings of Jesus. In 1985 a new curriculum approach began the development of Bible Study Guides for each book of the Bible. Since 1991 these book studies have been interspersed with topical studies.

**Youth Lessons.** In 1869 G. H. Bell, an early Adventist educator, wrote a series of lessons for youth based on the book of Daniel. These were eventually published in eight yearly volumes and were used for 25 years. During the years 1864 through 1888 youth lessons appeared regularly in the *Youth's Instructor*. For some time the lessons surveyed the biblical history of both the Old and New Testaments. Later, the focus shifted to studies on doctrines under the title "Important Bible Subjects," and dealt with the doctrine of the



sanctuary, the covenants, the Sabbath, and related Seventh-day Adventist beliefs.

Currently, two sets of Bible Study Guides are available for young people, *Cornerstone Connections* for age 15-18, and *Collegiate Quarterly* for age 18-35.

**Children.** In 1863, an Adelia Patten wrote a two-year series of lessons for children. From 1864 through 1888 children's lessons appeared in the *Youth's Instructor*, most built around biblical history and narrative Bible stories. In 1869 G. H. Bell wrote a series of lessons for children. In 1890 *Our Little Friend* began carrying the Sabbath School lessons for children. Sabbath School quarterlies for primary and junior ages were started in Australia in 1911-1913, and soon expanded to include the rest of the English-speaking world. From 1933 to 1936 a series of five volumes called *Bible Stories for the Cradle Roll* appeared. Other curriculum materials for children appeared periodically, both from the General Conference Sabbath School Department and from active teachers and personnel in local Sabbath Schools around the world.

By the year 2000 a new children's curriculum will be available to the world field. Currently under development, it will be the first international children's curriculum developed by the church. The product of creative thinking and evaluation by many people from all the world divisions, the new curriculum will stress four core aspects of the Christian faith: Grace, God's part in the plan of

salvation; Worship, our response to God's saving initiative; Community, how God's grace compels us to live together in harmony as the family of God; and Service, the natural response of the true Christian to reach out in soul-winning and service to others.

**Teacher Training.** In 1885 the *Sabbath School Worker*, a journal of instructions and ideas for Sabbath School personnel, began. It was published until 1985, when it was replaced by various other journals sponsored by the Church Ministries Department. From its beginnings, the Sabbath School Department has offered teacher training to Sabbath School teachers around the world.

## **Sabbath School Offerings**

Weekly and special periodic offerings for the worldwide missionary work of the church and the expense offering for the local Sabbath School are received in Sabbath School. The earliest plan for Sabbath School offerings was introduced in 1878, when the first annual session of the General Sabbath School Association urged the use of penny boxes placed near the door to receive funds for operating expense.

In 1885 the Sabbath Schools made their first gifts to missions. In the first quarter of that year the Oakland, California, Sabbath School gave all its income to aid in the establishment of the Australian Mission. Several state Sabbath School associations proposed sending part of their offerings to help estab-

lish this mission. A little later W. C. White, former president of the International Sabbath School Association, asked the schools to give a portion of their contributions to missions. This was the beginning of an ever-increasing stream of financial support that has flowed from the Sabbath Schools to the world fields.

In 1890 the Sabbath Schools contributed a significant amount of money to build the missionary ship *Pitcairn*. When the *Pitcairn* sailed with its first missionaries to the Pacific islands in 1890, a new era in Sabbath School missions offerings began. In 1909 it was recommended that all the regular contributions, except on one or two Sabbaths in the quarter reserved for expenses, be given to worldwide mission work.

With the establishment of the Church Ministries Department in 1985, the responsibility for Sabbath School offerings passed to the Stewardship Department of the General Conference, though they remained part of the regular Sabbath School program. Later, the General Conference treasury assumed the responsibility. Currently, the Office of Mission Awareness at the General Conference is responsible for the worldwide Sabbath School offering system. These offerings, nevertheless, remain part of the weekly Sabbath School program in local churches.

**The Regular Sabbath School Offering for Missions.** In 1909 the General Conference recommended that the Sabbath School give all offerings to mis-

## Highlights of Sabbath School History

- 1853 First Sabbath School; Rochester, N. Y., founded by James White.
- 1863 First series of Sabbath School lessons adapted for children.  
First Adult Sabbath School lessons written by Uriah Smith.
- 1877 State Sabbath School Associations formed in California and Michigan.
- 1878 General Sabbath School Association organized.
- 1879 First Branch Sabbath Schools organized.
- 1885 First Sabbath School mission offering; contributed by Oakland, California, for Australian Mission. *Sabbath School Worker* begins publication.
- 1886 First Kindergarten Division, Battle Creek, Michigan.
- 1889 *Senior Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly* begun. First Sabbath School quarterlies printed in languages other than English: Danish, Swedish, French, and German.
- 1901 *International Sabbath School Association* replaced by *Sabbath School Department* of the General Conference.
- 1909 Plan for weekly Sabbath School mission offerings adopted.
- 1911 Primary quarterlies begun in Australia.
- 1912 First Thirteenth Sabbath Offering taken. First *Mission Quarterly* printed.
- 1913 Junior quarterlies begun in Australia.
- 1919 Birthday-Thank Offering introduced.
- 1925 Investment Plan adopted.
- 1952 Centennial of Sabbath School.
- 1956 First *Sabbath School Manual* published.
- 1982 *Cornerstone Connections* begins publication; Sabbath School lessons for teens.
- 1995 Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department established.
- 2001 *GraceLink* Children's Sabbath School Curriculum launched.
- 2003 *Sabbath School University - SSU* - broadcast launched on the Hope Channel
- 2004 *Real-Time Faith* began publication; Sabbath School lessons for age 13,14.
- 2006 New *Cornerstone Connections* began publication.

sions, providing for their expenses in some other way. Goals and devices to record the amounts were introduced to stimulate the missions offerings. By 1913 all regular Sabbath School offerings were going for missions and a special offering was taken for expenses.

The Sabbath School currently sponsors four offerings:

*The regular Sabbath School mission offerings.*

*Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.* On the last Sabbath, usually the thirteenth Sabbath of each quarter, a special offering is taken, and a percentage is applied to certain preselected mission projects.

*Birthday-Thank Offerings.* Members are asked to bring a token of thanks for another year of life or for a specific personal blessing received. As early as 1890 Ellen White wrote: "On birthday occasions the children should be taught that they have reason for gratitude to God for His loving-kindness in preserving their lives for another year."

Again she wrote in 1894: "Not only on birthdays . . . but Christmas and New Year's should also be seasons when every household should remember their Creator and Redeemer. . . . do not let the day pass without bringing thanksgiving and thank-offerings to Jesus."—*Adventist Review & Sabbath Herald*, November 13, 1994.

*Investment Fund.* Members are invited to make an "investment" for missions in some earning project, and give the proceeds as a special offering. The investment idea was followed as early

as the 1880s when certain church members dedicated such projects as an acre or more of a crop, some cattle, or some cash to provide camp-meeting equipment.

At the Spring Meeting of the General Conference Committee of 1925 the plan was named "Investment Fund" and made part of the Sabbath School system with the understanding that the money received would go into the regular mission budget.

## Worldwide Sabbath School Policies

The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists has established, through its various administrative entities, a set of general policies that govern the worldwide Sabbath School at all levels of church organization: divisions, unions, conference/missions, and the local church. Some pertinent policies are included here for the information of those who work in Sabbath School.

These policies have to do with the functions of the Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department, the process of developing the curriculum materials used in Sabbath Schools around the world, the election of officers and teachers in the local church, and the management of Sabbath School finances. Some may be repeated in other places in this *Handbook* where they apply directly to an aspect of the Sabbath School.

### The Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department

The Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department at all organizational levels of the church has been given the responsibility by the world church to administer and run the worldwide Sabbath School system.

**The General Conference.** At the General Conference level, the responsibility of the department is as follows:

“In cooperation and consultation with world divisions, the Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department has the responsibility to assist administration in accomplishing the mission of the Church in the following ways:

- Provide Sabbath School Bible Study Guides, under the direction of the editors and as authorized by the General Conference Administrative Committee (the official publisher), for all age levels.
- Design materials for Sabbath School programming.
- Provide training systems and resources for Sabbath School teachers.
- Develop and provide resources for membership training systems usable at the local church level.
- Promote Sabbath School as a soul-winning function.
- Cooperate with the Office of Mission Awareness in the promotion of support for world missions.”

## **Sabbath School Departments in Divisions, Unions, and Conference/missions**

**Divisions.** Division Sabbath School departments are directly responsible for the development of Sabbath School program helps for all age levels. They also develop teacher training courses and seminars, and handle the administrative aspects of printing and distributing Sabbath School materials.

**Unions and Conference/Missions.** The Sabbath School Departments of unions and conference/missions serve as consultants to local churches in the development of Sabbath School programs, the promotion of mission offerings, and anything else that has to do with the administration and function of the Sabbath School and the training of teachers.

## **Sabbath School Curriculum Materials**

The General Conference Administrative Committee, known as ADCOM, is the publisher of Sabbath School Bible Study Guides for all age levels. The General Conference is the owner, copyright holder and publisher of these Study Guides. They constitute the official world Sabbath School curriculum.

The General Conference Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department is responsible for producing the Bible Study Guides for all age levels used by the world church. These Bible Study Guides are the products of a cooperative venture with world divisions. The

policy reads as follows:

“The General Conference, in consultation with its divisions, establishes a denomination-wide curriculum for each age level and prepares Sabbath School Bible Study Guides, providing for Sabbath School members to study the same age-appropriate Bible lessons concurrently.

“The purpose of a denomination-wide system is:

a. To strengthen and unify the Church through the development and utilization of carefully planned curricula and Sabbath School Bible Study Guides that have been evaluated and approved by manuscript evaluation committees in world divisions and in residence at the General Conference.

b. To ensure that the teachings of the Bible, as understood by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, are consistently and uniformly presented.”

## **How the World Sabbath School Curriculum Functions**

The phrase “world Sabbath School curriculum” means that the General Conference produces a standard set of study guides for use in Sabbath Schools throughout the world. These curricula are the outcome of a process that involves counsel, suggestions, input, and ideas from the entire international Seventh-day Adventist church.

The developmental process functions through three primary entities:

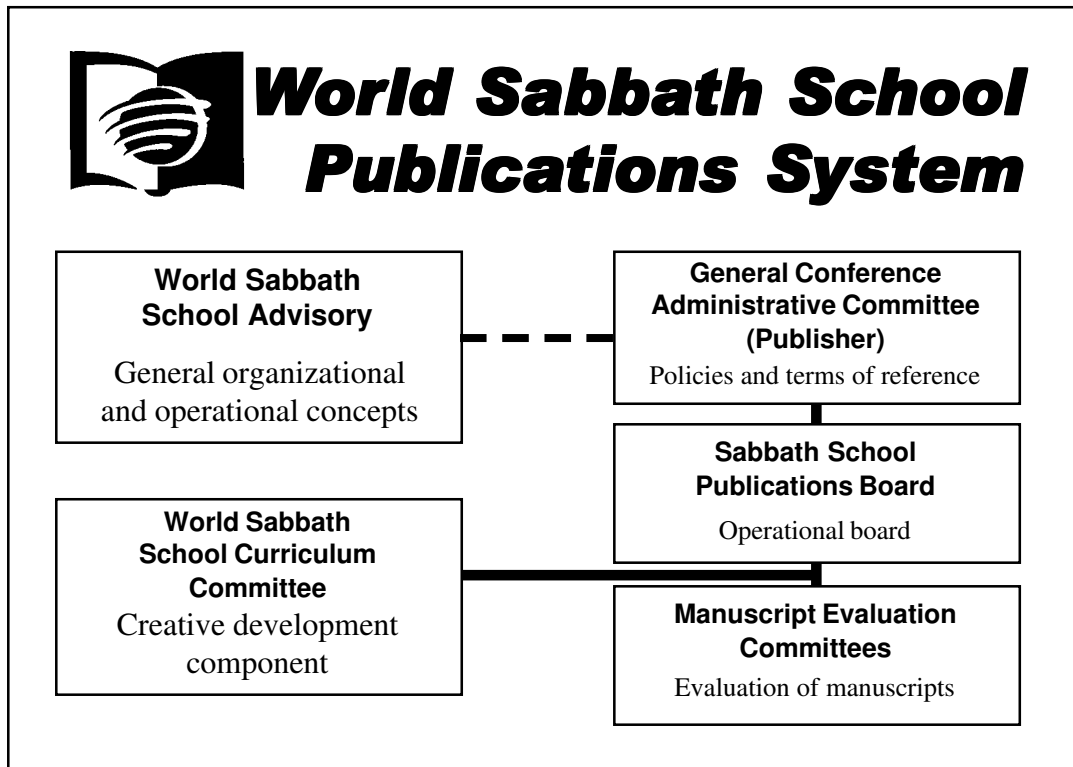
**The World Sabbath School Advisory.** The members of the World Sabbath School Advisory are the

division Sabbath School directors, members assigned by the General Conference Administrative Committee, and invited consultants. The Advisory meets at least once every five years, between General Conference sessions. The primary task of the World Sabbath School Advisory is to develop the guidelines and orientation of the worldwide Sabbath School, and to lay out the scope and sequence of the Bible Study Guides that will be available for all age levels.

**The World Sabbath School Curriculum Committee.** The World Sabbath School Curriculum Committee is the body that actually develops the Sabbath School materials. Its members are the division Sabbath School directors, members assigned by the General Con-

ference Administrative Committee, and any other members and consultants assigned or invited. The World Sabbath School Curriculum Committee is subdivided into various task forces, or working groups, that do the actual work of putting together the curriculum.

**The Sabbath School Publications Board.** The Sabbath School Publications Board is the governing body for Sabbath School publications. The membership is approved by ADCOM, the publisher. The Sabbath School Publications Board authorizes all Sabbath School publications for the world Seventh-day Adventist Church.



**Manuscript Evaluation Committees.** Manuscript evaluation committees in each division, and at General Conference headquarters, read manuscripts, offer suggestions, and make recommendations about the feasibility of publishing the manuscripts considered. Once manuscripts are approved for publication, they are sent to divisions for translation, if needed, and printing.

### **Sabbath School Offerings and Mission Promotion**

At the General Conference level, the promotion and programming of Sabbath School offerings, including the publication of the Sabbath School *Mission Quarterly*, is the responsibility of the Adventist Mission office.

**World Mission Funds.** The Sabbath School in all its divisions has historically been recognized as the church organization which gives weekly emphasis to the worldwide mission program. Funds received through Sabbath School mission offerings constitute a significant portion of the world mission funds.

**General Conference Funds.** Sabbath School mission offerings are General Conference funds, and are to be passed on in their entirety by the church treasurer to the conference/mission for transfer to the General Conference. These mission offerings include the regular weekly offering, Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, Sabbath School In-

vestment, and the Birthday-Thank Offering. Each of these mission offerings is to be identified as a separate fund in the regular system of records from the local church to the General Conference.

**Sabbath School Expense.** If the expenses of the Sabbath School are not provided for in the regular church budget, a Sabbath School expense offering may be received. This offering is retained in the local church to meet the recurring expenses of the Sabbath School as voted by the Sabbath School Council.

**Regular Weekly Mission Offering.** Mission offerings given through the Sabbath School, other than those for the thirteenth Sabbath of each quarter, Investment, and the Birthday-Thank Offering, constitute the regular weekly Mission offering.

**Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.** The offering received on, or designated for the thirteenth Sabbath of each quarter, a portion of which is devoted to designated projects in world divisions according to a schedule voted by the Annual Council.

**Sabbath School Investment.** In order to encourage further giving to the mission program and to raise mission funds through various individual or family projects, the plan known as Sabbath School investment was developed. This plan is not particularly tied to a regular time period or a weekly or quarterly appeal for the offering, but is a

continuing program to promote an increase of mission gifts beyond normal regular giving on the basis of financial returns from special fund-raising projects decided on by individual members or groups. Such proceeds or offerings are received at any time, but periodically a special promotional appeal is presented in the Sabbath School.

**Birthday and Thank Offerings.** Periodically, an appeal is presented in the Sabbath School for a special mission gift in recognition of God's blessing on the occasion of a birthday or other significant event for which thankfulness might be expressed. Such offerings have added a substantial amount to the available mission funds, and are included with other Sabbath School Offerings to expand the cause of missions around the world.

### **Sabbath School Officers**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual specifies a number of things regarding Sabbath School officers. The following are some key policies.

“The officers of the Sabbath School should be members of the local church. They are elected for one or two years as determined by the local church. The officers who serve as members of the Sabbath School Council are elected in the same manner and at the same time as the officers of the church. The list of Sabbath School officers and their assistants to be elected by the church is as follows: superintendents, with one or

more assistants; secretary, with one or more assistants; a leader for each division, including the adult and extension divisions; a Vacation Bible School director; and an investment secretary.” (pp. 91,92).

### **The Sabbath School Council**

“Sabbath School Council is the administrative body of the Sabbath School. It consists of the following: superintendent (to serve as chairperson), assistant superintendent(s), secretary (to serve as secretary of the council), assistant secretaries, division leaders, investment secretary, Lay Activities (Personal Ministries) leader, Vacation Bible School director, an elder (appointed by the church board or by the board of elders), and the pastor. As soon as possible after the officers are elected, the superintendent should call a Sabbath School Council meeting to appoint, as needed for the various divisions, other officers who do not serve as members of the Sabbath School Council. These may include assistant division leaders, division secretaries, music directors, pianists and/or organists, and greeters” (p. 92).

### **Sabbath School Teachers**

“In addition to the appointed officers listed in the paragraph above, the Sabbath School Council appoints the teachers for all divisions. Careful study should be given to the needs of all groups. It is advisable to consult with the division leaders particularly when selecting teachers for the children's



divisions.

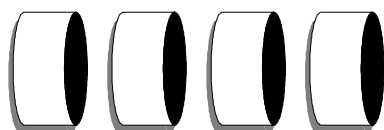
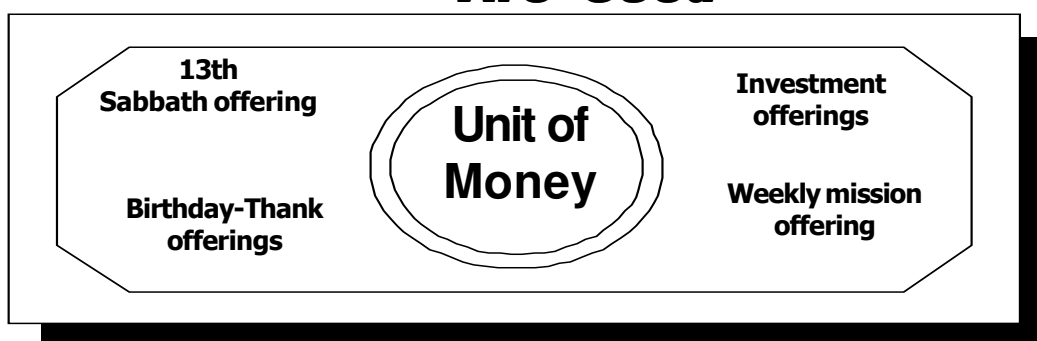
Teachers are appointed by the Sabbath School Council and approved by the church board.

The Sabbath School Council is responsible for the successful operation of the entire Sabbath School through the leadership of its chairperson, the super-

intendent. The council should meet at least once each month.

Because of the importance of maintaining the integrity of the truths being taught, great care should be exercised in the choice of Sabbath School teachers. The time allotted for teaching approximates that of the pastor in the

## **How Sabbath School Offerings Are Used**



**40% Christian Education**



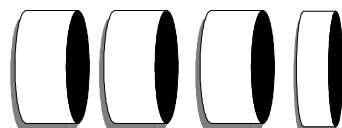
**10% World Division specials** (Evangelism, new churches, etc.)



**5% General Conference operations**



**10% Inter-Division employees** (Pastors, doctors, teachers, evangelists)



**35% World Division Appropriations** (General operations of the world church)

pulpit. All teachers shall be members of the church in regular standing and serve at the pleasure of the church board” (pp. 92, 93).

### ***Inspired Thoughts on Sabbath School***

- “The Sabbath school work is important, and all who are interested in the truth should endeavor to make it prosperous.”
- “The Sabbath school, if rightly conducted, is one of God’s great instrumentalities to bring souls to the knowledge of the truth.”
- “The Sabbath school should be one of the greatest instrumentalities, and the most effectual, in bringing souls to Christ.”
- “The Sabbath school is an important branch of the missionary work, not only because it gives to young and old a knowledge of God's word, but because it awakens in them a love for its sacred truths, and a desire to study them for themselves; above all, it teaches them to regulate their lives by its holy teaching.”—  
*Counsels on Sabbath School Work.*

## Organizing the Sabbath School in the Local Church

The Sabbath School in the local church is a unit of the worldwide Sabbath School system. It is responsible for appointing and training teachers, developing Sabbath School programming, managing the finances allocated by the church, and organizing itself in such a way that its four purposes are fulfilled: Study of the Word, Fellowship, Community Outreach, and World Mission Emphasis.

Approval of plans, programs, projects, and the implementation of policies are the responsibility of the Sabbath School Council. The officers of the Sabbath School are responsible to the Sabbath School Council, which in turn is responsible to the church board.

### **Sabbath School Membership**

Sabbath School membership includes the members of every class in all divisions. Sabbath School officers, division leaders, teachers, and other personnel should be included on the Sabbath School records.

Anyone indicating a desire to join may be a member of the Sabbath School. Neither baptism nor a formal transfer of church membership is necessary. No waiting period or formal application is required. The teacher simply adds the name to the class record.

Dropping names from the membership list, or transferring names from one class to another, is done by the Sabbath School secretary as authorized by the Sabbath School Council.

### **Selection of Sabbath School Personnel**

Sabbath School personnel must be members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in regular standing.

There are three ways Sabbath School personnel are chosen.

### **Election by the Church**

Sabbath School officers who serve as members of the Sabbath School Council are elected by the church along with other church officers. They may be elected for a one or two-year period to ensure strength and continuity. They may also be elected for shorter periods as the needs of the local church may require. The officers are:

1. General superintendent
2. Assistant superintendents (as needed)
3. Sabbath School secretary
4. Assistant secretaries
5. Division leaders
6. Investment secretary

## Appointment by the Church Board

Between the annual elections any vacancies that occur in the above list shall be filled by the church board in consultation with the Sabbath School officers.

## Appointment by the Sabbath School Council

Positions filled by appointment of the Sabbath School Council are the following:

1. Assistant division leaders
2. Division secretaries
3. Music directors
4. Pianists/organists
5. Teachers
6. Greeters
7. Ushers

The above lists should be understood as guidelines for the nominating committee and the Sabbath School Council. Small churches may choose fewer people and large churches may require more.

## Selection of Teachers

Teachers for all divisions are selected by the Sabbath School Council. Division leaders should be present during the selection process. The list of teachers must be approved by the church board (See *Church Manual*, p. 92).

## Sabbath School Council

The members of the Sabbath School Council are:

1. General superintendent (Chair

person)

2. Assistant superintendents
3. Sabbath School secretary
4. Assistant secretaries
5. Division leaders
6. Investment secretary
8. Personal Ministries director
9. An elder appointed by the church board or board of elders
10. The church pastor

**Responsibilities.** It is the responsibility of the Sabbath School Council to keep the Sabbath School running smoothly. Everything that concerns the Sabbath School is appropriate to consider in this council.

As soon as possible after the annual election, the Sabbath School Council should meet to plan for the coming year. It is recommended that during the year regular meetings be called.

