

Dear Sunday School Coordinators,

As you prepare for the Fall sessions of Sunday School, the Diocesan Response Group (DRG) has a request to make of you. In keeping with our risk reduction guidelines published in the DRG manual and available from your parish clergy, we would recommend that at your Teacher Training events this Fall you include the following information.

- Levels of Supervision
- Appropriate Contact
- Discipline
- Bathroom supervision
- Overnight events
- Screening of volunteers
- Use of physical space
- Reporting abuse
- Job descriptions

Any teacher who cannot make the scheduled event must review the content of the training with either the Sunday School Superintendent or Rector BEFORE they teach.

We enclose materials for possible use in your training events, we also recommend you distribute the 10 safe steps trifolds included in this mailing and also available in your DRG manual.

Level of Supervision

- Children and youth should be under the supervision of at least two adults, one of whom may be a high school aide, during Sunday School or any other church sponsored activity or program.
- When one adult needs to leave a classroom, adults in the nearest classroom should be notified AND the doors should remain open.

Appropriate contact includes

- Bending down to the child's eye level, speaking kindly, and listening attentively
- Gaining permission before hugging a child and respecting his or her right to refuse a hug
- Taking a child's hand and leading him or her to an activity
- Comforting a child by placing an arm around his or her shoulder and giving a gentle squeeze from the side
- Praising or welcoming a child by holding the child's two hands in yours
- Patting the child on the head, hand, back, or shoulder in affirmation
- Holding a preschool child who is crying, provided that he or she wants to be held

Inappropriate contact includes

- Kissing, or coaxing a child to kiss you
- Extended hugging or tickling
- Touching any area of the body normally covered by a bathing suit, specifically the buttocks, thighs, breasts or groin areas
- Carrying older children, having them sit on your lap, or having them rub up next to you

Discipline

- Unless under the direct supervision of a Sunday School Teacher, discipline is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.
- The purpose of discipline is to maintain order in a manner consistent with the teaching of Christian responsibility, respect and cooperation.
- No child shall be disciplined by the use of spanking, hitting, slapping, or any form of physical punishment.
- Verbal reprimands shall not include destructive criticism, insults or shouting.

- Adults are encouraged to listen to the child, communicate expectations of appropriate behaviour, and give alternative choices. Parents should be informed if continued disruptive behaviours exist.
- If a child is continually disruptive and does not respond to the Sunday School teacher, an adult should be sent to locate the Sunday School Superintendent (or designee) - if this person is not available, the parent should be contacted and brought to the room.
- Parents are responsible for their children before the worship service begins, and after the worship service and Sunday School session ends.
- During worship service, children must have a parent or another responsible adult on the premises.

Bathroom supervision

- Normally a child (Pre-school through First Grade) is escorted by a teacher and that person waits outside the bathroom-older children should go in pairs, returning within a reasonable timeframe.
- If a child needs assistance, two adults should be present-when only one adult is available, the door to the bathroom should be left open.
- If anything unusual occurs, a note should be written by the Sunday School teacher and given to Sunday School Superintendent or Clergy by the end of the morning-parents should also be notified.
- Ideally diapering should be performed by the parent (a quick check before leaving the nursery is a great help!!)-otherwise, diapering should be done in the nursery with two adults present.
- Parents should be encouraged to escort their children to the bathroom before Sunday School begins

Overnight events

In addition to following the guidelines published in the Diocesan Youth Manual, any and all adult chaperones supervising overnight stays of Church youth MUST have been cleared to do so by the Rector. A signed parental consent form is required which names the advisors/ chaperones present. Two adult males should dorm with the boys and two adult females should dorm with the girls. All outside doors will be locked and will remain locked until parents arrive for pick-up in the morning.

Use of physical space

- No Sunday School classes should take place in rooms that are windowless. If this cannot be avoided the door should be kept open at all times.
- All teachers should be aware that there will be drop-in visits by the Sunday School coordinator and/or clergy during class times throughout the year.

Reporting abuse

Suspected child abuse is always to be reported to the district office of Alberta Children's Services, the Child Abuse hotline (1 800 387 5437) or the police. It is a moral responsibility for everyone in the community as indicated in the child Welfare Act. Indicators may include:

- Unexplained bruises or welts or injuries, especially in places that young children do not normally injure during regular play or movement.
- Burns which leave a pattern outlining the object which was used to make the burn, such as cigarette, iron or electric stove burner, burns on the hands or feet caused by scalding water or rope burns from being tied.
- A young child who is often left alone
- A child who hints or talks outrightly about sexual abuse
- A child or adolescent who repeatedly runs away from home

DRAFT Job descriptions

We are aware that most parishes have now produced their own job descriptions for Sunday School coordinators, teachers, and nursery supervisors. We include one example of each position here as examples which could be used if this task has not been completed.

Nursery Coordinator

The Nursery Coordinator will oversee all aspects of the Parish Nursery.

I. SPECIFIC MINISTRY RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Nursery Responsibilities

1. Get to know the parents who are utilizing the nursery.
2. Introduce new parents to other parents of young children in the church.
3. Assist with design and implementation of training of volunteers.
4. Be aware of the general look of the nursery, including cleanliness, safety of toys etc.
5. Draw up nursery schedule and send to clergy in a timely manner.
6. To recruit and schedule caregivers, overseeing their training and the nursery environment.
7. Plan at least one training event for caregivers
8. Keep a current list of volunteers with names/addresses/phone numbers.

B. General

1. Communicate regularly with children, parents and volunteers.
2. Participate in seasonal church staff meetings.
3. Attend worship services on a regular basis.
4. The Nursery Coordinator works closely with the Sunday School coordinator for mutual encouragement, support, training, developing strategies, and planning.

