

Start or revitalize a ministry in your church

QUICK START GUIDE



EARLITEEN SABBATH SCHOOL



Quick Start Guide for Earliteen Sabbath School

Available from:

AdventSource

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The Earliteen Sabbath School Division

Go to **ChildMin.org** for leader's resources, training, and information about certification classes.

Sabbath School provides a religious education that leads young people to Jesus and helps them build a relationship with Him. Earliteens have reached the age where many will consider baptism. Some earliteens have already been baptized; others will still be searching. Some will make the decision for the first time. Earliteen leaders need to make sure they know where each child is in their spiritual journey. Earliteens who have not been baptized need to be given the opportunity to make a decision. Those who have been baptized should be encouraged in their spiritual journey.

In some churches, earliteens are grouped with juniors into one Sabbath School class. In other churches, earliteens are included with the youth. Because of their different emotional, spiritual, and growth needs, it is better when earliteens can have their own separate division. Even if they must share a division, the leader can choose to have separate class time where earliteens can study Real-Time Faith lessons created especially for them.

This Quick Start Guide contains ideas to help get your earliteen Sabbath School ministry started. As you read, think about how you can adapt these suggestions for your local church. Use this material as a starting point for your own creativity.

Sabbath School Divisions		
Beginner	ages birth-2	2-Year GraceLink Curriculum
Kindergarten	ages 3-5	2-Year GraceLink Curriculum
Primary	ages 6-10 (grades 1-4)	4-Year GraceLink Curriculum
Junior	ages 10-12 (grades 5-6)	2-Year GraceLink PowerPoints Curriculum
Earliteen	ages 13-14 (grades 7-8)	2-Year Real-Time Faith Curriculum



Earliteen Sabbath School Leader Job Description

Your job description may vary as determined by your children's ministries council or your church. The following information contains general guidelines for earliteen leaders.

Objective: To coordinate and lead the earliteen Sabbath School

Timeframe: One or two years, depending on the practice of your local church

Accountable To: Children's ministries coordinator and children's ministries council

Specific Responsibilities:

- Set the goal for your division
- Organize and lead the earliteen Sabbath school division
- Equip and coordinate the assistant leaders
- Recruit other needed volunteer staff
- Order your curriculum needs through the church secretary
- Prepare and execute weekly programs
- Plan outreach to parents
- Meet with the children's ministries council or other governing church body
- Provide opportunities for volunteer training in your church or at conference events
- Encourage volunteers to complete children's ministries certification
- Encourage volunteers with thank you notes, gifts, or parties

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

Ongoing Leadership Growth Through:

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

EARLITEEN LEADERS MUST BE COMMITTED TO:

- Jesus Christ and a growing relationship with Him
- Christ-centered ministry to children
- The Seventh-day Adventist Church and its beliefs
- A balanced Christian lifestyle
- Teamwork
- Cooperative ministry under the leadership of the pastor, church board, or children's ministries council
- Personal growth and learning



Top 10 Tasks for Earliteen Sabbath School Leaders

1. Read this Quick Start Guide. (You are already doing this!)
2. Read the *Children's Ministries Manual*. It is full of great ideas and information that will make your ministry successful. This book is available from AdventSource at AdventSource.org or 402.486.8800.
3. Look at the Sabbath School lessons your church is using. If you are not using Real-Time Faith (the only curriculum produced by the Seventh-day Adventist Church), find out why that decision was made. (For more on Real-Time Faith, see page 8).
4. Call your staff together for an organizational meeting. With their help, determine the goal of your department. What do you want the earliteens to know and do before they move on to youth? What do you have to do to help them reach that goal? If you do not have a goal, you are shooting arrows without a target. What specific things can you do to lead earliteens to make a decision for Jesus, be baptized, and continue to build a relationship with Him?
5. Get an up-to-date picture of your earliteen Sabbath School division—both the earliteens who are attending and your departmental needs. Research what has been happening; talk to current and former volunteers. Take an inventory of the supplies already available. Assess what new materials will be needed. Circulate and collect your questionnaire. (See page 5.)
6. Create a budget for the entire year. (See Budgets on page 19).
7. Plan a calendar for the year that includes all division activities. Add appropriate church and conference activities. (See page 20).
8. Consult with the children's ministries coordinator concerning expectations, needs, the budget, the church calendar, and any areas of concern.
9. Share your plans, calendar, budget, and any other pertinent information with the children's ministries committee.
10. Start a program of prayer warriors who are paired with each teacher. When appropriate, pair earliteens with prayer partners.