**Agenda Items.** Some agenda items for the council may be: Appointment of officers not elected by the church; appointment of teachers; adjustments in class membership; development or scheduling of training programs; materials, equipment, and facilities for the various divisions; approval of promotions from one division to another; scheduling of Promotion Days, Decision Days, Community Guest Days, and other special days; setting goals for offerings, membership, and attendance; authorizing expenditure of Sabbath School expense funds; evaluation of the Sabbath School; development of new classes; planning for community outreach, and any other Sabbath School

items that may come to its attention.

## **Sabbath School Records**

The Sabbath School secretary is responsible for keeping accurate records of Sabbath School activities and reporting to the Sabbath School Council and the Sabbath School department of the local conference/mission.

**Continuous Membership System.** The Sabbath School uses a continuous membership system. The class membership at the close of the year is carried over intact to the next year. The secretary prepares the new records based on the last quarter of the year and provides them to the class on the first Sabbath of the new quarter

**Master Record File.** The Sabbath School should keep a master record file, using whatever system is provided by the Sabbath School Department of the conference/mission where the Sabbath School is located, or as developed by the local church. The system may be anything from a computerized database to card files and notebooks.

Many Sabbath School secretaries use the *Sabbath School Record and Registry*, a yearly record book provided by the local conference/mission. Items recorded in the registry relate to membership, attendance, offerings, officers, daily lesson study, teacher meetings, Sabbath School Councils, baptisms, Branch Sabbath Schools and Community Guest Days. It also contains monthly, quarterly, and yearly summaries of Sabbath School activities. The

weekly records are useful in preparing monthly statistical summaries of Sabbath School activities for the Sabbath School Council, and yearly reports for the church business meeting.

**Sabbath School Class Records.** Each world division is responsible for developing a record keeping system that best serves the needs of the Sabbath Schools in its territory.

Each Sabbath School class should have a class record listing the names of the members. All officers and teachers should be listed, as well as members of baptismal classes, specialized ministries, and the extension division. The secretary should provide each class with the necessary record keeping materials for listing new members.

Anyone who wishes may be a member of the Sabbath School, and should be recorded in the class record. The Sabbath School teacher is authorized to add the names of people who indicate their desire to join. They may be added on their first Sabbath of attendance if their intention is to continue in attendance.

**Transferring Between Classes.** Regular members of established Sabbath School classes who wish to transfer to another class, or be dropped from a class, should contact the secretary, who will present the request to the Sabbath School Council. The secretary will then adjust the Sabbath School records as authorized by the Sabbath School Council. The secretary will also adjust the records of children promoted from one division to another.

**Offering Records.** The class record keeping system will include a record of the class mission offering goal, and the weekly amount received in the class. A week by week record of all Sabbath School offerings—mission offerings, Investment, Birthday-thank offerings, and Thirteen Sabbath—offering should be kept by the Sabbath School secretary. Each offering should be recorded separately.

As soon as possible after the offering is counted and recorded, the secretary should turn the money over to the church treasurer and receive a receipt. These receipts should be filed as a permanent record of the Sabbath School.

**Conference/mission Report.** Each local conference/mission will

provide a report form to the local church. Usually, these report forms ask for information about both Sabbath School and Personal Ministries. They normally request the following basic information, but may ask for more, depending on church stipulations for your area of the world: Sabbath School membership; Bible studies given; lay led evangelistic campaigns; baptisms from lay led activities; pieces of literature distributed; Investment offering; Mission offer-

ings; Community Service units.

**Permanent Records.** The Sabbath School records are the property of the Sabbath School. All records should be handed over intact by the outgoing secretary to the incoming secretary. The Sabbath School Council should decide when records are obsolete and may be

thrown away. Before dispensing with old records, however, check with the person in charge of archives and statistics at the local conference/mission office. They may want to preserve them for historical purposes.

### **Reporting to the Sabbath School Membership**

The Sabbath School members should receive up-

dates on how the Sabbath School is doing. The use of a weekly secretary's report, however, is no longer a part of the regular Sabbath School program, though individual churches may, if they wish, use a weekly report. Well prepared and illustrated periodic reports are much more effective than a routine weekly statistical summary.

Some of the statistics that may be shown are: membership, attendance goal, actual attendance, offering goal,

### **SABBATH SCHOOL RECORDS**

All Sabbath Schools need a record keeping system. The system is under the responsibility of the Sabbath School secretaries, who maintain a master record file.

The basic Sabbath School records are:

- Sabbath School class records.
- Conference/mission reports.
- Offering records.

actual offering, daily study goal, actual number following daily study plan, Investment goal, and Investment returns to date.

The information could be displayed on a chalk board, white board, overhead projector, or in the church bulletin and/or newsletter. Many Sabbath Schools have a register board in front of the sanctuary, used to inform Sabbath School members about the progress of the Sabbath School.

### **Divisions and Classes**

Bible Study Guides and auxiliary materials are provided for eight Sabbath School divisions. The ages indicated on the chart are approximate and correspond to generally accepted principles of childhood educational and spiritual development. The age groups for some departments may change, depending on how they are determined in a particular part of the world, often based on the local school system, the size of the church, or the number of children in the church.

### **Extension Division**

The extension division cares for the needs of shut-ins and those who live in isolated places and cannot regularly attend church. The Sabbath School should make provision for attending to their needs and supplying them with Sabbath School Bible Study Guides.

### **Sabbath School Divisions**

Suggested age groups

<b>Division</b>	<b>Ages</b>	<b>Curriculum Materials</b>
Beginner	0-2	Beginner Bible Study Guide
Kindergrten	3-5	Kindergarten Bible Study Guide
Primary	6-9	Primary Bible Study Guide
Junior	10-12	PowerPoints
Teens	13,14	Real-Time Faith
Youth	15-18	Cornerstone Connections
Young Adult	18-35	Collegiate Quarterly
Adult		Adult Bible Study Guide

## Children's Divisions

**Promotions.** Promotions from one division to another ideally take place twice during the year, but may take place any time according to the needs of a particular child, regardless of chronological age. Reading ability is not a criterion for promotion. Promotion Sabbaths for all divisions should be scheduled into the yearly church calendar.

**Beginners: Ages 0 - 2.** Where there are few children, the cradle roll (or beginners) may be combined with kindergarten. In large Sabbath Schools, this group may be further divided into Beginners A, from birth to 18 months, and Beginners B, 18 months through the third year.

**Kindergarten: Ages 3 - 5.** Where there are few children, the kindergarten may be combined with the primary division for the program part of Sabbath School. Even when the age groups are combined for the program section of Sabbath School, separate classes for the study of the lesson should be arranged.

**Primary: Ages 6 - 9.** Because children enter school at different ages, primary children should not all be expected to read. The program and teaching methods should be adapted to accommodate nonreaders.

## Junior and Teen Divisions

**Junior: Ages 10 - 12.** When there are few children, a combined junior/teen

division may be formed for meeting the needs of children 10 - 14 years of age. It is advisable to join only the program section of Sabbath School and to have separate classes for the juniors and teens, using their own Bible Study Guides.

Local custom, maturation level, and the wishes of specific children should be considered when planning for promotion. Promotion should occur at the close of the school year.

**Teen: Ages 13 - 14.** When there are too few young people in this age group to have their own division, it is preferable to combine them with the juniors. Because of different developmental rates in youth of this age, the leader may advance or delay promotion to the youth department according to the needs of the individual.

## Youth and Young Adult Divisions

**Youth: Ages 15 - 18.** If there are few young people of this age, they should meet with the adults for the program and have their own lesson study as a group.

When the youth are combined with the adults, it is advisable to include them in the planning and presentation of Sabbath School programs. The Sabbath School Council needs to endorse youthful initiative and creativity, while giving guidance on how to maintain the basic objectives of the Sabbath School.



**Young Adult: Ages 19 - 30.** Where enough students of this age group are present, they should have their own division. Where the number of young adults is small, they meet with the adults but have their own lesson study time. Superintendents are encouraged to keep in mind the particular needs of young adults in planning their programs.

**Adult Division**

The adults form an integral part of Sabbath School, and are a division just like any other.

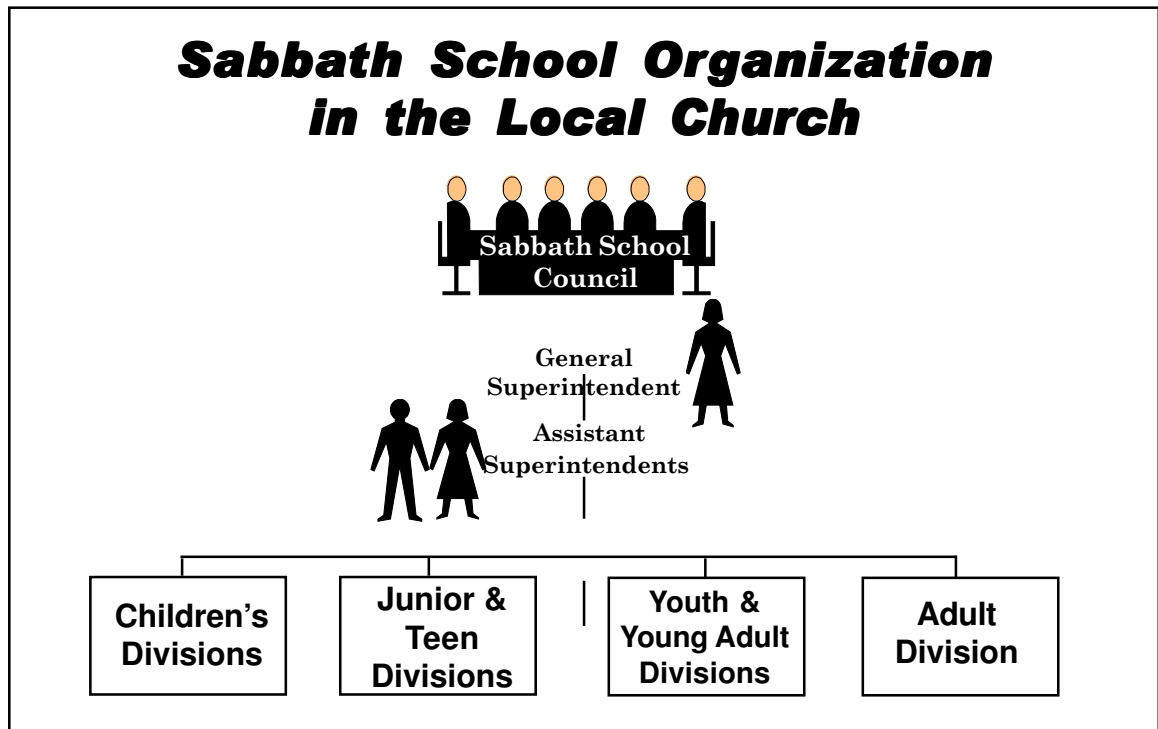
The world Sabbath School system provides the adult division with the Adult Bible Study Guides in four edi-

tions:

- Student edition
- Teacher’s edition
- Easy Reading edition
- Large Print edition

The adult division also provides specialized program arrangements and materials for Sabbath School Action Units and small group activities.

**Extension Division.** This is the section of the adult Sabbath School that cares for the needs of shut-ins and people in isolated areas who cannot regularly attend Sabbath School. The Extension Division provides them with Sabbath School Bible Study Guides and makes provision for their needs.



## Ways to Organize the Work of the Sabbath School Superintendents

There are two main ways for a group of Sabbath School superintendents to organize themselves.

1. Each superintendent is assigned a certain number of programs during the year and plans all the activities for the assigned Sabbaths.

2. Each superintendent takes charge of a different aspect of Sabbath School and plans activities within that area of responsibility for the entire year.

Each superintendent may act as master of ceremonies on assigned Sabbaths, but the program itself will be the product of the work of the various superintendents.

The following chart shows how this system would work:

## Responsibility for Planning Teachers' Meeting

Every Sabbath School should have a teachers' meeting. The best results are obtained when the meeting is held prior to the Sabbath, so the teachers have time to assimilate the material and place it in their lesson plans.

Teachers' meetings should consider at least three things:

1. Study of the next week's lesson.
2. On-going education on teaching technology, or the study of a book or course on teaching methodology.
3. Discussion of any general problems that may need consideration.

## Planning Forms

The forms on the next pages may be helpful in planning Sabbath School programs. There is a form for yearly and quarterly planning.

Superintendent	Responsibility	Master of Ceremonies
No. 1	General superintendent, special days, rally days, etc.	First Sabbath of the month.
No. 2	World mission.	Second Sabbath of the month.
No. 3	Music and special features.	Third Sabbath of the month.
No. 4	Evangelism and outreach.	Fourth and fifth Sabbaths of the month.

# Annual Activities Plan Sheet

This form may be used to plan the activities around which you will build your Sabbath School programs for the year. Include Rally Days, Visitors Days, Thirteenth Sabbaths, etc.

<b>Month:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	<b>Month:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
<b>Month:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	<b>Month:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
<b>Month:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	<b>Month:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
<b>Month:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	<b>Month:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
<b>Month:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	<b>Month:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
<b>Month:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	<b>Month:</b> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

## **Planning Sheet for a Quarter**

Use this form to plan the programs for each quarter of the year. Plan programs well in advance. This will help your Sabbath School run smoothly and effectively.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
<b>1</b>		
<b>2</b>		
<b>3</b>		
<b>4</b>		
<b>5</b>		
<b>6</b>		
<b>7</b>		
<b>8</b>		
<b>9</b>		
<b>10</b>		
<b>11</b>		
<b>12</b>		
<b>13</b>		
<b>14</b>		

## Responsibilities of Sabbath School Personnel

*This section outlines the general duties and responsibilities of Sabbath School personnel in the local church. Local situations may mandate fewer or additional personnel. Their duties and responsibilities will be defined by the local church. The time commitments are approximate, based on observations and information from local churches around the world.*

### General Superintendent

#### The Role

The general superintendent is the general coordinator of the Sabbath School. It is his or her job to see that the goals and objectives of the Sabbath School are implemented in all divisions. In some cases, the general superintendent may also hold the office of adult division leader.

The role of the general superintendent may be shared with assistant superintendents.

#### Line of Authority

The following people report to the general superintendent: assistant superintendents, Sabbath School secretaries, division leaders, world mission coordinator, Investment secretary, Branch Sabbath School leaders, and receptionists.

The general superintendent is re-

sponsible to the Sabbath School Council, the church board, and the local conference/mission Sabbath School Department.

#### Time Commitment - 6 to 7 ½ Hours a Month

The general superintendent or an assistant superintendent must be on duty each Sabbath at least half an hour before Sabbath School begins to make sure all divisions and classes are functioning.

One to two hours per month should be scheduled for the Sabbath School Council. Another one or two hours will be expected for attending the church board.

Two to four hours per month may be spent in recruiting volunteers, promoting training events, and caring for other administrative duties. They will also need to budget time for studying Sabbath School methods, for prayer,

and for planning ways in which the Sabbath School can reach its objectives.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

It is the duty of the general superintendent to administer the entire Sabbath School by developing leadership, chairing the Sabbath School Council, building a soul-winning Sabbath School, and recruiting volunteers. If there are no assistants, the general superintendent will also care for the duties of the assistant superintendents of the adult Sabbath School.

### **Developing Leadership**

1. Supervise all the leaders of the Sabbath School and encourage them to perform their duties cheerfully and effectively.

2. Arrange for the training, support, and resources needed for effective leadership in all areas of the Sabbath School.

- a. Help leaders prepare budgets to present to the Sabbath School Council.

- b. Determine needs for equipment and supplies in each division and help them get the necessities.

- c. Encourage leaders and teachers to attend appropriate training events.

3. Check with the Sabbath School secretary on the adequacy of records and the accuracy and promptness of quarterly reports to the conference Sabbath School director.

4. Foster the development of an adequate collection of Sabbath School books, cassettes, and videos in the

church library.

5. Be on hand early Sabbath morning to coordinate activities and answer questions.

6. Work closely with the pastor, particularly in the planning of training events, community outreach, and special programs.

### **Chairing the Sabbath School Council**

1. Call monthly meetings of the Sabbath School Council.

2. Call quarterly planning sessions where future plans for all divisions will be coordinated.

3. Call a yearly planning session soon after the election of officers and before the new year begins. Outline events for the entire year.

4. Prepare the agenda for all council meetings.

5. Represent Sabbath School interests on the Church Board.

6. Publicize Sabbath School Council plans and activities.

### **Building a Soul-Winning Sabbath School**

1. Implement the four Sabbath School objectives:

- Promote Bible study and effective class teaching.

- Foster Christian fellowship.

- Encourage community outreach activities.

- Cultivate support for world missions.

2. Plan with the assistant superintendent for evangelism in promoting Branch Sabbath Schools, Community

Guest Days, Friendship Evangelism, and class outreach.

3. Plan with the assistant superintendent for the reclaiming of inactive members and in keeping the Sabbath School membership list up to date.

4. Plan with the world missions coordinator for a strong program of mission education in all divisions.

5. Plan with the hospitality coordinator for an effective program of caring for visitors.

6. Plan with the adult division leader for growth. If a Sabbath School wants to grow, it should add one new class per year for every 100 members. These might be for special interest groups such as young adults, singles, women, cradle roll parents, new members, prospective members, or other special interests.

7. Encourage activities outside of Sabbath school time, such as potlucks, picnics, nature walks, and other social activities.

8. Make sure the extension division is functioning properly.

### **Recruiting Volunteers**

1. Identify potential Sabbath School personnel, invite them to get involved, and assist them in getting started.

2. Be on hand early Sabbath morning to help find substitutes or assistants in order for the program to run smoothly.

3. Plan training events and encourage new people to attend and prepare themselves for service.

4. Arrange for frequent appreciation and affirmation to be given to Sabbath School volunteers.

### **Assistant Superintendents**

There are two main ways for a group of Sabbath School superintendents to organize themselves.

1. Each superintendent may be assigned a certain number of programs during the year and plans all the activities for the assigned Sabbaths.

2. Each superintendent takes charge of a different aspect of Sabbath School and plans activities within that area of responsibility for the entire year.

### **Assistant Superintendent for Evangelism**

The assistant superintendent for evangelism must work closely with the pastor and the Personal Ministries leader of the church so that the outreach plans of the church are coordinated.

It is the responsibility of the assistant superintendent for evangelism to:

1. Direct Sabbath School outreach in the community.

2. Plan with division leaders and teachers for class outreach activities.

3. Plan for Community Guest Days.

4. Sponsor Friendship Evangelism.

5. Plan with division leaders for Decision Days.

6. Work with Vacation Bible School director for Vacation Bible School follow-up programs.

7. Plan for Branch Sabbath Schools.

8. Develop a follow-up system for guests and other prospective members.

9. Fill in for the general superintendent for Sabbath morning duties as needed.

10. Attend the Sabbath School Council and report on activities and plans for community outreach.

## Assistant Superintendent for Membership

It is the responsibility of the assistant superintendent for membership to:

1. Analyze the local membership situation by checking the Sabbath School rolls with the church membership roll.
2. Maintain an up-to-date list of addresses and phone numbers of members and prospective members.
3. Arrange for the implementation of a plan of assignment of inactive members to classes for visitation and follow-up.
4. Foster the visitation of members who occasionally are absent from Sabbath School.
5. Help with the integrating of newly baptized members and newly transferred members into the Sabbath School program.
6. Fill in for the general superintendent for Sabbath morning duties as needed.
7. Attend the Sabbath School Council and report on activities and plans for membership promotion.

## Assistant Superintendent for World Mission

1. Work with division leaders to make sure an interesting mission emphasis is provided in each week's Sabbath School program.
2. See that every division has *Mission* for their age level and that they are using it.
3. Work with division leaders to help increase mission giving by help-

(cont'd. on p. 31)

## Why Do Missing Members Miss?

Most studies estimate that approximately 40 percent of church members on the books are inactive. Why are they inactive?

There are four basic reasons why people stop attending church: conflict, unmet expectations, lack of affinity, or inability to relate.

### Conflict

More than half of all inactive members leave because of unresolved conflicts with the pastor, with other members, theological issues, or church standards and policies. Conflict creates discomfort and the tendency of most people is to simply retreat.

### Unmet Expectations

Sometimes members become discouraged because they feel the church ignored them or didn't help them during a time of stress in their lives. Sometimes people become upset when they get burned out with church work and are unappreciated. People expect to find friends in the church and if they are not able to penetrate existing groups, they will leave.

### Lack of Affinity

A single mother may feel out of place with married couples; a young person may feel alienated by a congregation of senior citizens. Professionals may find it hard to communicate with working class people.

### Inability to Relate

Some people are misfits wherever they go. They have difficulty relating to people in general and in building meaningful relationships.



## ***Ideas For Reintegrating Nonattending Members***

- Make sure the class record is taken every week. This record is the key resource for identifying missing members.
  - Memorize the names of your class members, their spouses and their children. Be acquainted with their work, hobbies, and leisure-time activities.
  - Give missing members a reason to come to your class. Make sure the lesson is well-planned and interesting.
  - Sensitize yourself to others' needs. Try to discover the reason that a member chooses to stay away. Look for hidden hurts that you can help heal.
  - Invite missing members to a church activity such as a dinner, a picnic, or a party. Often people stay away because they lack fellowship and a sense of belonging to the group.
  - If you have class members who are trained to do so, involve them in reaching the missing members. Assign names to be visited or contacted during the week.
  - Every special Sabbath School program or church activity is an opportunity to call the missing member to let them know what is happening. Offer to pick them up if transportation is a problem.
  - Mail a copy of the new quarterly to each missing member. Better yet, take it to them.
  - Mail or deliver a bulletin to each missing member every week. Keep the absentee in touch with what is happening in church.
  - Encourage regular members to place missing members on their personal prayer list. Prayers can reach behind closed doors, and they can melt cold exteriors.
  - Remember missing members with a greeting card on their birthdays, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Christmas, and other special occasions.
  - Never give up! People will often put up barriers to avoid being hurt. Persistence will break down those barriers.

## **Tips on Visiting Missing Members**

- Pray for the absentee daily. Pray especially before you visit that angels of God may attend you and that the Holy Spirit will give you wisdom.
  - Know as much as possible about the absentee: name, family members, occupation, age, and interests.
  - In some cases, it may be wise to phone ahead for an appointment. Identify yourself with the church and a specific Sabbath School class if that is appropriate.
  - Approach the home with a cheerful, optimistic attitude. Determine to be warm, tactful, and gentle.

- Have a friendly visit about things they are interested in such as family, hobbies, and occupation. You might ask when they first joined the Adventist church and what led them to Christ.
- Bring greetings from the Sabbath School and your class.
- Mention some interesting thoughts from that week's Sabbath School lesson, Sabbath School program, or sermon topic.
- Be enthusiastic about good things that are happening.
- If confronted by a person's problem or a negative experience they had with the church, do not argue, condemn, or defend the church. Don't take sides. Let them unburden themselves and express your sincere feelings of regret. Say something such as, "I'm sorry to hear what happened. I can understand why you feel badly. On behalf of the Adventist church I want to apologize and ask your forgiveness."
- Offer something appropriate to the missing members such as Bible Study Guide, a good book, *Signs, Adventist Review*, a video, or sermon tape.
- Give an invitation to come back to church. If you are unknown to the person, it may be wise to wait until the third or fourth visit to make such an invitation.
- Assure them that you and the members of your Sabbath School class will be praying for them.
- Stay no longer than about 20 minutes. Close with prayer, mentioning the names of family members and specific needs that they have expressed.
- You may want to invite the person or family to your house for a meal or fellowship group.
- Assure them you will come again; then keep your promise.

ing with such things as: setting and visualizing goals, finding visual aids such as maps and pictures, locating interesting stories, tapes, books, videos on target area, or setting up displays and bulletin boards

4. Providing regular information about projects, needs, goals, and special offerings through the program, bulletin boards, church bulletins, and newsletters.