C. QUALIFICATIONS

1. A member of the church for at least one year.
2. This person is able to supervise, encourage and coach volunteers.
3. This person has demonstrated ability to plan and organize events for the ministry.

Term: One year minimum

Sunday School Coordinator

DRAFT

The Sunday School Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the entire children's ministry to ensure a smoothly operating, safe and effective program. The coordinator will recruit and train leaders who will touch children's lives with God's love, teach them God's Word and provide fellowship with God's people — laying a foundation that will keep children interested in the things of God and involved in church. The coordinator works closely with the clergy of the Parish.

SPECIFIC MINISTRY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Plan and lead teachers' meetings
2. Schedule teachers and lessons
3. Train and supervise new teachers working closely with parish clergy and adhering to Diocesan guidelines.
4. Together with clergy, review curricula and provide input into curriculum choice
5. Attend seasonal church staff meetings.
6. Monitor teachers and immediately report any concerns to clergy.
7. Hold small-group celebrations/appreciations at least twice annually in conjunction with nursery coordinator.
8. Keep a current list of volunteers with names/addresses/phone numbers.
9. Plan a yearly calendar and budget for the Children's Ministry and monitor expenditures.
10. Provide the parish office with a list of birthdates and special occasions (e.g. graduation, special sports awards etc.) of the children attending Sunday school.
11. Inform clergy if a regular attendee misses a number of sessions, call home to check on child's health.
12. Maintain a current list of allergy health concerns for Sunday school children and ensure that teachers are aware of such concerns.

B. General

1. Communicate regularly with children, parents and volunteers.
2. Participate in seasonal church staff meetings.
3. Attend worship services on a regular basis.
4. The Sunday School Coordinator works closely with the Nursery Coordinator for mutual encouragement, support, training, developing strategies, and planning.

C. QUALIFICATIONS

1. A member of the church for at least one year.
2. This person is able to supervise, encourage and coach volunteers.
3. This person has demonstrated ability to plan and organize events for the ministry.

Term: One year minimum

Position: Nursery Caregivers

DRAFT

Nature of the Position

It is the role of the nursery volunteer to assist and follow the direction of the Nursery Coordinator and to welcome, nurture, and help develop a comfortable, safe, and predictable community for children attending the nursery.

Outline of Responsibilities

- arrive 15 minutes before the service begins and wear your name tag
- greet parents & children in a friendly manner
- if unfamiliar with a child, review registration form or speak to the nursery coordinator, so you are aware of any special needs the child may have
- care for and comfort all children in the nursery not giving your primary attention to just one or a few children
- if you cannot fulfill your scheduled duties, it is your responsibility to try to find a substitute and advise the Nursery Coordinator of the switch or vacancy
- to work as part of a team with other volunteers and teen helpers

Skills & Experience

- enjoys working with babies and toddler age children
- an ability to communicate and work with the Nursery Coordinator, other volunteers and parents

Boundaries & Limitations

- uphold the statement regarding the creation of a safe environment

Participation Group

- children ages birth to 4 years of age

Screening Requirements

- A member of the parish for one year prior to volunteering in nursery

Length of Term

- one year, renewable

Benefits to the Volunteer

- the primary benefit to the volunteer is the ability to build close and warm relationships with the youngest children of the parish
- the development of friendships with other volunteers involved in the nursery program
- for High School age volunteers, the ability to log volunteer hours and a letter of reference for future volunteer, or job opportunities.

Sunday School Teacher/Helper

DRAFT

Sunday School Purpose: to aid the Christian development of the children of the parish through enjoyable learning experiences introducing them to God's word and the love of Jesus Christ.

Qualifications, Knowledge, Attitudes

Sunday School Teachers and Helpers should be baptized and regularly attend this Anglican Parish Church.

She or he should be interested in the Christian development of children and be comfortable working with children, age 4 to 15.

Responsibility

You are a living witness of Christian love. The teacher/helper works with parents, other teachers, and the clergy to present a Christian Education program that engages the children and nurtures them in their faith development.

Specific Duties

- a. Prepare lessons using curriculum and resources supplied;
- b. Supervise and guide children in completing lessons and projects;
- c. Ensure that the Sunday School room is clean and presentable after class;
- d. Attend teachers meetings;
- e. Assist with special events as related to Sunday School, when possible.

Supervision/Accountability

Sunday School Teachers are accountable to the clergy of the parish one of whom has specific responsibility for Sunday School. If the teacher/helper has any problems or concerns, clergy are available to help.

You will always work in a team of at least 2 people. You will never be expected to be solely responsible for the children on Sunday mornings.

If the teacher/helper is unable to be present for the scheduled class, she or he should arrange for a replacement, and if that is not possible, notify the clergy co-ordinator. As a last resort, a message can be left on the Church's answering machine.

The Clergy Co-ordinator will communicate regularly with teachers to ensure supplies are available and to determine if there are any problems.

Time Commitment

Sunday School starts the first Sunday following Labour Day and ends the last Sunday in June. A class takes about 40 minutes and preparation takes about 1 hour. Members of the parish have offered specific skills e.g. music and arts and crafts, to enhance the Sunday school program.

Rewards/Benefits

It is rewarding to see the growth in the Christian knowledge of the children and their delight in completing tasks.

Orientation/Training

An orientation evening will be held in the early Fall to familiarize teachers with the curriculum and to get to know other teachers and helpers. Other meetings will be offered seasonally. Teachers and Helpers will be invited to attend diocesan workshops as available.