Seven Principles for Excellent Leaders

As the leader of the earliteen Sabbath School division, you need to commit to setting a high standard. Here are seven principles that will serve you well. Think of them as a guide to a successful ministry.

Be Personal

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



Excel

Do what you do well. It's not about how much you do, but how well you do it. Show people that you are reliable, accurate and able to anticipate and deal with problems. Eventually they will develop trust, respect, and appreciation for what you do. People are more likely to help someone who represents excellence.

Nurture

Be supportive of others. Even self-motivated people are encouraged by a supportive atmosphere. Under such conditions people are more likely to feel comfortable and share ideas.

Diversify

Get to know many different kinds of people (with diverse interests, opinions, and backgrounds). The more people you know, the more opportunity for networking you'll have—sharing ideas, solutions, and support. Expand your network to include coworkers, church members, neighbors, and employees of companies where you do business.

Be Visible

Participate in groups that share your interests. Do you belong to any local community groups? Seek out and join other people with similar interests and needs.

Personalize

Learn other people's unique qualities. When you meet people, remember more about them than their name. What are their backgrounds, interests, experiences, personalities? The more you know about a person, the easier it is to relate to them.

Organize

Make a networking plan. How can you best make use of these principles? Who can you add to your network list? Start by going through lists of participants in conferences and workshops you've attended.

In your networking efforts, remember that you must be willing to give at least as much as you receive from networking, whether that be through experience and resources or old-fashioned elbow grease. You must give in order to receive.

Priority #1 – Find Out Who You Are Serving

From the beginning, a good leader gets to know the earliteens and their families. Below is a survey you can adapt and circulate to your earliteens. The information you collect will help you in planning your programs, events, and calendar. Another way to get to know your earliteens is to take them on an outing as a group. Make them feel special to you and to the Sabbath School! Invite them to do something special or help with some project. Earliteens need to be involved.



Earliteen Sabbath School Survey

Please take a few moments to answer the following questions. The results of this survey will be used to assist us in organizing programs and events and developing resources you will enjoy.

1. Your name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State/Prov: _____ ZIP/PC _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

2. Parent or guardian's name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State/Prov: _____ ZIP/PC _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

3. Do you have special needs (allergies, developmental, physical)? YES NO
If yes, what are they? _____

4. What are your special interests? _____

5. What do you like to do? _____

6. What type of program, other than Sabbath School, would you enjoy? _____

7. If you could choose three areas where you would most like to help, what would they be?

8. What else whould you like us to know about you? _____

Permission to adapt and copy for local church use.



Understanding Earliteens

In order to understand earliteens (ages twelve and thirteen), it is helpful to note the characteristics of their growth and development. Earliteens...

Physical

- Mature at widely different rates; girls generally experience growth spurts before boys of the same chronological age
- Reach puberty during their earliteen years (most of them)
- Want action and want it now
- Can be quite awkward as they cope with growth spurts
- Often look more grown up than they act

Mental

- Think in the abstract quite well, but still need examples, synonyms, or word pictures to illustrate new concepts
- Understand symbolism once it has been explained
- Are capable of engaging in discussion and debate
- Have long attention spans—provided they are interested in the topic
- Test the boundaries of convention and knowledge
- Are interested in making money
- Are beginning to question everything, looking for authoritative answers
- Reject illogical reasoning or rules

Emotional

- Lack self-confidence and self-esteem
- Experience wild mood swings
- Get bored easily
- Are always testing the values they grew up with
- Take themselves seriously
- Appreciate adults who are low-key and joke with them

Social/Relational

- Often cave in to peer pressure and are afraid to take a stand
- Are somewhat clumsy in relating to each other
- Avoid doing anything in isolation from the group
- Many are discovering their sexuality
- Fear being singled out as different
- Seek close friendships within a tight group