5. Plan special events to promote missions such as: mission conferences, mission theme days, mission study groups, mission prayer circles, mission trips, and mission potlucks.

6. Coordinate the Thirteenth Sabbath Program.

7. Fill in for the general superintendent for Sabbath morning duties as needed.

8. Attend the Sabbath School Council and report on activities and plans for world mission promotion.

## **Assistant Superintendent for Hospitality**

It is the responsibility of the assistant superintendent for hospitality to:

1. Recruit, train, and supervise the crew of greeters that meet people on Sabbath morning.

2. Arrive early on Sabbath morning to make sure there are enough greeters on duty and observe how to improve the work of the greeters.

3. Work with division leaders to make sure a plan for welcoming visitors and recording their names, addresses, and phone numbers is put in place.

4. Work with the teachers to make

sure all are helping newcomers feel welcome.

5. Organize a program of providing meals for visitors and make sure someone is always prepared to invite visitors home or to a fellowship meal at the church.

6. Develop a plan of follow-up for all visitors who attend Sabbath School including, cards, letters, phone calls, and/or a visit.

7. Work with division leaders and teachers in planning fellowship activities outside of Sabbath School hours

8. Fill in for the general superintendent for Sabbath morning as needed.

9. Attend the Sabbath School Council and report on activities and plans for hospitality.

## ***Ideas About How to Present and Report on the World Mission of the Church***

### **Ideas for the World Mission Report**

- **Have a missions quiz.** Use brief quizzes to spotlight the history of the featured division or to share general information about mission lands.
- **Plan a skit.** Use the skits in *Mission* or ask the youth or children's divisions to make their own skits using the stories found in *Children's Mission*.
- **Try a dialogue.** Try having two people give the mission report. Let them alternate telling parts of the story.
- **Conduct an interview.** If the story is about one person's experience, make up questions and interview someone as if they were that person. The person gives answers from the mission story.
- **Many Adventists take overseas trips.** Tell them you will expect a report when they return about their contacts with Adventist institutions and people.
- **Correspond with missionaries from your country who are working in another country.** Write to them and let them know you are praying for them. Ask them to write a quarterly report of their work and activities that you can use as a mission report.
- **Correspond with missions or schools.** Find the address of a mission or school in the featured division in the *SDA Yearbook*. Find out firsthand what life is like in the area. Ask about their needs and goals. Share their response with the Sabbath School.
- **Get an overseas phone connection.** Talk to your telephone company about a hookup so you can talk to someone overseas. Have them broadcast the call over the audio system. Talk to them about specific projects advertized in *Mission*.
- **Use maps.** Use maps in connection with the mission report. Show exactly where the story took place.
- **Liven the story with costumes.** Have people dress in costumes for special mission programs.
- **Use a panel discussion.** Follow a mission report with a panel discussion about getting involved in world missions.
- **Plan a jigsaw mission story.** Cut the mission report into several different parts. Paste each part on a separate card. Let people draw cards and read their part in turn.
- **Use a hidden mike.** Have the narrator of the story stand at the pulpit. Whenever the direct words of the speaker are used, have that part spoken over a hidden microphone or from another part of the building.
- **Illustrate with graphs.** Use circle graphs or bar graphs to illustrate mis-

sion statistics. Consult an almanac for information about population, literacy, religions, and average income. Compare with other countries.

- **Plan a Thirteenth Sabbath program.** Get the children's divisions involved in promoting missions. Excellent programs are provided in *Children's Mission* magazine.

### **Ideas for Educating the Church About Missions**

- Provide interesting mission emphasis for Sabbath School programs.
- See that every division has access to a globe and a world map to use in their mission education program.
- See that the children's divisions have access to pictures, books, felts, and other visual aids to make their mission education interesting.
- Develop a mission resource library of books, videos, maps, and visual aids.
- Present plans to the Sabbath School Council for mission to shut-ins and mission education, offering promotion, mission involvement and special events.
- Put out a mission newsletter or include a missions reporting section in the monthly church newsletter. Include information from *Mission*, correspondence with missionaries, statistics about the featured division, and specific offering goals for your Sabbath School.
- Record mission stories. Take the recorded stories to shut-ins and members of the extension division so they can feel like part of the worldwide mission program.
- Make mission posters. Get the children or youth to make posters advertising missions or the special Thirteenth Sabbath program and projects.
- Display mission artifacts. If you have people who have lived in particular countries, have them set up a table to display items of interest from the featured country.

### **Ways to Get Involved in Missions**

- **Stage a mission potluck.** Bring foods common to the countries of the featured division. Check your local library for international cookbooks. *Children's Mission* has several recipes for each quarter.
- **Have a mission progressive party.** Plan various mission-centered activities in different homes or parts of the church. Groups spend 15 to 20 minutes in each place. Some things to do are: films, quizzes on missions, singing in a foreign language, eating food from the featured countries, listening to stories of mission heroes, or writing to someone in a mission land.
- **Do a research report on missions.** Assign individuals or groups research topics on particular countries or cultures. Have them report their findings to the group.

- Sing in another language. *Children's Mission* often includes a song in another language. Teach it to the whole Sabbath School.
- Invite people who sing in a language of the featured division to teach your group a song.
- Hold a mission conference. Invite special speakers, show films, have skits and quizzes. Plan an all-day mission emphasis, including a mission potluck.
- Get a pen pal from mission lands. *Guide* and *Mission* sometimes have names and addresses of pen pals.
- Send literature and greeting cards to mission lands. Requests often appear in the *Adventist Review*.
- Invite international students. Most colleges and universities have international students. Invite them to your Sabbath School for an interview about life in their country. Invite them home for a meal.
- Pray for specific mission needs. Take time in Sabbath School to pray for specific needs and unreached people groups.
- Organize a prayer vigil. Organize different people to pray around the clock for specific people groups that need the gospel.
- Make a stamp collection. Involve your group in collecting stamps from countries of the featured division. Display them at the end of the quarter.
- Get acquainted with immigrants and refugees. Get to know people who come from other cultures. Try to learn some of their language and customs. Do what you can to share the gospel with them. Help them with their problems.

### **Ideas for Mission Offering Promotion**

- Work with the division leaders and the Sabbath School Council to set goals for weekly mission offerings, Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, and Investment Offering.
- Help division leaders plan and make goal devices for mission offerings.
- Promote Investment.
- See that a Birthday Thank Offering is taken in all divisions at least once a month. Provide promotional material.
- Promote the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, setting a goal of three times the weekly offering.
- Keep the members informed about how they are doing in reaching their world mission offering goals.

### **Mission Involvement**

- Get youth involved in short term mission trips sponsored by the local church, school, or conference youth department.
- Encourage college age young people to apply for a position as a student missionary. Get a list of openings from your conference/mission Youth Department.

- Organize mission study groups.
- Organize prayer circles for world mission, concentrating on specific projects or unentered areas.
- Encourage correspondence with missionaries.
- Encourage vacationers to visit Adventist mission work and bring back reports of what they saw.

## Special Events

The world mission coordinator should plan several special events each year to focus on the challenge of world mission such as: Weekend Mission Conference, Mission Theme Days, Mission Potlucks, Children's Mission Parties, World Mission Vesper Programs, Thirteenth Sabbath Programs

## Resource materials

1. The General Conference Sabbath School and Personal Ministries web site has Bible Study Guides for Children through Young Adult as well as teaching helps and resources and links to Sabbath School University and other helpful sites. Visit at [sspm.gc.adventist.org](http://sspm.gc.adventist.org).

2. *Adventist Mission* is a General Conference office that produces the quarterly Mission magazines that include facts and stories about the division where the special projects chosen for the Thirteenth Sabbath offering are located, as well as a quarterly DVD that also features the division receiving the 13th Sabbath offering for that quarter. Contact your division Sabbath School department for more information. Materials and stories can be accessed on the web at [www.AdventistMission.org](http://www.AdventistMission.org). *Adventist Mission* is a General

3. *Adventist Frontiers*, produced by Adventist Frontier Missions, P.O. Box 346, Berrien Springs, MI 49103, is an independent ministry operated by Adventist lay members to plant churches among unreached people groups.

4. ADRA produces a monthly video called *ADRA's World* and a weekly radio program on cassette. These offer some good ideas about missions.

5. *Mission Felt Sets* are specifically designed each quarter to highlight the division projects which will benefit by the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering. These can be obtained through the Adventist Book Center.

6. The book *Getting Excited About Global Mission* by Dorothy Eaton Watts and James R. Hardin (Hagerstown, MD.: Review and Herald Publishing, 1989) is a good source of educational materials.

7. *You Can Make A Difference!* by Dorothy Eaton Watts (Silver Spring, MD.: Education Department of the General Conference, 1991), is a curricular unit on Adventist global mission for grades 7-12. It has quizzes, skits, games, and ideas for mission conferences, mission programs, mission prayer conferences, and many other events that would work well in a church setting.

8. *Sabbath School Leadership Magazine*, published by Review & Herald Publishing, has programs and resources for Sabbath School ([www.sabbathschool.com](http://www.sabbathschool.com)).

## **Sabbath School Secretary**

### **The Role**

The Sabbath School secretary cares for the records, supplies, offerings, and clerical details of the Sabbath School and all its divisions. In larger schools these duties may be shared with one or more assistants.

### **Line of Authority**

The secretary is responsible to the general superintendent, assistant superintendent as assigned, and to the Sabbath School Council.

Assistant secretaries report to the secretary. Division leaders and teachers are also responsible for reporting membership, attendance, daily lesson study, and offerings to the secretary.

Class secretaries are responsible to the general Sabbath School secretary for information on membership, attendance, daily lesson study, and offerings.

### **Time Commitment – 10 Hours a month plus Sabbath morning duties**

The secretary, or an assistant, must be on duty every Sabbath.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

It is the duty of the secretary to attend to the clerical work of the Sabbath School— keep records and statistics, oversee supplies, provide communication and care for the Sabbath School offerings.

## **Keeping Records and Statistics**

1. Distribute and collect the class record cards, offering envelopes, and personal ministries report blanks.

2. Check record cards, fill in omissions, count and record the offerings.

3. Promptly enter all weekly statistics into the *Sabbath School Record and Registry*.

4. Secure and preserve a receipt from the church treasurer for all Sabbath School offerings.

5. Transfer the names of all class members to the new Sabbath School class records each quarter and at the beginning of the year.

6. Maintain a Sabbath School membership file including baptized, unbaptized, inactive and prospective members.

7. Maintain the weekly, monthly, quarterly, and yearly records required.

8. Keep minutes of meetings of the Sabbath School Council on permanent file.

9. Preserve all records and pass them on to a successor.

### **Overseeing Supplies**

1. Order, through the Personal Ministries secretary, supplies authorized by the Sabbath School Council. This includes Bible Study Guides, program helps, teaching aids, and magazines.

2. Provide the Sabbath School Council with a recommended list of supplies for their approval. This should be updated each quarter and changes made in the standing orders from publishing houses, if this system is used in your area indicating if more or fewer of any items are needed. Allow one quar-



ter for the changes to take effect.

3. Request necessary free supplies from the conference or mission Sabbath School department. The following are usually sent each quarter on a standing-order basis: mission quarterlies, class record cards, class record envelopes, expense envelopes, quarterly report forms, and extension division report blanks, and in some divisions, Investment label report cards.

4. Open Sabbath School supplies and place them where they may be easily distributed weekly or quarterly.

5. Distribute all Sabbath School publications and supplies to the division leaders and teachers.

- Program materials and teacher's helps will be needed several weeks in advance for efficient planning.

- Children's take home papers such as *Our Little Friend*, *Primary Treasure*, *Guide*, *Insight*, or whatever is used in your division, may be distributed to the departments on the day they are to be used.

- Lesson quarterlies should be given out one or two weeks in advance of the new quarter.

6. Arrange for the use or disposal of out-of-date Sabbath School materials. Some can be packaged and sent to fields around the world. Contact the local conference/mission Sabbath School director for instructions on how to do this.

### **Providing Communication**

1. Send or telephone announcements of the Sabbath School Council.

2. Pass on information from the conference/mission Sabbath School depart-

ment about workshops, training seminars, new policies, and new materials to those who need the information.

3. Keep the Sabbath School in all its divisions informed of progress, trends, plans, and achievements through occasional reports during the regular program.

4. Compile a complete and accurate quarterly Sabbath School report on Sabbath School Report Form A, and send it promptly to the local conference/mission Sabbath School department.

5. Prepare monthly and quarterly statistical reports for the Sabbath School Council. Use the report forms provided by your Conference/Mission Sabbath School department.

6. Prepare a list of inactive or missing members to be given to class or division leaders.

7. Send a list of names and addresses of Sabbath School officers and division leaders to the conference/mission Sabbath School department as soon as elections are held, or subsequent changes are made. The church clerk sends in only the names of the superintendent and secretary. The Sabbath School department needs the names of all officers in order to send out specific information and supplies.

8. Keep the Sabbath School membership apprised of the progress of the Sabbath School through the use of reports.

9. Make sure that all Sabbath School meetings are publicized in the church bulletin. These include Sabbath School Council meetings, teachers' meetings, and Sabbath School workshops.

## **Attending Meetings**

1. Participate in Sabbath School Council meetings, take notes, write up the minutes, and provide copies to all members.

2. The secretary or an assistant may be asked to attend teachers' meetings to keep a record of any recommendations for the Sabbath School Council.

3. The secretary should work with the Assistant Superintendent for membership to put together an accurate set of membership and attendance records.

- Help count the offering.
- Help with record keeping.
- Fulfill specific regular responsibilities as assigned.

## **Caring for Offerings**

1. Collect the offering envelopes from each class.

2. Count the money, record the amount, and turn the funds over to the church treasurer as soon as possible and get a receipt.

3. Keep a permanent file of the receipts.

4. Approve bills for Sabbath School materials and supplies before the treasurer pays them.

5. Ask the treasurer for regular monthly financial statements.

## **Assistant Secretary**

It is the responsibility of the assistant secretary to:

1. Perform the duties of the secretary in his or her absence.

2. At the direction of the secretary, perform such tasks as:

- Distribute and collect supplies.
- Share in the responsibility of caring for supplies.

# The Adult and Young Adult Divisions

*The leadership functions of the Adult and Young Adult divisions are nearly identical. The Sabbath School Bible Study Guides for both groups cover the same topics, though in different formats. In some cases, the two groups meet together for the Sabbath School program and then divide into separate classes. In other churches, they may function as separate departments.*

## Adult/Young Adult Division Leader

### The Role

The role of the division leader is to oversee the Sabbath School program and lesson study of the division. Assistants may be chosen to work with the division leader.

### Line of Authority

The division leader is responsible to the general superintendent and to the Sabbath School Council and should work closely with the Sabbath School secretary. Assistant division leaders, teachers, song leader, pianist, organist, greeters, and ushers report to the division leader.

### Time Commitment –14 hours a month plus time spent on Sabbath morning.

The division leader should plan to spend two to four hours a month in planning, gathering material, and contacting participants. At least two hours a week, outside of the Sabbath program, should be spent organizing, planning, recruiting, and training. One to two hours a month should be

budgeted for the Sabbath School Council.

### Duties and Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the division leader fall into four main categories: leadership development, planning, weekly programs, and communication.

### Leadership Development

It is the responsibility of the division leader to:

1. Recommend names of teachers or discussion group leaders to the Sabbath School Council.
2. Plan for and be in charge of weekly teachers' meetings.
3. Attend, and encourage other officers and teachers to attend, Sabbath School workshops and leadership training seminars designed to assist them in their responsibilities.
4. Make available to division teachers helpful training courses and other materials to aid in self-improvement.
5. See that the church library has the necessary resources in the areas of teaching techniques, program ideas, world mission education, Bible study aids, and maps.

## **Planning Weekly Programs**

It is the responsibility of the division leader to:

1. Serve as a member of the Sabbath School Council.
2. Present requests to the Sabbath School Council for needed supplies, equipment, or personnel.
3. Lead out in planning the weekly programs.
4. Lead out in planning for periodic social and fellowship activities for the division, such as banquets, picnics, retreats, camping weekends, and various kinds of class social activities.
5. Coordinate division activities with the local church calendar of events.
6. Lead out in the development of a yearly plan for community outreach events such as Community Guest Day, Friendship Evangelism, and Branch Sabbath Schools, working closely with the general superintendent or the assistant superintendent for evangelism and the Personal Ministries leader of the church.
7. Plan for classes of ten to twelve members.
8. Oversee and promote the five Sabbath School offerings: weekly mission offering, Thirteenth Sabbath offering, Birthday-Thank offering, Investment fund, and Sabbath School expense offering.
9. Schedule the divisions that will participate in the Thirteenth Sabbath programs.
10. In coordination with the church pastor, plan for a Pastor's Bible Class for new members and other interested people.

## **Communication**

1. Inform Sabbath School teachers and officers of conference/mission sponsored training seminars or workshops in their area of interest.
2. Arrange for the Sabbath School program to be printed in the church bulletin.
3. Advertise special Sabbath School programs and outreach activities through announcements, bulletin notices, newsletter articles, and bulletin board notices.
4. Visit classes regularly.
5. Plan for ways to express appreciation and affirmation to the volunteers who staff the Sabbath School.

## **Adult/Young Adult Teacher**

### **The Role**

The role of the teacher is primarily to assist people in learning that will lead to faith development. The teacher is also expected to promote fellowship, community outreach, and world missions.

### **Line of Authority**

The teacher reports to the division leader. The assistant teacher reports to the teacher.

### **Time Commitment – 25 hours a month**

The time involved in lesson preparation depends on the background and training of the teacher. Usually a successful teacher will devote three to five hours in preparation during the week. He or she should also set aside two to four hours per month for teachers' meetings. In some cases teachers are also asked to attend the Sabbath School Council once a month.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the teacher to lead the Sabbath School class in meaningful and redemptive study of God's Word through creative and effective teaching methodologies.

1. Teach the lesson and/or serve as discussion leader, depending on the type of class.
2. Encourage daily lesson study.
3. Attend teachers' meetings and teacher training sessions.

4. Seek to involve the student in discussion and active learning.

5. Be aware of the characteristics of adult learners and the life issues with which they have to deal at particular periods of their lives and strive to meet those needs.

### **Class Leader**

Traditionally, the teacher has been responsible for running the mechanism of the Sabbath School class. This is not the ideal. Each class should have a class leader who is responsible for all these aspects of class management.

When it is not possible to have a class leader, some member of the class may be able to handle these tasks. Every effort should be made to avoid placing them on the shoulders of the teacher, whose main responsibility is to lead the class in the study of the Word.

The responsibilities of the class leader are:

1. Become acquainted with class members: their interests, spiritual journey, and needs.
2. See that members receive their Bible Study Guides in the edition that will benefit them most. The General Conference produces four editions: Standard, Teacher's, Large Print, and Easy Reading.
3. Watch for visitors and invite them to attend the class.
4. Welcome all, introduce guests, and provide an atmosphere of warm fellowship for members and guests.
5. Take the attendance record.
6. Deal with missing class members appropriate to their circumstances and needs, encouraging class members to

call, visit, or send cards.

7. Encourage participation by class members in the community outreach endeavors sponsored by the church and the Personal Ministries Council.

8. Promote the world mission offering.

9. Set a class offering goal and take up the weekly world mission offering

10. Devise ways to get class members interested and involved in world missions.

# The Youth Division

## Youth Sabbath School Leader

### The Role

The role of the youth Sabbath School leader is to coordinate programs that acquaint youth from 15 to 18 years (high school) with the gospel and to lead them to make a commitment to Christ and the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

### Line of Authority

The youth Sabbath School leader reports to the general Sabbath School Superintendent. The leader is expected to attend the Sabbath School Council. Teachers and youth staff are responsible to the leader. The leader will also cooperate with the Sabbath School secretary, world missions coordinator, and the superintendent for evangelism.

### Time Commitment – 8 hours a month plus Sabbath mornings

The leader should spend about two hours during the week and approximately one hour on Sabbath morning. Before the beginning of a new quarter, the leader should hold a one or two hour planning session with the entire staff. Time will be needed at the start of each quarter to get materials and accommodations ready for the new quarter. Another one or two hours will be needed

for the monthly Sabbath School Council.

### Duties and Responsibilities

It is the duty of the leader to administer the division, manage the program, and minister to the youth as a friend and counselor.

It is the duty of the youth leader to:

1. Learn about the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and moral developmental characteristics of youth, understand their developmental needs, and seek to meet those needs.
2. Give a sense of continuity and security to youth through regular attendance and beginning each program on time.
3. Maintain appropriate discipline.
4. Communicate unconditional love and acceptance.
5. Learn each youth's name and make contact with each of them as often as possible outside of the Sabbath School setting.

### Administer the Division

It is the duty of the youth leader to:

1. Take responsibility for the upkeep and organization of the division's supplies and equipment.
2. Decide with the assistants and teachers how to spend the division budget for materials and visuals.
3. Present needs for supplies, equipment, furniture, and room environment to the Sabbath School Council.

cil.

4. Work with assistant leaders and teachers to establish goals and activities that are age appropriate.

5. Recruit and train people to help with the details of the division, keeping in mind the need for substitutes and replacements.

6. Assure that there is an up-to-date record of names, addresses, phone numbers, and birthdays of all earliteens.

7. Distribute supplies such as teaching aids, program helps, memory verse booklets, and take home papers.

8. Plan, promote, and preside over teacher's meetings.

### **Manage the Weekly Program**

It is the duty of the youth leader to:

1. Plan an interesting program that will meet the developmental needs of youth.

2. Involve the youth in planning, leading out, and conducting each Sabbath School program under careful guidance and supervision.

### **Minister to the Youth**

It is the duty of the youth leader to:

1. Get acquainted with the families and understand the particular needs of the youth in the family situation.

2. Maintain open communication with the parents or guardian about goals and objectives of the program, special things that are happening, progress of the youth in faith development, and any serious behavioral problems.

## **Youth Sabbath School Teacher**

### **The Role**

The role of the youth Sabbath School teacher is to acquaint the youth in Sabbath School from ages 15 through 18 with the gospel and to lead them to make a commitment to follow Christ and to become involved in the mission of the Adventist church.

### **Line of Authority**

The youth Sabbath School teacher reports to the youth division leader. The teacher is expected to attend teachers' meetings and planning sessions.

### **Time Commitment – 8 hours a month plus 1 hour on Sabbath mornings**

The teacher should plan to spend about one hour during the week and approximately one hour on Sabbath morning. Another two to four hours per month will be needed for teachers' meetings and division planning sessions.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

It is the duty of the youth teacher to serve as a friend and counselor, support the program, teach the lesson, and minister to the youth in the class.

The youth Sabbath School teachers share many of the same responsibilities toward the youth and the youth Sabbath School as the leader. See the list of responsibilities under the youth leader section.



## ***Characteristics of Youth***

Youth is the bridge between the freedom of childhood and the responsibilities of adulthood. These years are some of the most stressful in life. Some of the characteristics of these years are:

### **Physical**

1. Forty percent of boys and ten percent of girls are still going through puberty at age 15½.
2. All girls have passed through puberty by the age of 17 while approximately 10 percent of boys are experiencing late hormonal changes.
3. The majority of youth have completed puberty and spend most of the youth years filling out physically and building strength.
4. Teenage youth are much concerned with the way they look: shape of features, hair, skin, height, weight.
5. During later adolescence fine motor skills, mechanical skills, reaction time, and eye-hand coordination near adult levels.