Spiritual

- Question spiritual truths they had previously accepted
- Challenge religious beliefs while at the same time needing help to clarify them
- Need to make a recommitment to God
- Need constant reminders of God's love and grace
- Need to hear adults talk about their personal faith
- Want a practical religion to live by

Developmental Needs

- Need to collect and sift through information
- Need to make more of their own decisions
- Need to express their individuality in various ways (usually with varying degrees of success)
- Need affirmation
- Need increased freedom from parental control and corresponding increases in their responsibilities
- Need more time with peers
- Need increased emotional distance from parents
- Need authoritative standards by which to judge right from wrong

Spiritual Needs

- Need to know there is a God
- Need to be told again and again that there is nothing they can do to make God love them more or less
- Need a Savior who can give them victory over sin
- Need to learn how to forgive and accept forgiveness
- Need to experience forgiveness and freedom from guilt
- Need to be told what is in it for them if they commit to living God's way
- Need to know what God has done for others and will do for them
- Need to know they need—and have—a Savior

Faith Development for Earliteens

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

The key element in an adolescent's searching faith is critical judgment. They want to examine all the information for themselves.



The needs at this stage of faith development are:

- To establish their own identity. They are questioning and examining their own beliefs, their lifestyle, their appearance, all authority, and anything they identify with, in an effort to define themselves.
- To know that the religion of the head is equal to the religion of the heart. This compels earliteens to ask searching questions that challenge adults' beliefs. They become critical of any explanations that cannot be supported by logic, good sense, and scientific inquiry. Adults need to accept questions without feeling threatened, working with earliteens to find answers.
- To be needed in the faith community.

MUCH MORE ONLINE

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

What does this mean for your earliteen Sabbath School class? Foster faith in adolescents through serious Bible study, short-term journeys, mission trips, and service opportunities.

Earliteen Sabbath School Lessons – Real-Time Faith

The earliteen Sabbath School is an important part of a spiritual journey for the teens in your class. To assist leaders and teachers in Sabbath Schools around the world, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists developed an Adventist curriculum called Real-Time Faith.

Real-Time Faith targets issues that are big in the lives of twelve to fourteen-year-olds and answers the questions on their minds. The teacher's guide gives you complete program plans to save preparation time. In fact, you get several program options so you can choose the activities that best fit your teaching style. Try these lessons and see how they can make your time with the earliteens count for the kingdom. For more information, visit RealTimeFaith.net.

Real-Time Faith consists of a two-year cycle and makes a special effort to match the maturity of twelve to fourteen-year-olds. In some churches, earliteens meet with juniors or youth. In those cases, earliteens can study GraceLink PowerPoints or Cornerstone Connections, or the age groups can separate for lesson study.

About the Lessons

Real-Time Faith emphasizes God's kingdom of grace, being a recruited agent (steward, citizen) of that kingdom, and the battle between it and the kingdom of evil. Being in God's kingdom

You will want to order a teacher's guide for each adult leader and a student Bible study guide for each earliteen in your Sabbath School class. Don't forget to order copies of *Guide* for them to take home also! Order it directly from your Adventist Book Center or ask your church secretary to place an order using the Standing Quarterly Order Form each quarter.



requires action—being doers and not just listeners (James 1:22). The first lesson of each quarter is a different portion of the Sermon on the Mount, which is “at once Christ’s inaugural address as King of the kingdom of grace and also the constitution of the kingdom” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Vol. 5, p. 322*).

After the first lesson of each quarter, each of the other twelve lessons (or sets of lessons) are about a different challenge, right, or privilege in the life of an agent of God’s kingdom. A Christian never knows what he or she will encounter next. At RealTimeFaith.net, earliteens can explore each week’s topic with other earliteens, and teachers can access additional resources and exchange ideas.

When Using Real-Time Faith, Keep a Few Things in Mind:

- More material is given to you in the teacher’s guide than you can use in one Sabbath. Choose what you are most comfortable with and don’t try to cram it all in.
- Music is important to this age group. Listen to what they listen to. Encourage them to evaluate what they listen to and come to the own appropriate conclusions.
- Earliteens are twelve to fourteen years of age. They aren’t sure where they fit in the scheme of things. Sometimes they feel and act like adults. At other times they revert back to childish behavior. They are searching for autonomy and often do so in ways that are not acceptable to adults. Because their self-esteem is fragile, adults working with this age group need to practice very careful communication skills.
- Choose a Bible version that will be easy for them to understand and apply. You may want to keep a supply of Bibles to use in the classroom.
- Be aware of teachable moments. While using the Real-Time Faith curriculum is important, don’t miss opportunities the Holy Spirit provides to reach teens with help for today’s issues.

We want young people to be involved with others—to look outside of themselves. At this age their focus is more inward. Encourage your earliteens to get involved with community activities for others—to be doers of the Word, not just listeners. You will need to get involved with them.

LAST-MINUTE PLANNERS

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

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

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



Internalizing what we learn is most important. Knowledge alone does not change lives. Experiencing grace is vital. It is important to help earliteens to understand grace and how it applies to them. This is the time to encourage them to surrender their lives to Jesus and join baptismal classes. Never pressure, bribe, or coerce a young person into this decision. The Holy Spirit must do the convincing. Give them opportunities to experience and show grace to others. Handle baptismal classes in such a way that an earliteen makes a personal decision for him or herself—not because of their peers.

A Guide for Evaluating Non-Adventist Resources

It is recommended that you begin with Real-Time Faith, the only Adventist curriculum for earliteens, and use other materials to enhance it. As you examine other materials, here are some questions to consider:

- Is the material Bible-based?
- Is it Christ-centered and doctrinally sound?
- Does it reinforce spiritual growth?
- Is it attractive and fun, and does it make the Bible come alive?
- Does it apply to an earliteen's life today?
- Is it age-appropriate?
- Is it well-organized yet flexible?
- Does it actively involve earliteens?
- Is it consistent with Adventist beliefs?

If you are not using Real-Time Faith or are considering a change to a different curriculum, it would be best to get approval from your children's ministries committee or the church board. This will protect you from potential problems that can come from using materials that do not agree with the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

How Earliteens Learn

The youth in your earliteen Sabbath school class learn through exploring and using all of their senses. Here are some ideas for ways you can reach all the teens in your class.

Visual: Pictures and DVDs (anything they can see)

Tactile: Lessons that involve touch, building, and coloring

Auditory: Stories, songs, and sounds

Movement: Action-oriented songs, lessons that involve moving around the room, and drama



Learning Styles

Educational research has determined that we each prefer a particular style of learning. These learning styles demonstrate themselves in children at a very young age, and teachers need to make sure they allow for children to learn in multiple ways. Here are some ideas on how you can help the earliteens in your Sabbath School class learn.

	Description	Application
Dynamic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is creative, an experiential learner, and a leader • Is results-oriented • Insists on doing things their way; is willing to take risks • Needs action and involvement • Has lots of ideas on how to do something differently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes dramatics • Likes to produce creative projects • Enjoys real-life simulations • Enjoys hearing about case studies and practicing reflective thinking
Innovative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs to know why they need to learn something • Has a good imagination • Is people-oriented, likes to be affirmed, likes to talk • May be the conscience of the group • Is sociable and wants everyone to be happy and win 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes to do arts and crafts • Enters into small group discussions • Enjoys role play and drama • Enjoys group work
Common Sense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes to use what they learn immediately • Is not interested in details • Likes to make choices • Wants to get involved • Is good at problem solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoys crafts • Enjoys role play involving the application of the lesson • Enjoys debates and experiments • Likes to write and plan
Analytic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes to know facts and details • Likes routine • Likes things organized • Likes to study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoys demonstrations • Enjoys competitions • Enjoys quizzes and puzzles • Enjoys discussions



Observe your earliteens closely. It is important to reach them through their preferred learning styles. Consider the following:

Innovative and dynamic learners learn through their heart and emotions. Analytic and common sense learners learn intellectually. Both need to understand grace. While the intellectual may accept Jesus by hearing biblical proof, the heart people will need to experience Him and His grace. Make sure your earliteens internalize the biblical lessons you teach them!

Attracting Earliteens to Your Room

Sit down and take a good look at your room. If you were an earliteen, would you like to be there? Is it warm and inviting? Is it interesting? Would it make you feel safe and comfortable or shy and nervous? Does it make learning look fun? Does it contain positive spiritual messages?