### **Mental**

1. Youth are interested in learning about careers.
2. They are interested in learning practical skills.
3. Mental activity may appear erratic because of hormonal changes and interests in boy-girl relationships, extracurricular activities, and jobs.
4. They have a better understanding of time, places, current events, and historical perspectives.
5. They are capable of handling difficult assignments that require research, organization, independent thinking, and creativity.

### **Emotional**

1. Teenage youth have many mood swings because of hormonal changes, uneven growth, and fatigue.
2. They are very sensitive about what others think about their looks and actions.
3. Fear of rejection makes it difficult for youth to express affection or appreciation openly.
4. Youth may feel strong conflict between desire for independence and need for safety and nurture, thus they are ambivalent in their feelings toward parents and teachers.

## **Social**

1. Teenage youth want to be appealing to the opposite sex, and heterosexual relationships are a top priority.
2. Adolescents have an intense need to belong to another person as well as to cliques, clubs, gangs, and teams. Extracurricular programs become very important.
3. Large group activities such as pep rallies, group cheering the crowd at a sports event, and a big crowd for any event are appealing to youth.
4. Conflict with parents and other authority figures is often intense as teenagers try to think for themselves and become their own person.
5. Peer pressure is very strong, and youth are often easier to live with at school than at home.
6. The teenager feels good will toward people in general and desires social responsibility.

## **Spiritual**

1. Youth are on a quest for values in all areas of life.
2. They are interested in ethical discussions about such areas as: drugs, humanism, evolution, nuclear war, violence, standards, environmental issues, world poverty, and sexuality.
3. Youth often feel a conflict between the code of ethics of their peer group and the moral ideals of adult society.
4. Teenage youth want to make a difference in their world and are drawn to a religion that helps them change things.
5. Teenagers can develop a meaningful relationship with Christ through a devotional life.

## **Needs**

The needs of youth are physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual.

## **Physical**

1. Youth need a comfortable learning environment with temperature in comfort zone and tables and chairs of good quality.
2. The program should provide for the teenagers' need for action and the use of their increased coordination and skills.

## **Mental**

1. Youth need to explore their world and have opportunities to dig for an-

swers to more complex problems.

2. They need opportunities to choose and to think independently. They need facts that will help them make correct ethical decisions.

3. They need adults who will take them seriously and help them in their search for knowledge and understanding.

4. They need correct information to help them understand issues such as: creation/evolution, drugs, humanism, violence, poverty, current events, and sexuality.

## **Emotional**

1. Youth need to feel they belong and are accepted. They have a great need for approval from adults as well as peers.

2. They want to feel needed by someone, to find their identity in doing something worthwhile. They need to be given leadership and to become involved.

3. They need help in developing self-control, independence, and self expression.

4. They need to experience unconditional love—being accepted and loved regardless of how they act. Youth are sensitive to criticism and often use this as an excuse to exit the church.

5. They need adults to help them achieve and develop their self worth, while treating them with respect.

## **Social**

1. Earliteens work best in groups of no more than ten.

2. They need to share their feelings and attitudes and know that they are heard and accepted.

3. They need to relate to adults who accept their racial and cultural differences without prejudice.

4. Youth are ready to interact with each other in learning activities. They need opportunities to talk with each other about spiritual issues, values, and ethical concerns.

5. They want adults to treat them with respect and as intelligent adults.

## **Spiritual**

1. Earliteens need models of spiritually minded people who reflect God's love, tolerance, patience, and firmness.

2. They need to have biblical truths that are meaningful and correctly

graded to their cognitive development.

3. They need to know the plan of salvation in its simplicity, to be led to accept Jesus as their Saviour, and to make a commitment through baptism if they have not already done so.

4. They need to know that Jesus loves them unconditionally.

5. They need adults to help them form habits of worship and a meaningful devotional life.

6. They need guidance in discovering biblical principles to govern their decisions about right and wrong.

7. They need to become involved in the world mission of the church both at home and in other lands.

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*The future of society will be determined by the youth of today. Satan is making earnest, persevering efforts to corrupt the mind and debase the character of every youth; and shall we who have more experience stand as mere spectators, and see him accomplish his purpose without hindrance? Let us stand at our post as minutemen, to work for these youth, and through the help of God to hold them back from the pit of destruction. — Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students, p. 47*

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## The Children's Divisions

*The church has two departments that deal with children's programs; the Sabbath School and Children's Ministries. The Sabbath School deals mostly with children's activities that take place on Sabbath morning. Children's Ministries deals with those programs designed for children that take place at times other than Sabbath morning.*

*Churches organize these activities in different ways. Your church may have designated Children's Ministries as the overall ministry to children, including Sabbath School. Other churches have combined the two and retain Sabbath School as the framework for all children's activities.*

*The job descriptions given below are specific to Sabbath morning activities. Lines of authority, governing committees and lists of responsibilities may vary according to how your church has chosen to organize itself.*

## The Junior/Teen Division

### Junior/Teen

The junior/teen division of the Sabbath School deals with children from 10 to 14 years of age. The standard curriculum materials are designed for a four year cycle with extra material included for those churches who have earliten sections.

In some churches there are enough children to organize a separate earliten division for thirteen and fourteen year old children. Youth of this age often prefer to meet by themselves rather than with the juniors.

The responsibilities of the leadership and teachers are the same, but many of the characteristics of the earli-

teens change. See the charts on the following pages for the main characteristics of juniors and teens.

### Junior/Teen Leader

#### The Role

The role of the junior/teen leader is to coordinate programs that acquaint children from 10 to 14 years old with the gospel and to lead them to make a commitment to follow Christ in baptism.

#### Line of Authority

The junior/teen leader reports to the Sabbath School superintendent. The leader is expected to attend either the

Sabbath School Council and/or the Children's Ministries Committee. Teachers and other personnel are responsible to the leader. The leader will also cooperate with the Sabbath School secretary, world mission coordinator, and the superintendent for evangelism.

### **Time Commitment – 10 hours a month plus Sabbath morning activities**

The leader should spend about two hours during the week and approximately one hour on Sabbath morning. Before the beginning of a new quarter, the leader should hold a one or two hour planning session with the entire staff. Time will be needed at the start of each quarter to arrange room decorations and get materials ready for the new quarter. Another one or two hours will be needed for the Sabbath School Council or the Children's Ministries Committee.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

It is the duty of the leader to love children, administer the division, manage the program, and minister to families.

#### **Love Children**

It is the duty of the junior/earliteen leader to:

1. Learn about the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and moral developmental characteristics of those in the division, understand the developmental needs of children between the ages of 10 to 14 years, and seek to meet

those needs.

2. Maintain appropriate discipline for the children's age level while communicating love and acceptance.

3. Learn each child's name and make contact with the child as often as possible outside of the Sabbath School setting in cooperation with the Children's Ministries Department of the church.

#### **Administer the Program**

It is the duty of the junior/earliteen leader to:

1. Take responsibility for the upkeep and organization of the division's supplies and equipment.

2. Decide with the assistants and teachers how to spend the division budget for materials and visuals.

3. Present needs for supplies, equipment, furniture, and redecoration to the Sabbath School Council.

4. Work with assistant leaders and teachers to establish goals and activities that are age appropriate.

5. Recruit and train people to help with the details of the division, remembering the need for substitutes and replacements.

6. Keep an up-to-date record of names, addresses, phone numbers, and birthdays for all children.

7. Distribute supplies such as teaching aids, program helps, memory verse booklets, and take home papers.

8. Plan, promote, and preside over teachers' meetings.

#### **Manage the Program**

It is the duty of the junior/teen

leader to:

1. Plan an interesting program that will meet the developmental needs of children of junior/teen age.
2. Involve the junior/teen in planning, leading out, and doing each Sabbath School program under careful guidance and supervision.

### **Minister to the Family**

It is the duty of the junior/earliteen leader to:

1. Get acquainted with the families and understand the particular needs of the child in the family situation.
2. Encourage the parents to go to Jesus with their perplexities. Let them know you are praying for them.
3. Maintain open communication with the parents or guardian about goals, objectives, special things that are happening, progress of the child, and behavioral problems.

## **Junior/Teen Sabbath School Teacher**

### **The Role**

The role of the junior/teen Sabbath School teacher is to acquaint a small group of children 10 to 12 years old with the gospel and to lead them to make a commitment to follow Christ in baptism and learn the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

### **Line of Authority**

The junior/teen teacher reports to the division leader. The teacher is ex-

pected to attend teacher's meetings and planning sessions.

### **Time Commitment – 8 hours a month plus Sabbath morning activities**

The teacher should plan to spend about one hour during the week and approximately one hour on Sabbath morning. Another two to four hours per month will be needed for teacher's meetings and division planning sessions.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

It is the duty of the junior/teen teacher to teach the lesson, love children, support the program, and minister to families.

### **Teach the Lesson**

It is the duty of the junior/teen teacher to:

1. Plan an interesting lesson that will meet the developmental needs of children of junior age and make them want to be sure they get to Sabbath School.
2. Plan to involve the children in each lesson through activities or discussion. Children of this age need involvement.
3. Plan for variety in the lesson. Alternate listening with responding, moving, visual, and tactile experiences.
4. Plan lessons that have a purpose and a simple spiritual message, using only items that will help communicate that purpose.

## **Love Children**

It is the duty of the junior/teen teacher to:

1. Learn about the physical, emotional, social, intellectual and moral developmental characteristics of juniors.
2. Understand the developmental needs of children between the ages of 10 to 12 years and seek to meet those needs.
3. Give a sense of continuity and security to the children by being there regularly and on time.
4. Maintain appropriate discipline for the children's age level
5. Communicate love and acceptance in all actions in dealing with the children.
6. Learn each child's name and make contact with the child as often as possible outside of the Sabbath School setting.
7. Greet all the children by name as they arrive.
8. Be sure that absent children get their Bible study guides and their take-home papers. A visit from their teacher will be treasured by the child.

## **Manage the Program**

It is the duty of the junior/teen teacher to:

1. Attend division planning sessions and teachers' meetings.
2. Present needs for supplies, equipment, furniture, and redecoration to the division leader.
3. Cooperate with the staff in establishing goals and activities that are age appropriate.

4. Keep an up-to-date record of names, addresses, phone numbers, and birthdays for all children.

## **Minister to the Family**

It is the duty of the junior/teen teacher to:

1. Encourage the parents to go to Jesus with their perplexities. Let them know you are praying for them.
2. Spend time getting acquainted with the family of each child in the class to help you understand the child better.
3. Maintain open communication with the parents or guardian of the child about goals and objectives of the class, special things that are happening, progress of the child in faith development, and behavioral problems.



## ***Characteristics of Junior Children***

This is the age when children's decisions ripen into commitment and baptism. Statistics show that more individuals are baptized at 12 years of age than at any other single year of life. If for some reason a child is deterred from making this commitment during the junior years, it becomes increasingly less likely that he or she will do so later.

### **Physical**

1. Growth slows and weight usually increases more than height during the junior years.

2. Girls as well as boys acquire strength during this period, and they admire strength, power, and bravery in others.

3. Girls have about 95 percent of their height and puberty has started in most by the end of their twelfth year. Boys vary more than girls in this area, only a few having begun puberty.

4. Juniors take a special interest in developing muscular skill and enjoy competitive games that require strength and speed.

5. They have abounding energy and a spirit of adventure. They love noise and find it very hard to be quiet.

### **Mental**

1. A junior's thinking differs little from that of adults. When their reactions seem irrational, it is because data essential for adequate judgment is lacking.

2. Juniors can think and reason, but abstract concepts such as love, peace, faith, and joy mean very little except in relation to real people and problems.

3. They have a fair concept of time and space and the relationship among nations and nationalities.

4. Juniors have a natural curiosity and appetite to learn new things about the world in which they live.

5. They enjoy problem solving and can be trained how to think of all possible points concerning a problem in order to arrive at a solution. They thrive on independent thinking.

6. They are capable of handling extended mental exertion and the development of projects.

7. They admire models and heroes who do outstanding exploits in the

areas of their personal interests or who exemplify the personal characteristics to which they aspire.

8. Juniors are open, talkative, communicative, energetic, mobile, dynamic, and sociable.

## **Spiritual**

1. Juniors understand sin and often become discouraged because they are plagued with desires they consider sinful.

2. They are prepared to respond with a deepening commitment to Christ, to experience the new birth, and to learn to have a relationship with God in prayer and Bible study.

3. If youth of this age meet unacceptance or condemnation by the church, they often begin to retreat from God.

4. Most juniors believe in God but have a hard time believing that He has any influence in their daily lives.

5. They have an interest in religion and ethical concerns, but at the same time are somewhat skeptical

## **Needs**

The needs of juniors are physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual.

## **Physical**

1. Juniors need a comfortable learning environment with the temperature in the comfort zone and tables and chairs the correct size.

2. They need a program that appeals to their exuberance, sense of adventure, and the testing of their strength and abilities.

## **Mental**

1. Juniors need to explore their world, to have opportunities to dig for answers to problems.

2. They need opportunities to choose and to think independently. They need the facts that will help them make correct ethical decisions.

3. They need adults who will take them seriously and help them in their search for knowledge and understanding.

## **Emotional**

1. Juniors need to feel they belong and are accepted. They have a great need

for approval from adults as well as peers.

2. They want to feel needed by someone, to find their identity in doing something worthwhile.

3. They need help in developing self-control, independence, and self-expression.

4. They need to experience unconditional love.

## **Social**

1. Juniors work best in groups of no more than eight.

2. They need to share their feelings and attitudes and know that they are heard and accepted.

3. They need to experience male as well as female role models in the Sabbath School.

4. They need to relate to adults who accept their racial and cultural differences without prejudice.

5. Juniors are ready to interact with each other in learning activities. They need opportunities to talk with each other about spiritual issues, values, and ethical concerns.

6. They need to experience appropriate touching, eye contact, and the focused attention of adults whom they admire.

7. They need to learn how to cope with violence and how to settle disputes without physical force.

## **Spiritual**

1. Juniors need models of spiritually minded people who reflect God's love, care, warmth, patience, and firmness.

2. They need to have biblical truths that are meaningful and correctly graded for their cognitive development.

3. They need to know the plan of salvation in its simplicity, and to be led to accept Jesus as their Saviour, and to make a commitment through baptism.

4. They need to know that Jesus loves them.

5. They need adults to help them form habits of worship and a meaningful devotional life.

6. They need guidance in discovering biblical principles to guide their decisions about what is right and wrong.

7. They need to become involved in the worldwide mission of the church both at home and in other lands.

# ***Characteristics of Teens***

## **Physical**

1. Teens are entering a period of rapid but somewhat uneven growth; they may experience intervals of physical depression and are often uncertain and awkward of movement.
2. Their motor senses develop before their judgment centers.
3. Their senses have developed more acuteness, especially sight and hearing.
4. The average age for puberty is 13.5 years. This change in body chemistry affects posture, coordination, voice, appearance, and inner tension.

## **Mental**

1. Teens are mentally energetic and active, but impulsive and erratic.
2. Their judgment and self-control have not yet developed to keep pace with their thoughtless, impulsive, venturesome tendencies.
3. Their mental processes, and consequently their pattern of living, tend to be disorderly.
4. However, they expect and respect orderliness on the part of parents, teachers, and leaders.
5. They appear to be mentally lazy, but only require proper motivation.

## **Social**

1. Girls titter and giggle; boys are boisterous and talkative; yet either at times will talk soberly with adults on serious subjects, such as current events.
2. Teens have strong individualistic tendencies and a keen, competitive spirit yet find it difficult to be themselves when faced with peer pressure.
3. Prestige with their peer group is often of more importance to them than the approval of adults.
4. They want to be given more freedom, leadership, and responsibility, but still require close guidance.
5. They tend to argue with brothers and sisters and to draw away from parents.

## **Emotional**

1. Teens are unsettled, uncertain, self-conscious, and insecure.
2. Their interests waver between childhood and adulthood.
3. They thirst for fellowship and group acceptance.
4. They are painfully conscious of their mistakes.

5. They often feel condemned by adults and by God and need a great deal of understanding.

6. Their irreverent, disrespectful, willful, insubordinate, defiant attitude usually is an unconscious resentment of being forced to leave the freedom of childhood for the responsibilities of adulthood.

## **Spiritual**

1. Earliteens have sufficient ability to find and to use help from the Bible.

2. They have increased reasoning ability but are hesitant because of lack of experience.

3. They are assailed by many doubts and questions.

4. They are strongly drawn to God, but are, at the same time, subjected to strong temptations and discouragements, and are likely to give up.

5. They are ready for more complex thinking about ethical and religious problems.

6. They are interested in religious faith, group life, and church activities, including discussion and recreation.

## **Needs**

The needs of teens are physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual.

## **Physical**

1. Earliteens need a comfortable learning environment with the temperature in the comfort zone and tables and chairs the correct size.

2. They need a program that appeals to their exuberance, sense of adventure, and testing of their strength and abilities.

## **Mental**

1. Teens need to explore their world, to have opportunities to dig for answers to more complex problems.

2. They need opportunities to choose and to think independently. They need facts that will help them make correct ethical decisions.

3. They need adults who will take them seriously and help them in their search for knowledge and understanding.

4. They need correct information to help them understand issues such as: creation/evolution, drugs, humanism, and sexuality.

## **Emotional**

1. Teens need to feel they belong and are accepted. They have a great need for approval from adults as well as peers

2. They want to feel needed by someone, to find their identity in doing something worthwhile. They need to be given leadership and to become involved.
3. They need help in developing self-control, independence, and self-expression.
4. They need to experience unconditional love. Teens are more sensitive to criticism than perhaps any other age level.
5. They need adults to help them achieve and to develop their self worth.

## **Social**

1. Teens work best in groups of no more than eight.
2. They need to share their feelings and attitudes and know that they are heard and accepted.
3. They need to experience male as well as female role models in the Sabbath School.
4. They need to relate to adults who accept their racial and cultural differences without prejudice.
5. Teens are ready to interact with each other in learning activities. They need opportunities to talk to each other about spiritual issues, values, and ethical concerns.
6. They need to experience appropriate touching, eye contact, and the focused attention of adults whom they admire.

## **Spiritual**

1. Teens need models of spiritually minded people who reflect God's love, tolerance, patience, and firmness.
2. They need to have biblical truths that are meaningful and correctly graded for their cognitive development.
3. They need to know the plan of salvation in its simplicity, to be led to accept Jesus as their Saviour, and to make a commitment through baptism.
4. They need to know that Jesus loves them unconditionally.
5. They need adults to help them form habits of worship and a meaningful devotional life.
6. They need guidance in discovering biblical principles to guide their decisions about what is right and wrong.
7. They need to become involved in the worldwide mission of the church both at home and in other lands.

# The Primary Division

## Primary Sabbath School Leader

### The Role

The role of the primary leader is to coordinate programs that acquaint children from six to nine years with the gospel and the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

### Line of Authority

The primary leader reports to the Sabbath School superintendent or to the children's ministries coordinator. The leader is expected to attend either the Sabbath School Council or the children's ministries committee. Teachers and primary staff are responsible to the leader. The leader will also cooperate with the Sabbath School secretary, world mission coordinator, and the superintendent for evangelism.

### Time Commitment – 8 hours a month plus Sabbath morning activities

The leader should spend about two hours during the week and approximately one hour on Sabbath morning. Before the beginning of a new quarter, the leader should hold a one or two hour planning session with the entire staff. Time will be needed at the start of each quarter to change room decorations and get materials ready for the new

quarter. Another one or two hours will be needed for the Sabbath School Council or the Children's Ministries Committee.

### Duties and Responsibilities

It is the duty of the leader to love children, administer the division, manage the program, and minister to families.

### Love Children

It is the duty of the primary leader to:

1. Learn about the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and moral developmental characteristics and needs of primary children.
2. Maintain appropriate discipline for the children's age level.
3. Communicate love and acceptance.
4. Learn each child's name and make contact with the child as often as possible outside of the Sabbath School setting.

### Administer the Division

It is the duty of the primary leader to:

1. Take responsibility for the upkeep and organization of the division's supplies and equipment.
2. Decide with the assistants and teachers how to spend the division budget for materials and visuals.

3. Present needs for supplies, equipment, furniture, and redecoration to the appropriate governing body.

4. Work with assistant leaders and teachers to establish goals and activities that are age appropriate.

5. Recruit and train people to help with the details of the program, keeping in mind the need for substitutes and replacements.

6. Supervise the work of the assistants and teachers.

7. Keep an up-to-date record of names, addresses, phone numbers, and birthdays for all children.

8. Distribute supplies such as teaching aids, program helps, memory verse booklets, and take home papers.

9. Divide the group into small groups of not more than five per group. Group children of the same age together.

10. Plan, promote, and preside over teachers' meetings.

### **Manage the Program**

It is the duty of the primary leader to:

1. Plan an interesting program that will meet the developmental needs of children of primary age.

2. Plan to involve the children in each item of the program through their minds, hands, feet, or bodies.

3. Plan for variety in the program. Alternate listening with responding, moving, singing, visual, and tactile experience.

### **Minister to the Family**

It is the duty of the primary leader

to:

1. Become acquainted with the families and understand the particular needs of the child in the family situation.

2. Encourage the parents to go to Jesus with their perplexities. Let them know you are praying for them.

3. Maintain open communication with the parents or guardian of the child about goals and objectives of the program, special things that are happening, progress of the child in faith development, and behavioral problems.

## **Primary Sabbath School Teacher**

### **The Role**

The role of the primary Sabbath School teacher is to acquaint a small group of children from six to nine years old with the love of Jesus and the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

### **Line of Authority**

The primary teacher reports to the division leader. The teacher is expected to attend teacher's meetings and division planning sessions.

### **Time Commitment – 8 hours a month plus Sabbath morning activities**

The teacher should plan on spending about one hour during the week and approximately one hour on Sabbath morning. Another two to four hours per month will be needed for teachers' meetings and division planning sessions.



## **Duties and Responsibilities**

It is the duty of the primary teacher to love children, manage the program, teach the lesson, and minister to families.

### **Love Children**

It is the duty of the primary teacher to:

1. Learn about the physical, emotional, social, intellectual and moral developmental characteristics and needs of primaries.

2. Give a sense of continuity and security to the children by being there regularly and on time.

3. Maintain appropriate discipline for the children's age level.

4. Communicate love and acceptance in all actions in dealing with the child.

5. Learn each child's name and make contact with the child as often as possible outside of the Sabbath School setting

6. Greet each child by name.

7. Be sure that absent children get their lesson quarterlies and their take home papers. A visit from his teacher will be treasured by the child.

### **Manage the Program**

It is the duty of the primary teacher to:

1. Attend division planning sessions and teacher's meetings.

2. Present needs for supplies, equipment, furniture, and room decor to the division leader.

3. Cooperate with the staff in establishing goals and activities that are age appropriate.

4. Keep an up-to-date record of names addresses, phone numbers, and

birthdays for all children.

5. Distribute supplies such as teaching aids, program helps, memory verse booklets, and take-home papers.

### **Teach the Lesson**

It is the duty of the primary teacher to:

1. Plan an interesting lesson that will meet the developmental needs of children of primary age.

2. Plan to involve the children in each lesson through their minds, hands, feet, or bodies. Children of this age need to respond.