It's important to take time to assess these questions. For young people to learn, they must be in a safe, comfortable, warm, and friendly environment.

Number one on the list—is your room clean and orderly? Even the smallest, darkest room in the lowest level of the church can be made attractive with light colors, cleanliness, and neatness.

Next, look at the chairs where the earliteens sit. While it isn't necessary to make the room feel like the living room they have at home—a more casual atmosphere—rather than arranging the chairs classroom-style, it is preferable and can still have an atmosphere of reverence. Placing the chairs in a circle is also more conducive to discussion.

Are your decorations earliteen-oriented or adult-oriented? What message are you trying to convey? Think carefully about what your room says.

When decorating the room, solicit the teens' help. Bring together those in the group who have an interest to help plan. Include others in the execution of the plan. They will probably need your supervision to get the job done, but they will feel a sense of ownership if they're involved. It will give those with artistic talent the freedom to express it.

What if You Don't Have Your Own Sabbath School Room?

Does your class meet in a space that you need to move in and out of each week? If so, here are a few ideas to make it easier:

- Use plastic boxes that can fit in your vehicle's trunk, if possible. These are for all those handouts and other needed supplies.
- A cardboard display board that folds out can work as a bulletin board the earliteens can decorate. Keep it in your trunk with the plastic boxes.
- You may wish to purchase a folding whiteboard or easel that fits in the trunk with paper and appropriate markers. Be sure to keep permanent markers and white board markers separate.
- On Sabbath morning, unload the storage boxes, display board, and white/ flip chart board, and you're ready to go.



Simple Discipline Techniques

If you are new to earliteen leadership, be prepared to be flexible from day one. Don't expect total silence or for the teens to speak only when spoken to. Determine in the beginning how much noise is tolerable. Role play, crafts, and activities are going to create a certain amount of noise. Be reasonable in the limits you set. Teens learn best by being involved, and involvement means movement and a modicum of noise.

Some discipline problems may be attributed to earliteens' maturity level. Feelings and emotions run high in young people entering puberty. Respecting the highs and lows of this age does not mean tolerating unacceptable behavior to adults or other classmates. Teaching a godly respect for others in a classroom environment is an important part of earliteen leadership. Being rigid is not.

As a leader you need to:

- Stay calm, cool, and collected no matter what. Keep your voice down and the level of your shock inside. In other words, expect anything but don't allow students control when they try using shock tactics. If they find out how to push your buttons, they will.
- Prepare a short handout of guidelines for helpers to prepare for trying situations. Encourage them to quietly and unobtrusively intervene rather than depend on the leader to do it in front of the group.
- Establish a few basic rules that are easy to follow. If you let the earliteens help create the rules, they will be more likely to follow them.
- Never try to force or shame a young person into participating. If you have a class of non-participants, find the student(s) the others follow. Befriend that student and find a natural way to enlist them as a participant who is on your side in a manner of speaking, and the others will follow.
- Remember that physical and verbal attacks are always inappropriate and should never be used as discipline.
- Remember that young people can be very aggressive. If you have an aggressive young person in your classroom, try the following to stop the behavior:
 - Act immediately, even if you have to ask them to leave.
 - Talk to the person later. Empathize with them. Say something like, "I know you were (annoyed, angry, upset), but the way you reacted to it is not acceptable. It (hurts, disrupts, etc.) me and the rest of the class. How can I help so the situation does not happen again?"
- Show forgiveness and grace. Teach them a valuable lesson. Never ignore what happened and hope it will go away. Love enough to confront.
- Have helpers keep an eye out for potential situations and deal with them before they escalate.
- Keep earliteens busy and involved.

There are many good books on the market to help you in this area. Check your local Adventist Book Center.



Ministering to Parents

Here are some suggestions worth thinking about:

- Earliteens are taking their first steps toward spreading their wings and venturing out from the family, and one of the ways they do it is by spending more time with their peers. Help parents understand that this is normal. Parents as well as teachers should remember that for earliteens, peers are number one.
- Help a parent know how to talk to their earliteen about spiritual things without turning them off.
- Encourage parents to attend a Sabbath School class or small group where they can share with one another and the group, brainstorming how to help in specific situations. (Be sure there's such a class available, and that it's led by a loving, accepting, grace-oriented leader.)
- Share a short, encouraging book or article.
- Encourage someone to attend a class or study on Jesus and how He met people's needs. Plan a class they would be interested in attending during the week. Let them work out the time and place.
- Help them with parenting problems and skills by offering parenting classes where they can unburden their fears and help others do the same.
- Consider hosting a family night out where you supply a light supper, offer homework tutoring for the earliteens, and hold a short program that interests the parents.
- Listen to parents and provide encouragement.

Most importantly, be sure whatever you do interests the parents and meets their needs. Encourage them to get through another week and help them learn to rely on Jesus.

Volunteers—The Key to Success

Recruiting Volunteers

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



12 TIPS FOR KEEPING VOLUNTEERS

1. Start them slow—immerse them in your vision
2. Be a model—be real and transparent
3. Build trust—believe in them
4. Invest your time in them—be a coach and encourage them
5. Ask for commitment—check on them systematically
6. Set goals for growth
7. Supply the tools they need—conduct regular equipping meetings
8. Communicate on a regular basis
9. Care enough to confront
10. Ask for ideas and opinions when appropriate
11. Thank them
12. Give them someone to work with

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

Who Do You Recruit?

- Find members who have earliten work at heart. Ask them to pray for your department.
- Select people who have had experience working with earliteens. Ask them to pray for your search and then with a specific volunteer.
- Encourage current workers to recruit helpers who love working with teens. Groom them as future volunteers.
- Look for volunteers among members of the adult Sabbath School classes.
- Be creative in your search. Don't forget youth and seniors.
- Ask the nominating committee to consult the children's division leader before appointing leaders in the department.

Retaining Volunteers

Retaining volunteers doesn't happen by accident. You must plan carefully. Show workers that you care about their efforts.

- Ask how things are going and what needs they have.
- Hold a dedication service that includes both volunteers and their prayer partners.



- Find substitute leaders and teachers who will work in an emergency so volunteers won't have to worry if they need to be absent.
- Visit volunteers at home so they know you really care. Do a kind deed for them.
- Put up a bulletin board in the hall and display pictures of volunteers.

In-service education also helps hold volunteers. People like to feel that they're growing. Here are a few suggestions:

- Remember that volunteers expect that meetings will benefit them, and want to be involved in the planning.
- Be respectful of volunteers' time by beginning on time, ending on time, and keeping it relevant.
- Use humor, energy, creative touches, and involvement.
- Begin programs with icebreaker techniques to relax those who attend.
- Make it spiritual in nature as well as educational.
- Present methods that will improve skills.
- Teach them how to meet the needs of teens.
- Retain the church's shared vision as the center of child training.

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

Guidelines for Volunteers and Caregivers

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

1. Never leave a child, or group of children in your care, unattended. Provide adequate supervision at all times, no matter what.
2. Never be the only adult serving as a caregiver. Always have at least one other person 18 or older with or near you.
3. Always ask a person's permission before touching him/her anywhere, even when responding to an injury or problem. This is especially true for any area that would normally be covered by a t-shirt and/or shorts. If an injury is within this area, make sure another adult works with you to provide care.



4. Physical and verbal attacks are inappropriate and should never be used as discipline. Putting a child in time out or having them sit in a chair are much more helpful methods in such situations.
5. Kids need to be touched appropriately. Keep hugs brief and shoulder-to-shoulder or side-to-side. Always keep your hands at or above the shoulder level. For small children who like to sit on laps, encourage them to sit next to you instead.
6. When taking small children to the bathroom, take another adult along.

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

- The volunteer screening rule: All volunteers must complete the screening process at NCSRisk.org/Adventist. Please check with your conference if you have any questions regarding this screening process.
- The six-month rule: Do not recruit a volunteer who has been a church member for less than six months.
- The two-person rule: Have at least two adults present at all times, 18 years of age or older, to help with the supervision of children.
- The glass window rule: If the door to a classroom does not have glass in or around it, the door should be left open so the teacher is in full view. Visit ChildMin.org/childrenssafety for more information.

Volunteer Ministry Screening

Why the need for volunteer screening?