3. Plan for variety in the lesson. Alternate listening with responding, moving, visual, and tactile experiences.

4. Plan lessons that have a purpose, a simple spiritual message, using only items that will help communicate that purpose.

5. Give attention to visuals, making sure they are suitable and there are no objectionable features in the pictures.

### **Minister to the Family**

It is the duty of the primary teacher to:

1. Encourage parents to help their children learn the memory verse each week.

2. Encourage parents to read the Sabbath School lesson to primaries. Reading is still too difficult for most to be able to study on their own.

3. Encourage the parents to go to Jesus with their perplexities. Let them know you are praying for them.

4. Spend time getting acquainted with the family of each child in the class to help you understand the child better.

## ***Characteristics of Primary Children***

This is the age of decision making. Primaries may not act out their decisions until later years, but it is during these crucial years—from 6 to 9 years of age—that basic attitudes are formed, and these have lifelong impact.

### **Physical**

1. This is the motor period of life, when the child works and plays hard to the point of exhaustion.
2. They have a hard time sitting still. They must be provided with action or they will provide their own.
3. Children still prefer activities using large muscle activities as opposed to precision work.

### **Mental**

1. Primaries are curious and eager to learn.
2. This is the peak age of creativity and memorization.
3. Primary children have an intense imagination, but are able to differentiate between the real and the imaginary.
4. They like adventure and thrill at being able to solve problems and discover things for themselves.
5. They are concrete, literal thinkers, not understanding symbolic or abstract ideas, though they are beginning to understand time, space, distance, and number concepts fairly well.
6. Primary children like to use their hands to make things, to construct, and to tear things apart to see how they work.
7. They prefer to read material with large print as many are still farsighted. Reading ability varies greatly.

### **Emotional**

1. Primaries respond well to affection, and they need a sense of approval and security.
2. Their feelings are sensitive and easily crushed.
3. Primaries feel confident one day and appear withdrawn the next. They need lots of sympathetic understanding.

### **Social**

1. Younger primaries work well with boys and girls together, but later they draw apart and feel uneasy with the opposite sex.
2. They enjoy group games and activities.

3. Friends are important and peer pressure is strong as they compare themselves with other children.

4. Primaries are beginning to cast off some of the ties of family and are sometimes torn between the wishes of parents and the demands of peers.

### **Spiritual**

1. Primary children have a very tender conscience.

2. They know right from wrong and can understand the meaning of sin. They are becoming aware of their need for salvation.

3. They are beginning to reason out their own decisions according to their Bible knowledge.

4. Primaries are beginning to form values and attitudes of their own based upon the foundation that has been laid.

5. They have a spiritual hunger and a strong impulse to obey.

6. Primaries enjoy group outreach activities. This is the age when unselfish service for others is most readily entered into.

### **Needs**

The needs of primary children are physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual.

### **Physical**

1. Primary children need a comfortable learning environment such as temperature in the comfort zone and tables and chairs the correct size.

2. They need to move. Use activities that involve the arms, hands, feet, and body.

3. They need to respond actively to what they learn. They need to be involved by answering questions, role playing, participating in games and quizzes, drawing or other activities.

4. They need to be accepted, regardless of the stage they are at in learning to read or write.

### **Mental**

1. Primary children need to know and explore their environment, to have their natural curiosity satisfied.

2. They need opportunities to choose and to think.

3. They need adults who will take them seriously and help them in their search for knowledge and understanding.

4. They need opportunities to use their imagination and creativity and to have their efforts accepted and displayed.

## **Emotional**

1. Primary children need to be loved and accepted, to know that they are special. They need freedom to make mistakes and to learn without fear of ridicule or punishment.
2. They need models of emotionally mature, kind, loving, patient people.
3. They need leaders and teachers who are calm and peaceful.

## **Social**

1. Primaries work best in groups of no more than six.
2. They need to share their feelings and attitudes and know that they are heard and accepted.
3. They need to experience male as well as female role models in the Sabbath School.
4. Young children need to relate to adults who accept their racial and cultural differences without prejudice.
5. Primaries are ready to interact with each other in learning activities. They need opportunities to talk to each other about spiritual issues.
6. They need to experience appropriate touching, eye contact, and the focused attention of adults whom they admire.

## **Spiritual**

1. Primary children need models of spiritually minded people who reflect God's love, care, warmth, patience, and firmness.
2. They need to have biblical truths that are meaningful and correctly graded for their cognitive development.
3. They need to know the plan of salvation in its simplicity and to be led to accept Jesus as their Saviour.
4. They need to know that Jesus loves them unconditionally.
5. They need adults to help them form habits of worship and service for others and to participate in group outreach activities.
6. They need guidance in discovering biblical principles to guide their decisions about what is right and wrong. They need many opportunities to discuss values.

# The Kindergarten Division

## The Kindergarten Leader

### The Role

The role of the kindergarten leader is to coordinate programs that acquaint children from four to five years with God's love.

### Line of Authority

The kindergarten leader reports to the Sabbath School superintendent or the children's ministries coordinator. The leader is expected to attend either the Sabbath School Council or the Children's Ministries Committee. Teachers and kindergarten staff are responsible to the leader. The leader will also cooperate with the Sabbath School secretary, world missions coordinator, and the superintendent for evangelism.

### Time Commitment – 10 hours a month plus Sabbath morning activities

The leader should spend about two hours during the week and approximately one hour on Sabbath morning. Before the beginning of a new quarter, the leader should hold a one or two hour planning session with the entire staff. Time will be needed at the start of each quarter to change room decorations and get materials ready for the new quarter. Another one or two hours will be needed for the Sabbath School Council

or the Children's Ministries Committee.

### Duties and Responsibilities

It is the duty of the leader to love children, administer the division, manage the program, and minister to families.

### Love Children

It is the duty of the kindergarten leader to:

1. Learn about the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and moral developmental characteristics and needs of children between the ages of four to six years and seek to meet those needs.
2. Maintain appropriate discipline for the children's age level.
3. Communicate love and acceptance by the way each child is spoken to and treated in all aspects, such as greeting each child by name and making contact with the child as often as possible outside of the Sabbath School setting. A visit from his or her teacher will be treasured by the child.

### Administer the Division

It is the duty of the kindergarten leader to:

1. Take responsibility for the upkeep and organization of the division's supplies and equipment.
2. Decide with the assistants and teachers how to spend the division budget for materials and present needs for

supplies, equipment, furniture, and other needs to the Sabbath School Council.

3. Work with assistant leaders and teachers to establish goals and activities that are age appropriate.

4. Recruit and train people to help with the details of the program, keeping in mind the need for substitutes and replacements.

5. Supervise the work of the assistants and teachers.

6. Keep an up-to-date record of names, addresses, phone numbers, and birthdays for all children.

7. Distribute supplies such as teaching aids, program helps, memory verse booklets, and take-home papers.

8. Divide the group into small groups of not more than five. Group children of the same age together.

9. Plan, promote, and preside over teachers' meetings.

### **Manage the Program**

It is the duty of the kindergarten leader to:

1. Plan an interesting program that will meet the developmental needs of children of kindergarten age with lots of variety. Alternate listening with responding, moving, singing, visual, and tactile experience.

2. Plan to involve the children in each item of the program through their minds, hands, feet, or bodies.

3. Give attention to visuals, making sure they are suitable, and there are no objectionable features in the pictures.

### **Minister to the Family**

It is the duty of the kindergarten leader to:

1. Provide parents with a copy of the program and the words for the songs and fingerplays to use in home worships. Encourage parents to read the lesson to their children.

2. Invite parents to a social gathering for a time of sharing, studying, and praying together.

3. Teach the parents to go to Jesus with their perplexities. Let them know you are praying for them.

### **The Kindergarten Teacher**

#### **The Role**

The role of the kindergarten teacher is to acquaint a small group of children from four to five years with the love of Jesus.

#### **Line of Authority**

The kindergarten teacher reports to the division leader. The teacher is expected to attend teachers' meetings and division planning sessions.

#### **Time Commitment – 6 hours a month plus Sabbath morning activities**

The teacher should plan to spend about one hour during the week and approximately one hour on Sabbath morning. Another two to four hours per month will be needed for teachers' meetings and division planning sessions.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

It is the duty of the kindergarten teacher to love children, manage the program, teach the lesson, and minister to families.

### **Love Children**

It is the duty of the kindergarten teacher to:

1. Learn about the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and moral developmental characteristics of the children in the kindergarten division, understand their developmental needs, and seek to meet those needs.

2. Maintain appropriate discipline for the children's age level.

3. Communicate love and acceptance by the way each child is spoken to and treated in all aspects, such as greeting each child by name and making contact with the child as often as possible outside of the Sabbath School setting. A visit from his or her teacher will be treasured by the child.

4. Be sure that absent children get their Bible study guides and their take home papers.

### **Manage the Program**

It is the duty of the kindergarten teacher to:

1. Attend division planning sessions and teachers' meetings.

2. Present needs for supplies, equipment, furniture, and learning environment to the division leader.

3. Cooperate with the staff in establishing goals and activities that are age appropriate.

4. Keep an up-to-date record of

names, addresses, phone numbers, and birthdays for all children.

5. Distribute supplies such as teaching aids, program helps, memory verse booklets, and take home papers.

### **Teach the Lesson**

It is the duty of the kindergarten teacher to:

1. Plan an interesting lesson that will meet the developmental needs of children of kindergarten age. Alternate listening with responding, moving, visual, and tactile experiences. Plan to involve the children in each lesson through their minds, hands, feet, or bodies. Children of this age need to respond.

2. Plan lessons that have a purpose and a simple spiritual message, using only items that will help communicate that purpose.

3. Give attention to visuals, making sure they are suitable and there are no objectionable features in the pictures.

### **Minister to the Family**

It is the duty of the kindergarten teacher to:

1. Encourage parents to read the Sabbath School lesson to their children and help them learn the memory verse each week.

2. Encourage the parents to go to Jesus with their perplexities. Let them know you are praying for them.

3. Spend time getting acquainted with the family of each child in your class to help you understand the child better.

## ***Characteristics of Kindergarten Children***

This is the age of decision making. Kindergartners may not act out their decisions until later years, but it is during these crucial years—from four to five years of age—that basic attitudes are formed that have lifelong importance.

### **Physical**

1. Kindergartners are active, energetic, and find it hard to sit still for more than a few minutes.
2. At this age children find it hard to focus on small details.
3. Small muscles lag behind larger ones in development and coordination. Girls are usually ahead of boys in development.

### **Mental**

1. Kindergartners are talkative and eager to learn.
2. They are full of curiosity about their world and ask many questions. Everything is “why?”
3. They are realistic thinkers, unable at this age to understand symbolism or abstract concepts.
4. Children at this age are easily distracted and can think of only one thing at a time.
5. They still have only a limited understanding of time, space, and numbers.
6. Kindergarten children learn best through the use of their senses, real objects that they can touch, see, and smell.
7. Fact and fancy are still not clearly distinguished by the younger kindergarten children.

### **Emotional**

1. Kindergartners have intense feelings and fears.
2. They want to be the center of everything and to monopolize the leader’s or teacher’s attention.
3. They enjoy routine and are upset by changes in the program, the room arrangement, or a change of teachers.

### **Social**

1. Kindergartners want other children to play with.
2. They are willing to share and take turns.
3. They like to pretend, imitating grownups.
4. Children of this age can be quite quarrelsome, yet are able to listen to reason.



## **Spiritual**

1. Kindergarteners have a simple trust in a personal God and believe strongly in angels, prayer, and God's watch care.
2. They are learning the difference between the voice of God and the voice of Satan.
3. They can distinguish between right and wrong; however they judge the seriousness of a wrong by the severity of the punishment.
4. They understand confession, restitution, and forgiveness.
5. They have many questions about religion and death.
6. They are able to have a real relationship with Jesus and to experience worship, awe, and thankfulness.
7. They enjoy worship rituals at home and at church.
8. They are beginning to understand a little of the world beyond their own home and community and can understand the concept of mission and sacrificing self for others.

## **Needs**

The needs of kindergarten children are physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual.

## **Physical**

1. Kindergarten children need a comfortable learning environment: with temperature in the comfort zone and tables and chairs the correct size.
2. They need to move. Use activities that involve the arms, hands, feet, and body.
3. They should not be required to do activities that require precision and the use of the small muscles.
4. They need to be accepted no matter at what stage they are in learning to read or write.

## **Mental**

1. Kindergarten children need to know, to explore their environment, to have their natural curiosity stimulated.
2. They need opportunities to choose and to think.
3. They need adults who will take their questions seriously and help them in their search for knowledge and understanding.
4. They need opportunities to use their imagination and creativity and to have their efforts accepted and displayed.
5. They need to receive knowledge in small doses to fit their short attention span.

## **Emotional**

1. Kindergarten children need to be loved and accepted, to know that they are special.
2. They need to feel secure and connected to people.
3. They need freedom to make mistakes and to learn without fear of ridicule or punishment.
4. They need models of emotionally mature, kind, loving, patient people.
5. They need leaders and teachers who are calm and peaceful. It is important to avoid using a loud voice or extreme actions. Even stories should not be over-dramatized.
6. They need time to adapt to changes in routine, so it is best to make changes slowly.

## **Social**

1. Kindergarteners work best in groups of four or five.
2. They need to share their feelings and attitudes and know that they are heard and accepted.
3. They need to experience male as well as female role models in the Sabbath School.
4. Young children need to relate to adults who accept their racial and cultural differences without prejudice.
5. To maximize their learning, they need many activities in which they work in groups with other children.
6. They need to experience appropriate touching, eye contact, and the focused attention of adults whom they admire.

## **Spiritual**

1. Kindergarten children need models of spiritually minded people who reflect God's love, care, warmth, patience, and firmness.
2. They need to learn biblical truths that are meaningful and correctly graded for their cognitive development.
3. Because the conscience is still developing, kindergarten children need guidance in their decision making.
4. They need to know that Jesus loves them unconditionally.
5. They need adults to take their questions about religion and death seriously and to give answers that they can understand.
6. They need adults to discuss Bible stories with them and to ask them questions about their understanding. Children of this age are very good at deceiving adults into thinking they understand.

# The Beginner/Cradle Roll Division

## Beginner/Cradle Roll Leader

### The Role

The role of the cradle roll leader is to coordinate programs and lessons that acquaint children from birth to three years of age with the love of Jesus. Some churches may prefer to call this the beginners division.

### Line of Authority

The cradle roll leader reports to the Sabbath School superintendent or to the children's ministries coordinator. The leader is expected to attend either the Sabbath School Council or the Children's Ministries Committee. Teachers and cradle roll staff are responsible to the leader. The leader will also cooperate with the Sabbath School secretary, world mission coordinator, and the superintendent for evangelism.

### Time Commitment – 6 Hours a month, plus Sabbath morning activities

The leader should spend about two hours during the week and approximately one hour on Sabbath morning. Before the beginning of a new quarter, the leader should hold a one or two hour planning session with the entire staff. Time will be needed at the start of each quarter to get materials ready for the new quarter. Another one or two hours will be needed for the Sabbath School Council or the Children's Ministries Committee.

## Duties and Responsibilities

It is the duty of the cradle roll leader to love children, administer the division, manage the program, and minister to families.

### Love Children

It is the duty of the cradle roll leader to:

1. Learn about the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and moral developmental characteristics of the children in the cradle roll division, understand the developmental needs of children from birth to three years, and seek to meet those needs.
2. Maintain appropriate discipline for the children's age level.
3. Communicate unconditional love and acceptance by the way the children are spoken to, held, and touched.
4. Learn each child's name and make contact with the child as often as possible outside of the Sabbath School setting, such as visiting the child's home and planning special social activities for cradle roll families.
5. Make sure someone is at the door to greet all children by name as they arrive, take them by the hand, and lead them to a seat or to whatever activity is going on.

### Administer the Division

It is the duty of the cradle roll leader to:

1. Take responsibility for the upkeep and organization of the division's

supplies and equipment.

2. Decide with the assistants and teachers how to spend the division budget for materials and visuals.

3. Present needs for supplies, equipment, furniture, and environment to the Sabbath School Council.

4. Work with assistant leaders and teachers to establish goals and activities that are age appropriate.

5. Recruit and train people to help with the details of the program, keeping in mind the need for substitutes and replacements.

6. Supervise the work of the assistants and teachers, giving on-the-job training as needed.

7. Keep an up-to-date record of names, addresses, phone numbers, and birthdays for all children.

8. Distribute supplies such as teaching aids, program helps, memory verse booklets, and take-home papers.

9. Plan, promote, and preside over teachers' meetings.

### **Manage the Program**

It is the duty of the cradle roll leader to:

1. Plan an interesting program that will meet the developmental needs of children of cradle roll age.

2. Keep the program the same from week to week; only as the children become very familiar with an item should it be replaced. Introduce no more than one or two new items each week.

3. Plan to involve the children in each item of the program through their minds, hands, feet, or bodies.

4. Plan for a variety in the program. Alternate listening with responding,

moving, singing, visual, and tactile experiences.

5. Plan programs that have a purpose and a simple spiritual message, using only items that will help communicate that purpose.

6. Give attention to visuals. All objects should be safe, soft, and unbreakable. Use large, uncluttered pictures.

### **Minister to the Family**

It is the duty of the cradle roll leader to:

1. Model tenderness, firmness, and love in the Sabbath School program. Young parents will learn much from observation.

2. Demonstrate the value of a loving touch, eye contact, and focused attention.

3. Provide parents with a copy of the program and the words for the songs and fingerplays to use in home worships.

4. Invite parents to a social gathering for a time of sharing, studying, and praying together.

5. Encourage parents to read the Sabbath School lesson even to the tiniest babies. This gives them a head start in their mental, emotional, and spiritual development.

6. Teach parents to go to Jesus with their perplexities. Let them know you are praying for them.

7. Work tactfully with parents who have left the church and return when a child is born. Involve them in the work of the division and encourage them in every way possible.

## **Cradle Roll Teacher**

### **The Role**

The role of the cradle roll teacher is to acquaint a small group of children from birth to three years with the love of Jesus.

### **Line of Authority**

The cradle roll teacher reports to the division leader. The teacher is expected to attend teachers' meetings and division planning sessions.

### **Time Commitment – 6 hours per month plus Sabbath morning activities**

The teacher should plan to spend about one hour during the week and approximately one hour on Sabbath morning. Another two to four hours per month will be needed for teachers' meetings and division planning sessions.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

It is the duty of the cradle roll teacher to love children, support the program, teach the lesson, and minister to families.

### **Love Children**

It is the duty of the cradle roll teacher to:

1. Learn about the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and moral developmental characteristics of the children in the cradle roll division, understand the developmental needs of children between the ages of birth and three years, and seek to meet those

needs.

2. Maintain appropriate discipline for the children's age level.

3. Communicate unconditional love and acceptance by the way the children are spoken to, held, and touched.

4. Learn each child's name and make contact with the child as often as possible outside of the Sabbath School setting.

5. Greet each child by name.

6. Be sure that absent children get their lesson quarterlies and their take-home papers. A visit from their teacher will be treasured by the child and the parents.

### **Support the Program**

It is the duty of the cradle roll teacher to:

1. Attend division planning sessions and teachers' meetings.

2. Present needs for supplies, equipment, furniture, and redecoration to the division leader.

3. Cooperate with the staff in establishing goals and activities that are age appropriate.

4. Keep an up-to-date record of names, addresses, phone numbers, and birthdays for all children.

5. Distribute supplies such as teaching aids, program helps, memory verse booklets, and take home papers.

### **Teach the Lesson**

It is the duty of the cradle roll teacher to:

1. Plan an interesting lesson that will meet the developmental needs of children of cradle roll age.

2. Plan to involve the children in each lesson through their minds, hands, feet, or bodies. Children of this age need to do and respond.

3. Plan for variety in the lesson. Alternate listening with responding, moving, visual, and tactile experiences.

4. Plan lessons that have a purpose, a simple spiritual message, using only items that will help communicate that purpose.

5. Give attention to visuals. All objects should be safe, soft, and unbreakable. Use large, uncluttered pictures.

### **Minister to the Family**

It is the duty of the cradle roll teacher to:

1. Model tenderness, firmness, and love in the Sabbath School lesson. Young parents will learn much from observation.

2. Demonstrate the value of a loving touch, eye contact, and focused attention.

3. Encourage parents to help their children learn the memory verse each week.

4. Encourage parents to read the Sabbath School lesson even to the tiniest babies. This gives them a head start in their mental, emotional, and spiritual development.

5. Encourage the parents to go to Jesus with their perplexities. Let them know you are praying for them.

6. Spend time getting acquainted with the family of each child in the class to help you understand the child better.

## **The Importance of Cradle Roll**

### **How did Jesus treat children and how did they respond?**

*Jesus was ever a lover of children. He accepted their childish sympathy and their open, unaffected love. The grateful praise from their pure lips was music in His ears, and refreshed His spirit when oppressed by contact with crafty and hypocritical men. Wherever the Saviour went, the benignity of His countenance and His gentle, kindly manner won the love and confidence of children. (The Desire of Ages, p. 511).*

### **How soon should a child be taught about God?**

*As soon as a child can love and trust his mother, then can he love and trust Jesus as the Friend of his mother. Jesus will be his Friend, loved and honored.—Child Guidance, p. 486.*

*One of the first sounds that should attract their [children's] attention is the name of Jesus, and in their earliest years they should be led to the footstool of prayer.—Child Guidance, p. 488.*

*The Lord has directed that the children, even from babyhood, should be taught of His goodness and His greatness, especially as revealed in His law, and shown in the history of Israel.—Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 32.*

## ***Characteristics of Beginner/Cradle Roll Children***

There is no period of human development more critical than the cradle roll years—especially the first two years. One educator said:

“If the sensitive years are ignored, they pass like dropped stitches, never to be picked up during the rest of a child’s life.”—Bernice T. Coy, *The Pastor and His Interest in Preschoolers*, p. 3.

### **Developmental**

1. Physical needs preempt all other needs for the child from birth to 24 months. Enough help needs to be available to care for physical comfort of cradle roll children (holding, feeding, changing, taking to restroom, etc).

2. Toddlers, one to two years of age, have a tremendous urge to be independent and do things on their own. They are very curious and need many opportunities for exploration, visual and tactile stimulation.

3. Young cradle roll children are self-focused and do not know how to play with others or to share before the age of three.

4. The toddler’s body demands exercise. Plan many activities for movement of hands and feet.

5. Two-year-olds often say No when they mean Yes. Phrase suggestions as statements rather than questions.

### **Cognitive**

1. Cradle roll children learn at different rates.

2. They learn moral behavior from specific situations, results, and consequences.

3. They do not understand intentionality.

4. Cradle roll children think syncretistically, linking together ideas that do not belong. For example: A cradle roll child does not understand “husband” and will call all men “Daddy.”

5. Symbolic language has no meaning for cradle roll children. Leaders should not refer to Jesus as the “rock,” the “shepherd,” or the “light of the world.”

6. Cradle roll children do not understand historical sequence, time, or distance. Places on the globe are meaningless.

7. A cradle roll child tends to focus on only one feature of a story. Stories should be very simple and to the point.

8. Repetition is a natural part of their learning process. The more something is repeated the more they enjoy it.

9. Biblical truth must be greatly simplified: God is real, God loves me, God

watches me, angels are real, angels help me, I can talk to God in prayer, God made the flowers, the Bible is a special book, Sabbath is a special day.

## **Needs**

The needs of cradle roll children are physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual.

### **Physical**

1. They need a comfortable learning environment with temperature in the comfort zone and tables and chairs the correct size.
2. They need to move. Use activities that involve the arms, hands, feet, and body.
3. They need to have the discomforts of hunger, thirst, or illness cared for immediately.