The screening process is meant to safeguard children and youth from sexual predators and the church from litigation.

Volunteer screening gives the families in your community confidence that their children are safe with us. If a person has had a prior conviction and is still appointed to a position in a church anyway, that church could be liable for negligence. The resulting emotional, social, and financial costs to the church would be substantial.

Who Should be Screened?

Every person who fills a ministry position in the church should be screened—particularly those who volunteer to work with children or youth. For many young people, any ministry



position in the church carries the weight of respect and authority. Pastors and other leaders in the church should go through the screening process first as an example to others. Teens who volunteer to teach younger children may be screened as well. Teens should never be left to work with children alone. Visit NCSRisk.org/Adventist to begin the screening process and ChildMin.org/childrens-safety for more information about child safety.

Planning Your Budget

The budget is your ministry vision expressed in money. A budget is, at best, an estimate of the amount of money you think you will need to spend during a specific time. It is better to estimate too high than too low.

Steps to Creating Your Budget

1. Consider the needs.
 - Look at your department's goals
 - Inventory what you already have
 - Determine your additional needs
 - Consult your Real-Time Faith teacher's guide supply list for help
 - Prioritize your immediate and long-range needs
 - Identify your categories of needs:
 - Curriculum
 - Books and other resources
 - Printing and photocopying
 - Supplies and other materials
 - Equipment
2. Discuss the budget with the children's ministries coordinator and committee.
3. If you need to reduce your budget, ask yourself these questions:
 - Can we accomplish the same goal less expensively?
 - Is this purchase vital to our ministry vision?
 - Is the timing right for this purchase or expense?
 - Have we done all we can to justify this expense?
 - Are you willing to bend on this purchase?
 - How might we raise additional money to accomplish our vision?
4. Evaluate and adjust your budget on a regular basis.



Sample Budget

Here is a sample form for computing a budget. It can be adapted easily to fit your needs. Always check what is already in the department before adding new items to the list. Also consider what can be donated or borrowed. Search the internet and stores for freebies. Keep your supplies organized so they can be used repeatedly. Try to build up the basic supplies recommended in the Real-Time Faith teacher's guide.

Resource Needs:

1. Adventist Book Center materials

Real-Time Faith teacher's guides _____

Real-Time Faith student Bible study guides _____

Copies of *Guide* for earliteens to take home _____

2. Supplies to be purchased

Activity supplies _____

Paper products _____

Supplies recommended
in the teacher's guide _____

3. Equipment or major additions needed _____

4. Outreach activities _____

5. Additional nurture activities _____

6. Printing and photocopying _____

7. Other _____

TOTAL _____

Permission to adapt and copy for local church use.



Building an Earliteen Calendar

Communication is important to the success of your earliteen department. Keeping everyone informed helps avoid conflict between other church programs, leaders, and parents. A monthly calendar keeps everyone informed of what is going to happen, when, and where.

When planning your calendar, consider other events in your church or conference that may impact your division. Include these in your finished calendar. Consider the following possibilities.

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

Add your division events to the calendar. Ask the earliteens to help design and produce the calendar. Let them be creative.

Permission to adapt and copy for local church use.

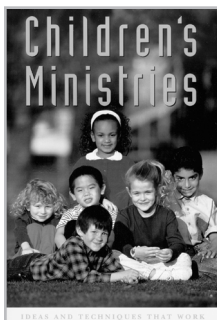


Get Started!

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

Resources

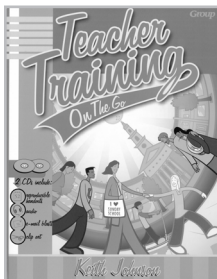
The following resources are available from AdventSource. For a complete list, visit AdventSource.org or call at 402.486.8800.



Children's Ministries Manual

By Ann Calkins

Learn how to reach this new generation and ignite their passion for Jesus. Containing practical answers to your questions, it teaches tried and true techniques that fit all kinds of learning situations from involving kids in role play to leading them into a committed relationship with Jesus.
Product #021992



Teacher Training On the Go

By Keith Johnson

Train—and retrain—volunteers. A year's worth of reproducible training handouts helps volunteers be their best. Their skills and effectiveness in children's ministry will grow. Includes one audio CD, 52 reproducible handouts, CD-ROM with email blasts and clip art, meeting format, appendix, topic list, and reproducible audio CD that empowers volunteers.
Product #043353

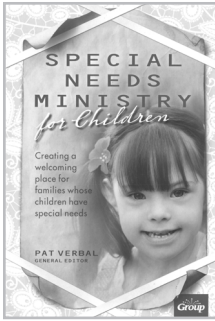


Pocket Guide to Discipline

By Group Publishing

The pocket guide is packed with practical ways to avoid most discipline issues—plus tips for tackling any problems that do arise. These are the best-ever solutions from the front-line teachers who have mastered the art of keeping their classrooms stress-free and fun—for both kids and leaders! Includes 10 booklets— one for every volunteer!
Product #012007





Special Needs Ministry for Children

By Pat Verbal

Do you know what it takes to make these kids—and their parents—feel welcome in your church? This practical, insightful book is your guide to answering all those questions and more. Packed with case studies and personal stories from recognized experts in this ministry field, you'll learn the truth about promoting your ministry and recruiting the right volunteers, the best ways to reach the most overlooked group in your community, and more.

Product #043340



NAD Youth/Children's Ministry Volunteer Code of Conduct

Acknowledgment Because I want the best possible environment for our children and youth to grow up in, it is important that those working with children have guidelines for conduct in order to protect both themselves and those under their care. As a ministry volunteer, I want parents and others to feel comfortable and confident with me.

My Commitment to Volunteer Ministry

As a Youth/Children's Ministry Volunteer, I will:

1. Provide appropriate adult supervision at all times for the children for whom I am responsible.
2. Have at least one other adult, eighteen (18) years of age or older, to help with the supervision of children. If I find myself in a situation where I am the only adult present, under no circumstances will I allow myself to be alone with one child (the "two-person rule"). This protects the child as well as protecting the adult from possible allegations.
3. Ask a child's permission before physically touching him/her anywhere, even when responding to an injury or problem. This is especially true for any areas that would normally be covered by a T-shirt and/or shorts. If an injury is within this area, make sure another adult works with you as care is provided.
4. Refrain from physical and verbal attacks and corporal punishment which are inappropriate behaviors and should never be used as discipline. "Time outs" or "sit-in-that-chair" may be helpful discipline methods to use with children.
5. Affirm children with appropriate touching by keeping hugs brief and "shoulder-to-shoulder" or "side-to-side." I will keep hands at (not below) the shoulder level. For small children who like to sit on laps, I will encourage them to sit next to me.
6. Provide extra care when taking small children to the restroom. I will take another adult along, or leave the door open.
7. Be aware of conducting activities in rooms that do not have an interior viewing area, or I will leave the door open during the activity to allow easy observation by others.
8. Cooperate with the volunteer screening process and complete the Volunteer Ministry Information form, as required by the church.
9. Be aware of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and aware of the legal requirements for reporting suspected cases of abuse. In addition to any legally required reporting, I agree that if I become aware of any behavior by another individual which seems abusive or inappropriate towards children I am supervising, I will report that behavior to the church pastor, elder, or directly to the Conference Treasurer's or Risk Management Director.



10. Cooperate with church leadership in conducting children and youth ministries by being a volunteer who is loving, kind, firm, and always a thoroughly professional person. Working with children and youth is not only a privilege; it is also a serious responsibility that must be approached with utmost care.
11. Participate in orientation and training programs conducted by the church.
12. Uphold the standards of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

* In the event I find it impossible to comply with the above, I will comply as closely as possible with the Code of Conduct and act in good faith for the welfare of the people involved.

Thank You for your service as a Youth/Children's Ministry Volunteer Please retain a copy of this document and keep it for reference.



Earliteen Sabbath School

This Quick Start Guide for Earliteen Sabbath School is full of important information to help you start or revitalize a ministry at your local church. This guide contains a job description, instructions for getting started, tips for maintaining a successful ministry, troubleshooting suggestions, recommended resources, and more. Whether you're new to this ministry or an experienced volunteer, this Quick Start Guide will inspire you with lots of great ideas you can immediately put to use in your local church.

Other titles in the Quick Start Guide series:

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

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



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