### **Mental**

1. They need to know, to explore their environment, and have to opportunities to choose and to think.
2. They need help in learning new words and ideas.
3. They need to receive knowledge in small doses to fit into their short attention span.

### **Emotional**

1. Cradle roll children need to be loved and accepted, to be touched and held, to receive eye contact and focused attention. They need to feel secure, connected to people.
2. They need freedom to make mistakes and to learn without fear of ridicule or punishment.

### **Social**

1. Cradle roll children work best either alone or in small groups of four or five individuals.
2. They need to experience male as well as female role models in the Sabbath School.

### **Spiritual**

1. Cradle roll children need models of spiritually minded people who reflect God's love, care, warmth, patience, and firmness.
2. They need to be taught biblical truths that are meaningful and correctly graded for their cognitive development.



## ***Discipline in Sabbath School***

### **Purpose**

The purpose of discipline is to teach the child self-reliance and self-control. All discipline, even that administered as punishment, should be redemptive in the sense that the disciplinary action moves the child toward self-government the next time the same problem arises. Simply controlling the immediate situation may be necessary, but it is not the ultimate aim of discipline.

*The object of discipline is the training of the child for self-government. He should be taught self-reliance and self-control.*—Education, p. 287.

*While under authority, the children may appear like well drilled soldiers but when the control ceases, the character will be found to lack strength and steadfastness. Having never learned to govern himself, the youth recognizes no restraint except the requirement of parent or teacher. This removed, he knows not how to use his liberty, and often gives himself up to indulgence that proves his ruin.*—Education, p. 288.

### **Preventive Discipline**

**1. Model Good Behavior.** Children are like mirrors reflecting the tone of voice and actions of adults.

**2. Prepare Carefully.** Take the time to have the program or lesson well prepared, with all materials in order so that your full attention can be given to the children.

**3. Arrive Early.** Arrive well before the children and be ready to greet them when they arrive, providing them with some activity to keep them busy and happy. Allow no opportunities for misbehavior.

**4. Know the Names.** Children feel valued when you know their names and something about their families, pets, and interests.

**5. Provide Adequate Supervision.** The fewer children a person has to supervise, the fewer problems there will be. There should be one adult for every five children in cradle roll and kindergarten; one for every six children in primary; one for every eight children in juniors and earliteens; and one for every ten youth.

**6. Plan an Interesting Program.** Use variety, surprise, visual aids, and activity. If the program is not interesting, the children will create their own entertainment, which will probably become a disciplinary situation.

**7. Have Few Rules.** The rules should be few and well chosen.

**8. Make Procedures Clear.** Make sure the children understand clearly what is expected of them in each situation.

**9. Avoid Crowding.** Have enough chairs and table space for all the chil-

dren. Crowding offers many temptations for misbehavior.

**10. Reward Good Behavior.** Give attention to those who are doing things right. Publicly affirm children who are reverent, helpful, take turns, raise their hands, come on time, etc.

### **Corrective Discipline**

**1. Establish Eye Contact.** Often a look and a head shake is enough. If that doesn't work move closer to the problem child. If the action doesn't stop, touch the child gently and give a positive statement of how you want him to act.

**2. Control Your Voice.** Never scold or yell at a child. Keep the voice even and the tone low and soothing. State calmly what you have to say. Do not show that you are upset.

**3. Be Fair.** Ask the child why they did what they did. Perhaps they didn't understand what you expected. Treat all children equally. Punishment should not be worse than the behavior.

**4. Be Firm.** Children will try adults to see if they mean what they say. Do not give in to whining and pleading.

**5. Be Consistent.** Don't discipline a child for something one time and overlook it another time. All staff in the division should follow the same discipline procedures.

**6. Reprove in Private.** If a child needs to be dealt with, do so in private. They will respond better when they are not embarrassed before others.

**7. Avoid a Power Struggle.** Do not put yourself in the place where the child must do something—or else. Give a child a choice so that they have freedom to choose the right.

**8. Don't Reward Bad Behavior.** Children often misbehave to get attention. Give attention to those who do right.

### **Four Types of Misbehaving Children**

#### **Show-off**

**1. The Goal:** Get attention.

**2. The Behavior:** The child becomes a nuisance, acts like a clown, and is often lazy, demanding more help than is necessary. They put others in their service, keeping teachers busy. They think, *Only when people pay attention to me am I a worthwhile person.*

**3. The Reaction:** Such misbehavior annoys adults. They coax, remind often, give service to the child, keep busy trying to please the child. The adult thinks, *This child occupies too much of my time. I wish they wouldn't bother me so much.*

**4. The Correction:** Never give attention when the child demands it. Punishing, nagging, giving service, advising are all forms of attention. Do not show an-

noyance. Be firm in telling them what you expect from them. Give lots of attention at other times.

## Stubborn

**1. The Goal:** Power.

**2. The Behavior:** The child is stubborn and argumentive. They want to be the boss. They tell lies and throw temper tantrums. They are often disobedient, doing the opposite of instructions. They think, *I count only when I can do what I want to do. I need to be in control to be worth anything.*

**3. The Reaction:** Adults feel threatened by such children. They think, *They can't do this to me. Who's running this show? I won't let them get away with this.*

**4. The Correction:** Don't fight. Don't give in. Give them power in situations where the child can use that power productively. Avoid a power struggle. Remove yourself from the conflict. Ask for their aid. Show them respect. Negotiate a contract with them.

## Mean

**1. Goal:** Revenge.

**2. The Behavior:** The child is vicious, sullen, and defiant. They kick, bite, scratch, and hurt people, animals, and adults. They are sore losers and potential delinquents. They steal and lie. They think, *My only hope is to get even with them. I will hurt them as they have hurt me.*

**3. The Reaction:** Adults feel outraged or hurt by such actions. They dislike the child and retaliate. This causes conflict.

**4. The Correction:** Never say that you are hurt or behave as though you are. Apply natural consequences. (Punishment produces only more rebellion). Do the unexpected. Persuade the child they are liked. Use group encouragement. Enlist a buddy. Show them much unconditional love and caring.

## Helpless

**1. The Goal:** Display of inadequacy.

**2. The Behavior:** The child feels hopeless and has an inferiority complex. They do foolish things or give up. They rarely participate. They think, *I don't want anyone to know how dumb I am. No one can help me.*

**3. The Reaction:** Adults feel helpless with such children. They feel like throwing up their hands. They don't know what to do. They think, *I give up. I can't do anything with this child.*

**4. The Correction:** Encourage them when they make mistakes. Make them feel worthwhile. Praise them for trying. Say often, *"I believe in you. I know you can do it."* Do not support their inferiority feelings. Get peer helpers to encourage them. Avoid discouragement yourself. Never give up.

## ***Leading a Child to Christ***

Leading children to the Saviour and into church membership is one of the key responsibilities of the personnel in the children's divisions. The following ideas on how to do that will be helpful. This information should be studied by all Sabbath School personnel, and plans should be included in the overall planning to implement ways and means of intentionally leading the children in Sabbath School to the new birth experience and to responsible church membership.

*You [the teacher] will show a care for your scholars by making special efforts for their salvation. You will come close to them in loving sympathy, visiting them at their homes, learning their true condition on conversing with them concerning their experience in the things of God, and you will bear them in the arms of your faith to the throne of the Father.*—Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 76.

### ***1. When should we begin to lead a child to Christ?***

The moment the child is born. Sabbath School leaders should invite parents of newly born babies to enroll their child in cradle roll. Visit the new parents, present a small gift for the baby, and give an invitation to bring the baby to cradle roll. Ask cradle roll mothers to encourage the new parents to enroll their baby.

Try scanning local newspaper columns for the names of parents of new babies in the neighborhood. Visit these homes with an invitation to enroll their infants in the Seventh-day Adventist cradle roll.

### ***2. What are the characteristics of Sabbath School personnel who can lead children to Jesus?***

People who:

- a. Love working with children.
- b. Have the best talents and abilities available.
- c. Are willing to take advantage of training opportunities to maximize their effectiveness.
- d. Have a good personal relationship with God.
- e. Want to be soul winners and are willing to do the personal work necessary to lead children to Christ.
- f. Are willing to spend the necessary time. It costs something in personal concern and effort to lead a child to Jesus.

### **3. What part does the weekly Sabbath School program play?**

Leaders and teachers should be careful to make each program or lesson evangelistic in nature. Everything done in the Sabbath School should have as its goal the winning of the child for Christ. An hour on Sabbath morning is too short a time to spend any of it on mere entertainment. Whatever is presented must be Bible-based and Christ-centered.

### **4. Should Sabbath School personnel visit the homes of children?**

Visits to the home help the Sabbath School worker minister to the whole family as well as to the child. Visits help a Sabbath School worker understand the child better. A visit from a Sabbath School teacher tells the child that he or she is special. Children respond more readily to appeals made by someone who is their friend.

### **5. Is it really possible for children to understand the plan of salvation and to make a meaningful, lasting commitment?**

*Do not speak of religion as something that children cannot understand, or act as if they were not expected to accept Christ in their childhood.—The Desire of Ages, p. 517.*

*It is still true that children are the most susceptible to the teachings of the gospel; their hearts are open to divine influences, and strong to retain the lessons received. The little children may be Christians, having an experience in accordance with their years.—The Desire of Ages, p. 515.*

*God wants every child of tender age to be His child, to be adopted into His family.—Counsels to Teachers, p. 169.*

### **6. How old should children be before they are baptized?**

*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.—Testimonies, vol. 1, p. 400.*

Research points to the ages of 11 to 15 as the optimum years for making decisions for Christ. Most children make this decision at the age of 12. Studies indicate that those baptized before puberty are more likely to remain active in the church than those baptized later.

## **7. Should the Sabbath School conduct a baptismal class?**

It is appropriate for such classes to be held in the junior and earliteen divisions for all children who are not baptized. The course is held during the regular lesson study time and lasts for one quarter. The children are told the purpose of the class and are given an appeal to join, but the response is voluntary and pressure should never be applied.

## **8. What are Decision Days?**

Decision Days are special days dedicated to asking for decisions for dedication to the Lord and for baptism. They should be held in each division twice a year. On these days part of the regular program may be set aside and a special story and appeal are given for children to make a decision (appropriate to their age level) to love and follow Jesus.

Preschool children can be asked to respond by placing a heart around a picture of Jesus or make a similar indication of their decision. Primary, juniors, and earliteens respond well by writing out their decision, their thoughts or feelings, or perhaps signing their name to a commitment card.

## **9. What is a simple gospel presentation for children?**

Make a wordless book with three sheets of construction paper: gold, red, white. Or make cloth flags in three colors. The ideas they represent can be made into a program or a brief talk.

**GOLD** Gold stands for heaven, the New Jerusalem, the golden city God has gone to prepare. Everything is good there. No bad things can enter heaven. John 14:1-3; Revelation 21, 22.

**RED** Red stands for our sins. All have sinned. All must die. But it also stands for the blood of Jesus. He died for us. Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; John 3:16.

**WHITE** If we accept Jesus as our Saviour, He will forgive our sins and give us a new start. Eternal life is ours. Isaiah 1:18; 1 John 1:9; Romans 6:23.

## Special Sabbath School Ministries

### Extension Division Leader

leaders report to the extension division leader.

#### The Role

It is the responsibility of the extension division leader to take the Sabbath School to those who, for reasons of transportation difficulties, illness, age, or a physical handicap, cannot regularly attend meetings at the church. This division may also include traveling workers, humanitarian workers, and military personnel. Where there are no more than three members in the extension division, the Sabbath School secretary may care for them. If the membership exceeds three, an extension division leader should be elected. If the number exceeds 10, one assistant leader should be elected to care for approximately each additional 10 members.

#### Line of Authority

The extension division leader reports to the assistant superintendent for membership or to the general Sabbath School superintendent where there is no assistant for membership. The leader is also responsible for reporting membership and offering figures to the Sabbath School secretary who needs this information for the conference/mission quarterly report. The assistant

#### Time Commitment – 20 hours a month

Two to three hours per week would be needed for visits, phone calls, and correspondence with the isolated members. Another one or two hours should be scheduled for the Sabbath School Council.

The amount of time spent depends on the individual leader and how often they visit or talk with their assigned members.

#### Duties and Responsibilities

1. Compile a list of members of the Extension Division.
2. Maintain regular contact with members of the extension division. This may be done in a number of ways, for instance, by visits, letter, or telephone.
3. Provide members with Sabbath School Bible Study Guides, children's papers if needed, world mission reports, individual offering envelopes, record cards, and other Sabbath School supplies.
4. Serve as a member of the Sabbath School Council.
5. Submit a complete report of the membership and offerings of the exten-

sion division to the Sabbath School secretary.

6. Enlist other members of the Sabbath School to send cards, make phone calls, or visit a member of the extension division.

7. In coordination with the superintendent for evangelism, study the possibilities of developing a Branch Sabbath School near an isolated or shut-in member.

## **Branch Sabbath School Leader**

### **The Role**

It is the role of the Branch Sabbath School leader to organize and conduct an evangelistic program using Sabbath School materials, to be held on any day of the week. This role may be filled by any Sabbath School leader, teacher, or member who may wish to begin a Branch Sabbath School.

### **Line of Authority**

The Branch Sabbath School leader is responsible to the Sabbath School Council or to the local conference/mission Sabbath School director in the case of isolated members. The leader will also work closely with the assistant superintendent for outreach if the Sabbath School has one.

### **Time Commitment – 16 hours a month**

The time it takes to lead a Branch Sabbath School depends on the scope

and size of the program. One should plan to spend a minimum of two hours a week in preparing the program and another two hours for the program itself and for visitation.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

The duties of the Branch Sabbath School leader fall into three categories: organization, programming, and soul winning.

### **Organization**

1. Get approval from the Sabbath School Council and the necessary financial support.

2. Begin small. It is possible to start with one or two interested people. It is usually best to begin by concentrating on one age level: children, youth, or adults.

3. Find others to help with the leadership as required by the size of the group.

4. Arrange for a place to hold the Branch Sabbath School and decide on the time it will be held.

5. Prepare announcements and invitations and see that they reach those who might attend.

6. Order lessons, program materials, and take-home papers for the children.

7. Keep a record of attendance.

8. Keep the pastor and the home Sabbath School informed about the progress of the Branch Sabbath School and the interest of individuals.

### **Programming**

1. Use Sabbath School materials and materials available through



Children's Ministry.

2. The meetings should follow the general pattern of regular Sabbath School, though there may be some need for adaptation.

3. Make the programs interesting and appropriate to the age and experience of those who attend.

4. Where specific Branch Sabbath School materials are not available, adapt material used in the regular Sabbath School, such as felt visual aid sets, picture sets, songbooks, illustrated songs, lessons, program, and activity materials.

### **Soul Winning**

1. Pray for the direction of the Holy Spirit that people will be led to make decisions for Christ.

2. Encourage personal devotion on the part of those attending, perhaps providing Bibles for those who need them.

3. Visit homes occasionally.

4. As you see spiritual growth taking place, be ready with encouragement and help as needed.

5. Avoid embarrassing anyone by presenting testing truths too soon. Avoid controversy. Concentrate on bringing them into a living relationship with Christ.

6. When appropriate, invite members of the Branch Sabbath School to participate in church functions.

## **Resources for Branch Sabbath Schools**

Most world divisions have study guides, baptismal manuals, Bible correspondence lessons, and other publications in local languages that can be used in Branch Sabbath Schools.

**Adults.** The regular Sabbath School Bible Study Guides may be used, especially those that focus on a book of the Bible or topics such as health or Bible biographies. You do not have to use the current Bible Study Guide. A series of two Bible Study Guides is available covering the 27 fundamental beliefs of the church.

**Youth:** Issues of *Collegiate Quarterly* on different topics may be used, as well as the adult Bible Study Guides.

**Junior/Earliteen.** The Youth department has available a study series called the G.A.T.E. that covers the doctrines of the church.

**Children.** The Department of Children's Ministry has excellent material that can be used in Branch Sabbath Schools.

They have a *Children's Great Controversy* set, a *Children's Steps to Christ* set, a year long series entitled *God Is So Great*, and three sets of Bible lessons: *God Sent His Son to Be My Friend*, *God's Young Friends in the Old Testament*, and *God's Young Friends in the New Testament*. A set called *God Wants to Be My Very Best Friend* studies the ten commandments.

An activity book on how to study the Bible, titled *Making the Bible a Delight*, is also available.

# How To Organize and Run a Branch Sabbath School

A Branch Sabbath School is an evangelistic type of service conducted primarily for the benefit of non-Seventh-day Adventists. Branch Sabbath School is an evangelistic endeavor using Sabbath School materials. It may be held on any day of the week.

## Types of Branch Sabbath Schools

**A church planting Branch Sabbath School.** This type of Branch Sabbath School is held on Sabbath at the same time as the regular Sabbath School, using the same materials, but in another location. Its purpose is to establish a new Sabbath School and eventually a new church.

It is advisable to consult with the pastor and church officers regarding the best location for this type of Branch Sabbath School.

**An outreach Branch Sabbath School.** This is evangelistic in nature and may be conducted on any day of the week. It is designed to create spiritual interest and bring souls to a saving relationship with Jesus. It may be conducted for children, youth, or adults.

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*“The object of Sabbath school work should be the ingathering of souls.”*

— Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 61.

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## Who Attends a Branch Sabbath School?

- Church members who are not Sabbath School members.
- Former members.
- Seventh-day Adventist parents of children in Sabbath School or church school.
- Guests who visit the church.
- Vacation Bible School interests.
- Friends, neighbors, and relatives.
- People responding to a community survey.
- Interests from literature evangelists.
- Radio, TV, and Bible school interests.
- Hospital visitation interests.
- Interests from literature distribution.
- Ingathering contacts.
- Those attending evangelistic meetings.
- Community service contacts.
- Prison ministry contacts.
- Business associates and contacts.

## How to Start a Branch Sabbath School

With some personal initiative and creativity, many church members can find ways to start Branch Sabbath Schools. Keep in mind that the Sabbath School department of the local church should always be kept up to date on the progress of Branch Sabbath Schools. The Branch Sabbath Schools are part of the overall church program. They are never the personal arena of any one person or group in the church.

Some suggestions for creating interest are:

- Have a story hour for children.
- Start a Bible marking class.
- Start a Bible discussion group.
- Conduct an adult program in conjunction with Vacation Bible School.
- Continue Vacation Bible School on a weekly basis.

## Where Can Branch Sabbath Schools Meet?

Branch Sabbath Schools can meet in all kinds of places:

- Private homes of members or interested persons from Vacation Bible School, Bible studies, and other activities.
- Public building—courthouse, fire station, school.
- Vacant building—store, church, office
- Nursing home.
- Prison.
- Out-of-doors if weather and conditions permit.

## Branch Sabbath School Personnel

Branch Sabbath School programs usually follow the format of the regular Sabbath School and use the same materials. The only difference is when and where they meet.

Begin with a simple program. Recruit friends to help establish the Branch Sabbath School. Ideally, there will be four people on the leadership team, each with a particular set of spiritual gifts:

1. The leader or administrator of the Branch Sabbath School.
2. The teacher or teachers.
3. A prayer leader or care coordinator. This person serves as the pastor of the Branch Sabbath School.
4. A person with the gift of hospitality. This person serves as greeter, social planner and serves as the host or hostess of the Branch Sabbath School.

## Branch Sabbath School Programs

The following programs are suggestions. You may need to design program formats that fit the social context of the part of the world where your Branch Sabbath School is held.

### Program for a New Branch Sabbath School:

Welcome  
Song or song service

Prayer  
Bible lesson or story  
Prayer

## **Suggestions for Children's Branch Sabbath Schools**

- The program should not last longer than one hour.
- Use music and active participation.
- If Bible quizzes are used, take into account the age and knowledge of the participants.
- Whenever possible, divide into small groups for the lesson study.
- Use activities and object lessons to reinforce the Bible stories.
- The ideal is that each child will get something to take home.
- Periodically, invite parents to a program presented by the children.
- For young children especially, focus on leading them to Jesus and not on complicated doctrinal issues.

### **Suggested Formats:**

Songs (with illustrations and activities)

Prayer

Devotional talk (2 min.). Suggested topics: love for parents, reverence, love of Jesus, Bible study, etc.

Song

Nature talk or story (always with illustrations)

Bible games

Bible lesson

Song

Mission story

Song

Closing prayer

## **Adult Branch Sabbath School Programs**

Use the same general format as a regular Sabbath School. Depending on the topic of the quarter, the regular Adult Bible Study Guide may be used.

If the audience is made up of mostly non-church members, a series of Bible studies may be used. Topics such as health, family life, parenting, and other issues may also be studied.

Encourage parents to attend an adult Branch Sabbath School while their children attend one for their age group.

### **Suggested Formats:**

Song

Welcome

Opening song

Special feature (music, quiz, health talk, etc.)

Bible study and discussion

Mission story (may be a video, a verbal presentation, etc.)

Closing song

Prayer

## **Youth Branch Sabbath Schools**

Follow the program formats for the adults or devise one that fits the context in which the Sabbath School is held.

# Receptionists

## The Role

The role of the receptionist is to make the atmosphere of the church warm and inviting. The receptionist's task is to set the climate for the Sabbath School, to make others feel comfortable, welcomed, and loved. They are to make friends of strangers.

## Line of Authority

The Sabbath School receptionist is responsible to the general Sabbath School superintendent or to the assistant superintendent for hospitality. In larger churches there may be a receptionist committee with one person acting as chairperson. In that case each receptionist would be responsible to that committee. The receptionists will work closely with the deacons or ushers.

## Time Commitment – 3 hours a month

Receptionists are often scheduled to serve one Sabbath a month, or every Sabbath for one month of the year or the quarter. The receptionist should be on duty thirty minutes before Sabbath School begins and should continue at least until the sermon begins. In large congregations the receptionist may be asked to attend a receptionists' committee once or twice during the year.

## Duties and Responsibilities

1. Become acquainted with regular members so that they can recognize

visitors when they arrive.

2. When approaching guests introduce themselves first, extend a welcome, then ask for the visitors' names.

3. Introduce the person to someone who will show them to a seat or help them find Sabbath school classes or the parents' room.

4. Introduce newcomers to one or two other people in the church with whom they might feel comfortable because of shared ages or interests.

## Making People Feel Comfortable

1. Make the church appear personal and caring to all who walk through the doors, members and visitors alike.

2. Try to sense the needs of people arriving in a church for the first time. Help them with such needs as: where to find the children's rooms, where to hang coats, the location of the restrooms, the location of the mother's room, as well as the variety of classes and where they meet. (This can be accomplished in the bulletin along with a map of the building or by a foyer announcement board.)

3. Arrange for someone to greet people in the parking lot, particularly when the weather is bad. Assistance with an umbrella on rainy days is often appreciated.

4. Be alert to people carrying children, packages, or other materials. Hold the door open and assist them in other ways.

5. Educate the regular members about the importance of mixing and talking with visitors after the service, and not just with their personal friends.

## A Quick Look at How to Treat Guests

The receptionist system in your church is one of its most important activities, and deserves careful attention and training of personnel.

What do people look for when they step inside your church door? This is not an easy question to answer, because people's personalities vary so much. There are, however, some common denominators:

- People look for a warm, friendly place.
- They are looking for the right kind of human contact.
- They expect courteous treatment, and they expect recognition of their existence.
- They expect verbal and body language that says: "You are welcome and accepted."
- They expect an attitude that says: "We want you here."

### Who Walks in Your Church Door?

There are four general categories of guests who walk in your church door:

- Unchurched people who for one reason or another visit your church.
- Non-attending or occasionally-attending Adventists.
- People brought to church by friends, relatives, and acquaintances.

- Adventists from out of town or from other Adventist churches.

Each of these groups has its own set of expectations, fears, and preconceived ideas.

The following chart lists some common perceptions and expectations.

None of these is universal, because people have individual personalities, and no church can be expected to read minds and hearts, but they point to some common denominators.

Your congregation, and especially your receptionists,

need to have a general idea of how to approach each group.

### Key Strategies

1. **Take - don't send.**
2. **Show - don't just "hand to."**
3. **Connect guests with other people as quickly as possible.**

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*Lasting impressions are made in the first 30 seconds, and guests often decide within about five minutes whether or not they will come back to your church.*

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<b>Unchurched People</b>	Unchurched people tend to be suspicious and fearful of church people and church buildings. They're in unfamiliar territory and don't know what to expect. They don't understand "church" language. Unchurched people tend to want anonymity. That means they don't want to stand out from the crowd. They just want to be accepted and feel like part of whatever is happening
<b>Non-attending or Occasional-Attending SDAs</b>	1. The exact phraseology used when greeting them. is very important. 2. Do everything in your power to protect these guests from the kmore unstable people in your congregation who somehow tend to surface in exactly the wrong place at the wrong time
<b>People Brought to Church by Friends, Relatives, and Acquaintances</b>	These guests already have a point of contact. The people who bring them can tell you whether they want to be smothered with affection or left alone.
<b>Adventists From Out of Town or From Another SDA Church</b>	We Adventists have a keen sense of "family." We expect to be received in any of our churches as if it were our own. In practice, we may end up being ignored, and as a result feel hurt. Untrained greeters tend to pay attention to the people they know, not the people they don't know. But it is precisely their job to pay attention to the people they don't know.

## Invitations to Lunch

1. Make sure the church has a plan to ensure that visitors are either invited to lunch at someone's home or to a church fellowship dinner.

a. Larger churches organize groups to host dinner every Sabbath.

b. Small churches usually have a potluck once a month with individuals taking responsibility for inviting visitors on other Sabbaths.

2. Extend a dinner invitation to each visitor. If the invitation is to someone's home, introduce the host to the visitor sometime during the morning's program.

3. Greet visitors again after the church service, making sure they have an invitation and know where to go for the dinner. Take them with you to the church fellowship dinner and introduce

them to two or three other people.

4. At church fellowship dinners it is important to seat visitors with members so they feel welcome and part of the fellowship. Often visitors are asked to go through the serving line first and end up sitting with other visitors, and so feel ignored by the members of the church.

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**A smile, a warm sign of welcome, either a handshake or whatever form is used in your culture, and a brief word of welcome are always in order.**

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## ***An Effective Receptionist System***

1. Make sure you have enough greeters to give individual attention to guests.

- Know where they should sit.
- Know where church facilities are Sabbath School rooms, rest rooms, etc.
- Ask questions. Is there anything special guests would like to know? Anything they would like to see?

2. Develop a welcome pack. Include everything you can think of about your church that a guest might want to know.

3. *Take* people – don't just send them. The idea is to designate a special section in the church where carefully trained people sit who know how to receive guests. When guests arrive, seat them in this section. Only the receptionists and the people who sit at the welcome desk are those who make available a welcome packet and other materials about the church.

At the welcome desk you could have:

- The welcome packet.
- Guest buttons or ribbons for those who wish to wear them
- Anything else you may want a guest to have.
- Some well trained people informally gathered around the welcome desk. They offer help, answer questions, and *take* people to wherever they go next.

5. Learn the names of regular members so they don't feel neglected. New greeters especially need to know who the members are.

### ***What to Put In An Information Packet***

- √ A map of the Sabbath School rooms and church plant.
- √ Some history of the church.
- √ A list of weekday activities such as Bible study groups, Pathfinder Club, health classes, the Adventist Community Services Center, family life workshops, and evangelistic seminars.
- √ A list of Adventist beliefs.
- √ Phone numbers of key church personnel.
- √ Information about the local Adventist school.



## Sabbath School Programs

### Adult Sabbath School Program Formats

The Sabbath School Council, under the leadership of the general superintendent, decides on the format of the program.

The following program formats are suggestions, a starting point from which each school may develop its own program.

The majority of adult Sabbath Schools tend to follow a traditional format similar to the worship service. This is not the best for Sabbath School. A “school” suggests active participation and learning activities by the students.

Whatever format is used, the four basic purposes of Sabbath School should be included: Study of the Word, Fellowship, Community Outreach, World Mission Emphasis.

Ellen White gives some clear counsel on Sabbath School programs (emphasis supplied):

### Innovation and Creativity

*Superintendents and the workers in our Sabbath schools have a very important, broad field to cultivate. They need to be baptized with the Holy Spirit of God, that their minds may be impressed*

*to use the very best methods, and follow the best plans to make their work wholly successful.—Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 11*

*Different minds and qualities will bring in fresh ideas, fresh lines of thought; and this is essential.—Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 165.*

### “Mechanical” vs. Interactive

*The object of the Sabbath school should not be lost sight of in mechanical arrangements, thus occupying time which should be given to other important matters. We should ever be guarded against forms and ceremonies which will eclipse the real object for which we are laboring. There is a danger of carrying system to such an extreme that the Sabbath school will become weariness, when, on the contrary, it should be a rest, a refreshment, and a blessing. There is altogether too much dependence placed upon form and machinery, while the life-giving power of God is not manifested for the conversion of souls, for whom Christ died. This order of things must be changed if our Sabbath schools meet the purpose for which they exist.—Counsels on Sabbath School Work, pp. 151, 156, 157.*

*Let not those who have a mechanical way of doing things, take complete charge of the school, and mold it into formal ways, into precise habits, and yet all its life stifled in a multiplicity of regulations. It is essential to have order, but we need a great deal more spiritual knowledge along with rules and regulations. We need a life-giving power, a zealous enthusiasm, a true animation, that our schools may become filled with an atmosphere of true piety and purity; that there may be real religious advancement.—Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 162.*

### **“Talk” vs. Interaction and Activity**

*They make long, dry speeches in the Sabbath school and the teachers’ meeting, thus wearying the minds of both the teachers and students. They do not realize that by their long, tedious talks they are killing interest in, and love for, the school.—Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 166.*

### **Key Elements of Sabbath School Programs**

#### **Participation and interaction.**

The more participation and interaction that is built into the Sabbath School program, the more learning and personal application takes place.

**Creativity and innovation.** The more interesting and appealing a program is, the more people will learn. Sabbath School programs that consist mostly of one person doing all the talking from the front of the meeting place,

in spite of how good the content might be, have very little lasting effect on the students.

### **Outreach and Evangelism**

Research and experience show that Sabbath Schools are not really successful unless they include elements of outreach and soul winning.

*The Sabbath School should be one of the greatest instrumentalities, and the most effectual, in bringing souls to Christ.—Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 10.*

*It has been proved in the missionary field that, whatever may be the preaching talent, if the laboring part is neglected, if the people are not taught how to work, how to conduct meetings, how to act their part in missionary labor, how to reach people successfully, the work will be nearly a failure. There is much to be done in the Sabbath School work, also, in bringing the people to realize their obligations and to act their part. God calls them to work for Him, and the ministers should guide their efforts.—Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 184.*

### **Traditional Program**

(Exact times may vary)

If a traditional format is used, the lesson study time of at least 45 minutes needs to be protected so that it is not preempted by the program.

9:15	Song Service
9:30	Opening Remarks, Welcome, Prayer

- 9:35 Keeping on Course  
(Choose one)
  - Progress Report
  - Evangelism
  - Investment
  - Improvement
  - Occasional Special Feature
- 9:40 Musical Selection
- 9:45 World Mission Report
- 9:55 Class Time
  - Class Activities - 10 minutes
  - Lesson Study - 45 minutes
- 10:40 Closing Remarks. Preview of next week

### More Dynamic Traditional Program

The format is the same as the traditional and follows the same time frame. More time and planning goes into the program.

- Train people to read and speak well in public.
- Practice the program
- Less formal and stiff - more participation by the students.

### Modified Traditional Program

A modified traditional program uses the same time frame, but the activities are different. Not all elements are included every week. The time is spent focusing on some issue, concern, real-life matter of interest to the students. Some activities could be the inclusion of personal growth seminars, opportunities of training in personal witnessing and training and certification of Sabbath School teachers.

### Full Time Learning Format

A full time learning format means that the entire Sabbath School time, usually about an hour and a half to two hours, is devoted to learning activities. The objective is interactive learning and participation that meets student needs. The time frame is a suggestion.

Another modification would be to vary the lesson study time. It could come before or after the mission feature, or at the very beginning of the Sabbath School activities.

9:00 Family Fellowship, informal song fest or group activity greeting, opportunity to share and talk together. *Try this occasionally:* All divisions join together in the sanctuary for singing, including children's songs, choruses, and special music. Families sit together.

9:25 Group Activity (children go to divisions)

9:40 Mission Feature or Personal Ministry Training

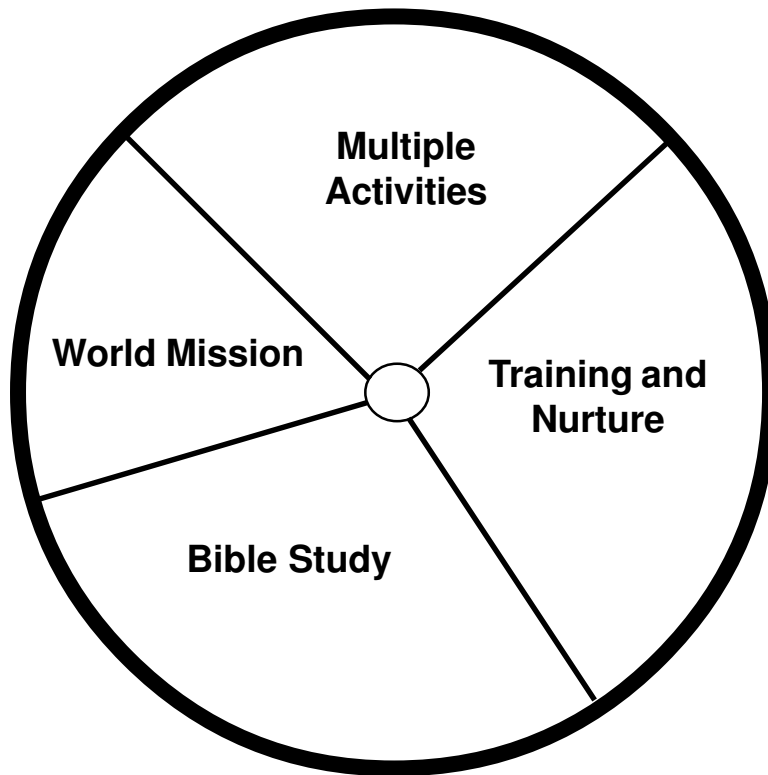
9:50 Training or Nurture Seminar

10:20 Lesson Study

10:50 Closing

## Full Time Learning Program

The segments represent the nature of the activity and the time spent. The size of any segment may vary from week to week.



### Quick Things You Can Do to Make Your Sabbath School Program More Dynamic

- Develop a theme for the programs. This could be a monthly theme, or it could run the entire quarter.
- Set goals for attendance, ministries or projects, and offerings.
- Advertise your Sabbath School. Set up a telephone chain to call members, send out a newsletter, advertise in the church bulletin.
- Give the classes names and build loyalty and enthusiasm in the classes.

## Five Sabbath School Audiences

Research has shown that very often a church will have some combination of five basic audiences, or sociological groupings, who come to Sabbath School. Each is based on a particular interest or preference.

Each of these groups works as a unit and can be organized so that they attract people with similar interests. The result is that the Sabbath School grows in membership and attendance.

Depending on the space available in a church, it is possible to have a number of adult Sabbath Schools functioning, built around these audiences.

The audiences are:

- Traditionalists
- Fellowship oriented
- Those who wish to study the Bible in depth
- Those interested in social action and involvement
- Multiple interest groups, from whom leadership is often drawn.

Organizing a five audience or sociological grouping Sabbath School takes a great deal of work and planning. All groups meet periodically, once every six weeks, or once a quarter, on Sabbath morning during the regular Sabbath School time. The purpose of these meetings is to report how the groups are doing, and on their plans for the future.

Each audience group should have a leadership team made up of a team leader, a teacher, a greeter, and a prayer leader. Each should have corre-

sponding spiritual gifts and must meet weekly, even if for a few minutes, for prayer, planning, and evaluation.

The primary function of each group is to find people like themselves and bring them to Sabbath School. In this way, the groups will grow consistently. Each group leadership team will make sure that the four purposes of Sabbath School are fulfilled.

Another way to use this same sociological grouping system is to organize Sabbath School classes based on each type of group. In this case, the Sabbath School program will be modeled on one of the formats already outlined, but the classes will be designed around these groups. In this case, more time must be given for classes and far less to the program. If not, the groups will not have time to carry out their various activities.

*The five audience group system will ideally result in a number of Adult Sabbath Schools (not just classes) meeting throughout the Sabbath School time. Each group will have its own program format and style of classes.*

*The only time the entire Sabbath School meets together is periodically, as part of an overall plan, to report and praise the Lord for what He is doing.*

*Most of the success of this system depends on three things:*

- *The amount of work and planning the Sabbath School leadership is willing to put into the plan.*
- *The space available in the building.*
- *The quality of the leadership teams in each group.*

## Weekly Program Planning Guide

Use this form as a guide for organizing weekly Sabbath School programs. Answering the questions will help focus the programs so they do not become routine and the same every Sabbath. It will help you become creative and innovative in your planning.

### Needs

What are the needs of my church that can be met by this week's program?

### Emphasis & Focus

What is the emphasis and focus of this week's program?

### Participation

How can this program motivate the participation of the members?

### Objectives

Which of the four main purposes of Sabbath School are emphasized in this week's program?

### Results

What specific results do we expect from this week's program?

## Sabbath School Action Units

A Sabbath School Action Unit is a small-group Sabbath School class organized in a way that provides time for sharing, Bible study, and systematic planning for outreach.

Many Sabbath Schools have discovered that the small-group Sabbath School Action Unit can, if properly conducted, provide the supporting fellowship and relevant nurture needed. It can also provide the caring atmosphere, inspiration, and training needed to bring our missing members back, so they will stay and assist us in reaching the world with the Three Angels' Messages.

The small group Sabbath School classes can provide an excellent organized, continuous training school, since Sabbath School meets every week. By involving outreach leaders, the care coordinators, Sabbath Schools can provide weekly promotion and training in soul-winning, both theoretical and practical, on-the-job skills.

### The Plan in Action

The plan is very simple. Here are 10 necessary elements of successful Sabbath School Action Units:

**1. Classes of Six to Eight.** Classes are formed into groups of six to eight for optimum participation.

Participation is vital to understanding, spiritual growth, and outreach. In a small group of six to eight, members feel free to share the experiences of their lives, their joys, and their burdens. The more they know of the cir-

cumstances that formed the lives of fellow members, the more they understand and love them and are encouraged to support one another.

**2. Outreach Leaders.** Each class has an outreach leader called a care coordinator, who is an assistant to the Church Lay Activities/Personal Ministries leader. Assisted by a secretary, the care coordinator promotes outreach in accordance with the class plan.

The care coordinator should be a loving, concerned, active member with a burden for souls who develops a band of enthusiastic and eventually well-trained soul winners. This person should be a tactful, enthusiastic, and persevering member who can cooperate with the Personal Ministries leader and other care coordinators in encouraging and giving simple, practical on-the-job training to fellow class members.

**3. Outreach Plans.** Specific outreach plans of the class are developed immediately after class organization at a special planning session. Little or nothing will be accomplished by the class without a plan. With a plan unlimited results are possible. The care coordinator leads the class in planning.

**4. One Hour Class Time.** To accomplish the purpose for which the Sabbath School was actually established, it is vital to provide an hour for the class. Twenty-five minutes are devoted to outreach at the beginning of the class, followed by thirty-five minutes for lesson discussion. This adjustment can be made with careful planning. It will mean shortening the opening exercises to allow the one hour time for classes.

**5. Time for Missing Class Members.** Weekly caring for missing Sabbath School class members is vital to the plan. The class leader takes up to five minutes at the beginning of the 25-minute outreach time to welcome all, take the record, and arrange for sending cards to, telephoning, and visiting any missing Sabbath School class members.

Loving, caring concern for missing class members is essential. Many have backslidden because they were not cared for immediately when they first began to miss Sabbath School. They need to be cared for according to their circumstances and needs.

**6. Time for Outreach.** The care coordinator uses the remainder of the 25-minute outreach time to:

- Call for experiences related to the class plan.
- Give simple, timely training based on experiences shared and appropriate to guests present.
  - Promote class plans and goals.
  - Give visitation assignments and arrange for on-the-job training where needed.
- Have special prayer for interests, plans, and goals.

**7. Lesson Discussion Application.** The teacher endeavors to get everyone to participate in the discussion of the lesson and in making personal applications. He or she reviews the high points of the lesson and asks three or four questions that help each one apply the lesson to life and to witnessing that week.

**8. Weekly/Monthly Leader Consultations.** To evaluate and sharpen plans, care coordinators should meet briefly after church with the Personal Ministries leader, Sabbath School superintendent, and the pastor for prayer, encouragement, and to strengthen their coordinated efforts. A regular monthly planning session is vital to the success of the plan.

**9. Monthly Corporate Sharing.** Once a month the care coordinators take the superintendent's program time, or their normal 20 minutes from the class time, and work together in presenting their successes before the entire Sabbath School. This encourages everyone.

**10. Monthly Home Fellowship/Evaluation.** To sharpen progress and build mutual trust and fellowship, casual, relaxed, and pleasant fellowship/evaluation meetings are held in the homes of class members. Dates and locations are set during the class planning session.

### **Typical Sabbath School Action Unit Program**

- 9:15 Song Service
- 9:25 Welcome, Prayer
- 9:30 Music/Special Feature
- 9:35 World Missions Report
- 9:45 Action Units Begin
  - Outreach Time - 25 minutes
  - Lesson Study - 35 minutes.
- 10:45 Benediction in Classes.



## Sabbath School Teacher Training and Resources

The work of the Sabbath School teacher is critical to the success of the Sabbath School. The ideal is that all Sabbath School teachers be persons with the spiritual gift of teaching. That is not always possible, but anyone asked to teach a Sabbath School class must take the task seriously and be willing to devote the necessary time, and willing to learn how to teach effectively.

Teaching is more than an activity or a science; it is an art.

*“To the teacher is committed a most important work—a work upon which he should not enter without careful and thorough preparation. He should feel the sacredness of his calling and give himself to it with zeal and devotion”*—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, p. 229.

*“It is the nicest [most exacting] work that was ever entered upon by the human agent, the dealing with human minds.”*—Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 277.

The Sabbath School teacher has a far greater responsibility than the secular teacher. The secular teacher’s purpose and responsibility is to cause to learn, to help students acquire knowledge. The Christian teacher is charged with the added responsibility of inspiring those he or she teaches to apply bib-

lical principles to daily living.

The Sabbath School teacher has three aims:

- Facilitate the acquisition of Bible knowledge.
- Motivate spiritual growth.
- Enable class members to develop scripturally oriented lifestyles.

**Teaching skills.** Based on the age level at which a person is teaching, certain fundamental teaching skills are needed. These skills can be learned and improved on through continuing education.

*“The Lord has made ample provision that teachers may have increased ability from Sabbath to Sabbath, that they may teach to some purpose, working as for time and eternity.”*—Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 104.

The Sabbath School system of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist church offers many opportunities to Sabbath School teachers for continuing education in the art of teaching.

**The International Sabbath School Teachers Association.** The International Sabbath School Teachers Association is a worldwide organization dedicated to improving Sabbath School teaching skills. It is organized through

*(cont’d. on p. 103)*

Age Level	Teaching Skills
<b>Adult/ Young Adult</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to teach in a variety of ways, all leading to active learning and the involvement of the students in discussion and analysis.</li> <li>2. The ability to help adult participants unlearn erroneous concepts and learn correct ones.</li> <li>3. Ability to formulate and ask questions in a way that engenders class participation and study.</li> <li>4. Attention-getting skills that engender participation and interest.</li> <li>5. Sufficient biblical knowledge to be able to teach what the Bible says, both doctrinally and experientially.</li> </ol>
<b>Youth</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to engender active participation, creativity, and innovation.</li> <li>2. Impart biblical knowledge through interactive experiences.</li> <li>3. Present biblical knowledge in a positive way that indicates that the gospel is always gain.</li> <li>4. Engender participation that encourages positive responses from peers.</li> </ol>
<b>Junior/ Earliteen</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to manage a group of juniors in a way that encourages learning, but does not stifle creativity and curiosity.</li> <li>2. Ability to turn responses, no matter how unique they may be, into positive learning experiences.</li> <li>3. Biblical knowledge based on interactive learning and focused on real life experiences as related in the Scriptures.</li> <li>4. Present Jesus in an appealing way and lead the class members to a commitment to Him as Lord and Saviour.</li> </ol>
<b>Primary</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to impart cognitive information and biblical knowledge, at the age level of vocabulary and understanding of primary children.</li> <li>2. Permit an open environment that encourages questions and responses, based on interactive learning principles.</li> <li>3. Present Jesus in an appealing way and lead the class members to a commitment to him as Lord and Saviour.</li> <li>4. Knowledge of the teaching materials available and how to use them.</li> </ol>
<b>Kindergarten</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Patience.</li> <li>2. Ability to love and understand small children and deal with them in a loving, kind way.</li> <li>3. Knowledge of children's learning abilities and how best to engage them in interactive learning experiences.</li> <li>4. Ability to teach in a concrete rather than abstract manner.</li> <li>5. Knowledge of the teaching materials available and how to use them.</li> </ol>
<b>Beginners</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Patience.</li> <li>2. Ability to love and understand small children.</li> <li>3. Awareness of developmental stages in a child's life.</li> <li>4. Awareness of how to gauge the developmental stage of each child.</li> <li>5. Ability to teach in a concrete rather than abstract manner.</li> <li>6. Knowledge of the teaching materials available and how to use them.</li> </ol>

each world division and managed by the Sabbath School department of the local conference/mission.

Chapters of the International Sabbath School Teachers Association are often organized on a regional basis, involving a number of churches in close proximity to each other. Each chapter elects its officers and organizes its work in consultation with the conference/mission Sabbath School department.

**Sabbath School workshops.** Many local conferences/missions sponsor Sabbath School workshops. Teachers should take advantage of these training opportunities to improve their skills.

**Personal study.** There are many resources available for teachers. Reading books and taking courses on how to teach are essential for teachers.

## Teaching Methods

Sabbath School teachers must learn and use the best teaching methods. At the adult/young adult level there are three commonly used methods of teaching.

**Telling or lecture method.** Using this method, the teacher imparts facts to the class, who presumably absorb the facts and “learn” something. Actually, the class members will only hear about 10% of what is said, and remember even less. *This is not the best method of teaching.*

**Recitation.** Using this method, the teacher, following the outline of the

Bible Study Guides, reads the questions and the students may or may not respond, usually with *yes* or *no* answers. *This is a really bad way of teaching.* It does not stimulate thinking and is actually counterproductive to the learning process.

**Question method.** Using this method, the teacher asks carefully thought out questions that engender discussion and analysis. Students dig into Scripture to find truthful and applicable answers.

Often a question will be followed by a period of silence while students absorb the question and search for an answer. One writer says, “In getting people to talk, one should not be afraid of silence or a long pause. Something will come through soon if the teacher is not afraid of standing and waiting.”

*(cont'd. on p. 106)*

### ***The Successful Sabbath School Teacher***

Recognition of God's call to teach

A personal knowledge of Christ

A knowledge of the Bible

A knowledge of human nature

Personal qualifications

- Consecration
- Cheerfulness
- Patience and tact
- Pleasing speech
- Love
- Feeling of responsibility

## The International Sabbath School Teachers' Association: What It Is and How It Works

The International Sabbath School Teachers Association is a voluntary organization whose purpose is to provide training, support and resources for Sabbath School teachers at all age levels.

The vision statement of the International Sabbath School Teachers Association is taken from Paul's writings and two statements by Ellen White:

"The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men [people] who will also be qualified to teach others. . . . Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:2,15.

*"Let the teachers enter, heart and soul, into the subject matter of the lesson. Let them lay plans to make a practical application of the lesson, and awaken an interest in the minds and hearts. . . . Let the activities of the scholars find scope in solving the problems of Bible truth. The teachers may give character to the work, so that the exercises will not be dry and uninteresting."*—Counsels on Sabbath School Work, pp. 113,114.

*"The true teacher is not content with dull thoughts, and indolent mind, or a loose memory. He constantly seeks higher attainments and*

*better methods. His life is one of continual growth."*—Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 103.

### What Are the Benefits?

What are the benefits of such an Association? Sabbath School teachers are better equipped professionally to carry out their responsibilities and can better understand and experience their important roles as leaders, protectors, and trainers. They will be spiritually and intellectually refreshed through newsletters, on-line and other resource materials.

The Association will focus on the basic skills needed by Sabbath School Teachers:

- Skills in handling the Bible
- Skills in using Bible study tools
- Skills in using resources
- Skills in teaching methods
- Skills in asking questions
- Skills in using instructional equipment
- Skills in small-group technology

### What Do Members Study?

Participants will gain an understanding of the following topics:

- A Philosophy of Sabbath School.
- Introduction to the Bible
- How to Interpret the Bible and the Writings of Ellen White

- Inductive and Relational Study Group Skills

- Lesson Preparation
- Learning Process
- Caring for Class Members

### How Can a Person Join?

There are three ways a person can become eligible to join the International Sabbath School Teachers Association:

**1. Through a training program:** Attend local conference coordinated training programs for a total of 10 hours.

**2. Equivalent training:** Have training and experience in the area of group skills, Bible teaching, and teaching methodology.

**3. Correspondence Courses:** On-line training, etc. for those who wish to study on their own.

### How Do You Maintain Your Membership?

There are four ways to maintain your membership, which must be renewed annually.

1. Be an active Sabbath School teacher or have been in the last 12 months.

2. Attend, within a three-year period, a conference or union training program. This may include a union convention.

3. Attend a local church or area training program once a year.

4. Be a participating member in activities sponsored by the Association.

### Certification Sponsored By The Association

The International Sabbath School Teachers Association sponsors a certification program for those teachers who are really serious about learning and improving their skills. The certification system provides three levels of training: entry level skills, mid-level skills and Advanced skills. It is expected that those who become certified will become part of the faculty of the association and will train others.

**Entry level skills** include the mission of the Sabbath School class, how to use the Bible in Sabbath School teaching, people skills for teaching, how to prepare the Sabbath School lesson, the art of asking questions, the use of instructional equipment, and small-group technology.

**Mid-level skills** include the laws of teaching and learning, group dynamics, learning styles, instructional skills, and the Sabbath School class as a caring unit.

**Advanced skills** include the teaching methods of Jesus, advanced applications of the laws of teaching and learning, advanced skills in using instructional equipment, and development of specific skills for various age groups.

## Sabbath School Teaching and Seating Arrangements

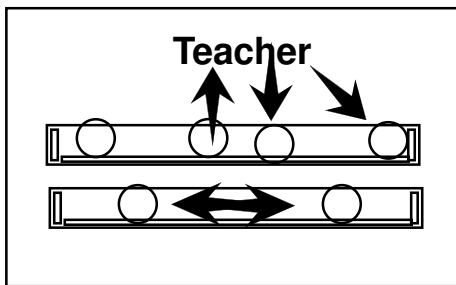
Seating arrangements make a great deal of difference in the effectiveness of teaching.

Most seating arrangements are dependent on the style of the church building. In some cases, Sabbath School classes meet in inadequate facilities that leave little choice of seating arrangements.

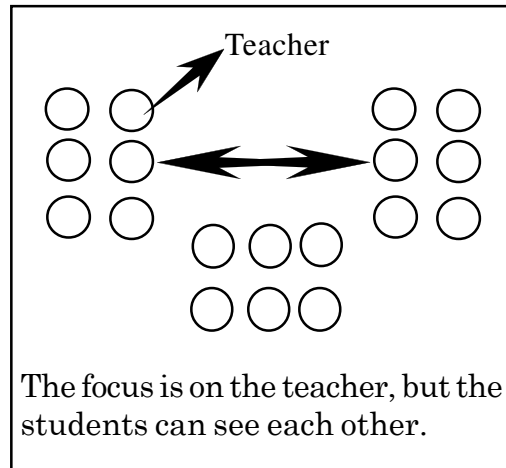
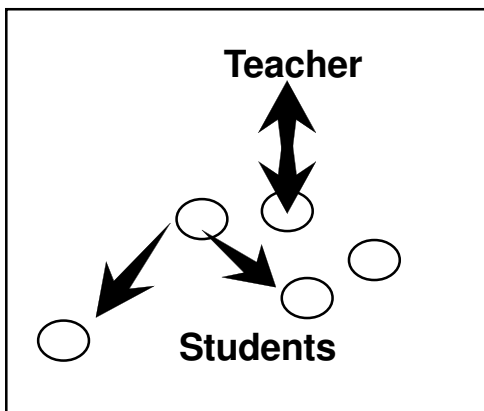
Nevertheless, some innovation and creative thinking will always find ways and means of improving even inadequate situations.

### Types of Seating Arrangements

#### Questions and Answer

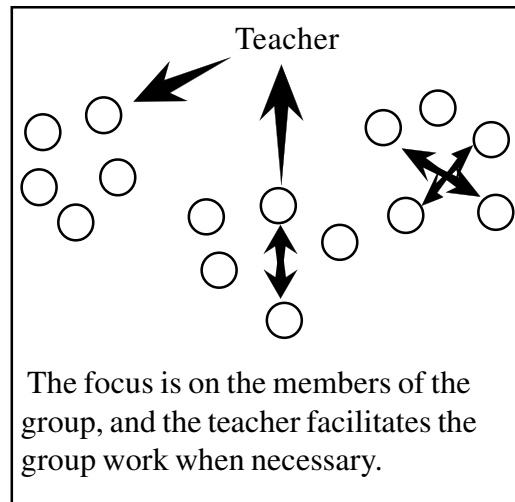


#### Discussion Arrangement

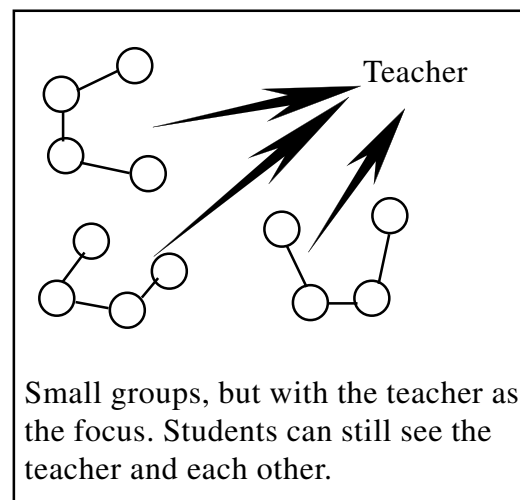


The focus is on the teacher, but the students can see each other.

### Small Groups



The focus is on the members of the group, and the teacher facilitates the group work when necessary.



Small groups, but with the teacher as the focus. Students can still see the teacher and each other.

## Special Days

There are four special days sponsored by the Sabbath School: Decision Days, Rally Days, Promotion Days, and Community Guest Days. The exact dates for these special days may be varied according to local circumstances.

Special days are important outreach tools, and planning for them should be an integral part of the annual program of the Sabbath School. Follow-up plans are a vital aspect of these special days and should be included in the planning process.

Plan short, enthusiastic, spiritual programs. Remember that they are designed to capture interest and afford opportunity for creating a desire to attend further services of the Sabbath School and church.

### Decision Day

The adversary of God will contest every step of our endeavor to save our children and youth. Decision Days help win the battle for the eternal destiny of souls.

The kindergarten and primary divisions should hold Decision Day services at least twice a year. Once a year is sufficient in the other divisions. The Sabbath School Council and the teaching staff should lay plans for this service and decide whether to conduct it

by division or with the entire Sabbath School.

### Children Are Responsive

Children are very responsive to the teachings of the gospel. Their hearts are open to divine influences and they retain the lessons received. The most favorable years for decision are when children are in the primary, junior, and earliten divisions.

About 7 percent of Seventh-day Adventist children and youth are baptized between the ages of 7 and 14. The highest rates are between eleven and fourteen. The peak age of baptisms is twelve.

### Variation in Procedure

A child's knowledge level and ability to understand and comprehend religious concepts must be taken into consideration. The methods used and the emphasis given in making an appeal should not be the same for every age group.

*“Do not speak of religion as something that children cannot understand, or act as if they were not expected to accept Christ in their childhood.”—The Desire of Ages, p. 517.*

*“Do not teach your children with reference to some future period when they shall be old enough to repent and be-*

*(cont'd. on p. 112)*

## ***How to Organize Special Days***

Most special days are organized in much the same way. What follows are some general principles to keep in mind.

### **General Planning**

The Sabbath School Council should plan the program several weeks in advance, including the following items:

1. Advertise the special day.
2. Enlist the cooperation of all members in inviting friends and neighbors, those who have been contacted through the Vacation Bible School, and especially non-attending church members, to come to Sabbath School on the special day. The membership superintendent or secretary should be able to provide names of non-attending persons.
3. Send written invitations to all former church members in the community.
4. Appoint a telephone committee to follow up the written and personal invitations with telephone calls.
5. Display a poster in the foyer of the church.
6. Make weekly announcements in the church bulletin about the date for the special day.
7. Appoint a welcoming and ushering committee or enlarge the existing committee.
8. Place a special basket or bouquet of flowers on the platform. This is a special day.
9. Select carefully those who participate in the program. Choose persons who can read and speak distinctly and who can hold the interest of the audience. Those who participate should represent church standards in dress and deportment.
10. Select special music suitable for the occasion.
11. Offer some small award to anyone bringing a visitor. Change it frequently.
12. Teachers may offer to take students home to dinner for bringing a visitor.
13. Have an Honor Roll with the names of those who bring visitors posted on it.
14. Make a special drive to invite visitors whenever there is a guest speaker or special Sabbath School program. Send out invitations with students.



15. Have some small award to give to visitors. Many Sabbath Schools use a little printed motto or a Bible verse card. Some Sabbath Schools give celluloid buttons, which, if used, should be changed each year. Others use paper bookmarks or silk ribbons, which may be purchased in quantity. A Bible bookmark ribbon can easily be printed with the name of the Sabbath School and a "Welcome" for visitors. The color of ribbon should be varied each year.

16. Visitors may be called forward to receive their awards or just stand in their places to be recognized. The Sabbath School may sing an appropriate welcome song.

17. Make the visitors feel at home as much as possible. Ask their names and where they are from. Invite them back next Sabbath. See that they are placed in the right class and introduced to the teacher of the class. Be sure that the secretary is given the name and address of each visitor.

18. Send thank you letters to people responsible for bringing visitors. See that every visitor receives a letter, a telephone call, or a personal visit during the week following the special day.

### Planning Calendar for Special Days

Special Days	Dates	Person(s) Responsible
Decision Day		
Rally Day		
Promotion Day		
Community Guest Day		

19. Enroll new members as soon as possible. Make them feel part of the Sabbath School.

20. Keep a scrapbook, files, and records, by years, of special days as resources for the following years.

### **Organizing the Program**

1. Stay on time during each feature of the program.

2. The person offering the opening prayer should remember to ask for a blessing on friends and guests. People appreciate being remembered in prayer.

3. The superintendent should extend a cordial welcome to all guests and mention that this is an annual Rally or Homecoming Day.

4. Mission presentation. The person or persons chosen to talk about missions on this special day should be carefully chosen and urged to prepare well. If the story from the *Mission Quarterly* is used, be sure it is told and not read. A brief statement should be made regarding the part that Sabbath School plays in supporting the worldwide mission program of the church, and an invitation should be given to all guests to participate in the offering for this work if they care to do so.

5. The lesson study. Teachers should be instructed to prepare especially well for this day. Visitors should be welcomed, introduced by name to the class, and encouraged to participate in the discussion of the lesson if they wish. They should not be asked direct questions that might embarrass them if the answer depends on specific knowledge of the lesson for the day. Teachers should avoid denominational clichés and controversial subjects.

## ***How to Organize a Decision Day Program***

### **The Program**

The Decision Day program replaces the regular Sabbath School program. Allow 20 or 25 minutes for the program, omitting regular features such as the mission emphasis, superintendent's remarks, etc.

The superintendent, or perhaps the pastor, could say something such as "This day has been set apart as Decision Day. We, as your Sabbath School officers, have been looking forward to this important occasion, and we have been praying that it will bring to all our Sabbath School members the blessing of a forward step toward the kingdom, especially to those who shall this day make a public confession of Jesus and their desire to join with the church."

The person conducting the service gives a brief study about the plan of salvation preceding the invitation, not more than 10 or 12 minutes long, allowing sufficient time for an appeal.

After the appeal, the Sabbath School divides for regular lesson study.

### **The Appeal**

If people will be called forward, make sure seats are reserved for them. If they are to stand or raise their hand, make sure they clearly understand what to do. It is always a good idea to build time for personal testimonies into the program.

An effective way to secure a response is to pass out cards or slips of paper. When the appeal is made, ask everyone to write a sentence or two expressing his or her feelings and intentions. This works especially well in the junior and primary divisions. It will lead to frank expressions of desire and determination to follow Jesus. The advantage of this plan is that it reveals the particular needs of each person. Efforts may then be made to give adequate instruction and encouragement to individual cases.

Be gentle with those who are timid or reluctant. The Holy Spirit will help them lose some of their self-consciousness and respond to His call.

Those who do not respond to the call for decision should not be made to feel that they have made a decision against the right once and for all. Convey the idea that the decision is simply deferred. Emphasize that Jesus stands always ready to receive those who come to Him, and that none is ever cast out.

Close the service with an earnest season of prayer.

*lieve 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.”—Counsels on Sabbath School Work, pp. 79, 80.*

Especially in the older divisions, one way to make a call is by using the “forward step” plan. After presenting in detail, the importance of a decision and offering a special prayer, each person, including the leader, secretary, teachers and students, is asked to write down his or her “forward step.” They may be asked for a decision to be more careful in following the daily study plan, to pray more, to be more regular in attendance, to give more to world mission, and to be more respectful and kind to parents. Make it very plain that if they have not yet surrendered their lives to the Lord, that should be their first step.

## **Rally Days**

The purpose of a Sabbath School Rally Day is to bring non-attending members to Sabbath School as special guests. The ideal is that the welcome they receive, the program presented, and the fellowship they enjoy will impress them to attend regularly.

There are three areas to consider in planning for Rally Days:

1. Preparing the Sabbath School members for the Rally Day;
2. The Rally Day program, both for Sabbath School and church;
3. Rally Day follow-up.

See the information on how to prepare for special days.

## **Children and Rally Day**

Enlisting will be of priceless benefit to the children and add to the total outreach of the Sabbath School.

Enlist children for an active part in Rally Day.

1. Share with the children the church’s burden for missing members and members of families who are not in the church and Sabbath School.

2. The special nature of Rally Day and its objectives need long-range attention, and emphasis in the buildup carried on in each division will appeal to children.

4. Children flock together very easily. It is not difficult to arouse their gregarious instinct by enlisting them to carry special invitations and appeals to other boys and girls to join them in Sabbath School on Rally Day.

5. Participation is an important key to interest. Outline a program of simple approaches children can make, explain it fully, and then have them practice. Watch the response!

6. Children love surprises, so plan a special surprise feature for the Sabbath of Rally Day. Curiosity will hold interest and encourage participation. Make frequent mention of it in the advance promotion. Make sure the surprise feature is worthwhile.

7. Everyone should share in specific recognition for making Rally Day a success. Some activity such as an outing for the children of a division to climax the campaign for Rally Day is a good way to say thank you and to welcome those who were newly found or re-enlisted.

## Promotion Days

Promotion from one division to another is usually based on a child's age or grade in school. Other criteria may apply in various parts of the world. A general Promotion Day may be held following the close of the school year. They may also be held at the end of each quarter, or whenever the church deems appropriate.

If children are very unhappy about being promoted, they certainly should not be forced to leave a division. Very likely after a few weeks they will be glad to go into the next division of their own accord. In this case it is not necessary to have a promotion, but just take them to their new division and introduce them to the leader.

Promotion Day is a special event and should be a meaningful, inspiring occasion. In some special circumstances it may be advantageous to promote a child at times other than on Promotion Day. It is better, however, to wait for the public ceremony and make it an enthusiastically anticipated event.

### **Preparing for Promotion Day.**

The general Promotion Day is planned by the Sabbath School Council so that each division is prepared to promote some students and welcome others. The actual time should be synchronized between the divisions to permit as smooth a transfer as possible. Promotion certificates, if used, should be ordered, filled out and signed well in advance of Promotion Day.

## Promotion Day Programs

### **Beginners (Cradle Roll) and Kindergarten**

Give each child to be promoted a name tag so that in the new division they can be called by name by the new leader and teacher. This helps to make the child feel more secure and welcome in the new division. These name tags may be shaped like little figures, animals or flowers, or be a sticker of Jesus blessing the children.

Usually the children to be promoted are called to the front of the room. A few appropriate remarks are made by the leader, telling them how happy he or she and their teachers have been to have them in the division, and how glad they are that they have become so grown up now that they are to be promoted to

*(cont'd. on p. 117)*

### **Promotion Ages**

<b>Beginners</b>	<b>Birth-3 years</b>
<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>4-5 years</b>
<b>Primary</b>	<b>6-9 years</b>
<b>Junior/Earliteen</b>	<b>10-14 years</b>
<b>Youth</b>	<b>15-18</b>
<b>Adult</b>	<b>19+</b>

## ***Organizing Promotion Days***

1. Use an assistant. It sometimes happens that a leader becomes so attached to the children that it is difficult for the person to conduct the promotion. If this is the case, have an assistant lead out in the promotion program.

2. Appoint a child from the division to which the children are being promoted to escort them to their new division.

3. Sometimes the current members of a division move back to make room for the new members.

4. The advance buildup in the minds of the little ones must be planned. The children should be brimming with anticipation. Leaders, teachers, and parents must join together in the buildup.

5. The program must be well planned and run on time.

6. Many parents and friends will come for a special Promotion Day. The greater the buildup, the greater the possibilities. Children are very effective in getting grandparents, aunts, uncles, and friends to attend.

7. The children must participate in the program. It is their high day. Use this special day to the glory of God.

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### **Promotion Days Win Souls**

Betty Lou Smith never came to Sabbath School, but someone enrolled her as a prospective member in the beginner division. The teachers visited her home and were always received warmly but no one attended Sabbath School.

Another baby arrived and was enrolled as a prospective member in the beginner division. The visits continued for three years.

Then came promotion day. Betty Lou's beginner division teacher and her kindergarten prospective teacher visited her at home and gave her a nice promotion card, even though she had never been to Sabbath School. The teachers kept visiting.

The children loved them, and Mrs. Smith was impressed. The ladies were so pleasant and kind that Mrs. Smith decided that maybe she herself needed some religion. So after months of prayer and genuine interest by the kindergarten teacher, plus the years of faithful visitation by the cradle roll teacher, Betty Lou attended the kindergarten division, where she was already enrolled as a prospective pupil, although she had never before attended a single class.

Betty Lou loved Sabbath School, and soon the mother was enrolled in an adult class. After some months of attendance, Bible studies, and personal work, Mrs. Smith joined the church. She later became the Sabbath School pianist.

Mr. Smith accepted the Lord Jesus during a revival meeting. He is now a regular Sabbath School member and a deacon in the church. Later Betty Lou and her brother, John, were baptized. There are four happy Sabbath School members in a church centered home because some teachers cared.

What a wonderful opportunity we have in the Sabbath School to do a great work for God. Let us never be satisfied until we have done our best for the Master.

another division. Tell them you want them to continue to grow for Jesus.

Have a short prayer, present each child with a promotion certificate, and bid them good-bye with an appropriate gesture, a handshake, a hug, or whatever is used in your part of the world. Then have someone escort them to the new division.

### **Primary Division**

Make some remarks of appreciation for having had these children in your division, and tell them that God has blessed them and helped them to grow up to become juniors. Give each one a promotion certificate, sing a song and offer a short prayer. Then escort them to the junior division.

### **Junior Division**

Much the same procedure may be followed in promoting the juniors to the youth division. This is usually about the time of their fourteenth birthday, though the time may vary in different parts of the world. In general, it is best not to keep juniors in the junior division after 15 years of age.

### **Receiving Promoted Members**

**Welcome.** A cordial and cheerful welcome should be planned by the division receiving the promoted members. They should be taken to the front of the room and introduced by name to the division and to their new teachers. A kind gesture would be to give them a bookmark, flower, picture, or Bible

verse typed on an attractive card appropriate to their age. You may wish to sing a welcome song.

The Sabbath School records, with the name and birthday of the child, the parents' address, telephone number, etc., should be transferred to the division to which the child is promoted.

### **Community Guest Day**

**Purpose.** A Community Guest Day is listed in the church calendar for the fourth quarter of each year. It is similar to a Sabbath School Rally Day, and the two may be used interchangeably or to compliment each other. The primary difference is in the audience addressed. Sabbath School Rally Days focus primarily on non-attending Sabbath School members. The purpose of a Community Guest Day is to introduce the surrounding community to the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and to win new members.

**Programs.** Programs are planned by the Sabbath School Council a quarter in advance. They are developed to make a favorable impression on non-members. Care should be taken to avoid subjects that might offend those invited. You may want to invite a city official to participate and say a few words. This is a good day to give awards to service-minded people in your community. See the information on planning Rally and Community Guest Days for organizational ideas.

**Fellowship Meal.** Plan for enough food for the expected visitors. Make a

special effort to decorate the room and make the meal attractive. You might ask the choir or a musical group to provide music. Mix the seating of guests with friendly members. Do not send all the visitors through the serving line first, as it leaves them no opportunity to mix with members. Assign “secret hosts” to mix with the visitors and make them feel at home during the fellowship time.

### **Additional Ideas**

1. Provide name tags for everyone, including members.
2. Provide lesson quarterlies for all the visitors.
3. Have welcome packets to give all visitors. The packet could contain: church bulletin, welcome letter from the pastor, a copy of a missionary journal, an information brochure on the Seventh-day Adventist church, a local church calendar of services and activities, special notice of any upcoming seminars, and a welcome card.
4. Send a thank you note to all visitors who attend. Invite them to come again.
5. Be alert for parts of the program that may need an explanation to non members. Choose well known hymns that are easy to sing.



