

Purpose

The *Children's Program Guidelines* provides the flow and activities of a Faith Encouragement Ministries weekend for the children. The purpose for the new Children's Coordinator is to use the information as a guide in planning and preparing for the Children's Program. The purpose for the experienced Children's Coordinator is to use the information as a refresher and possibly as a source of new ideas. All may find the material to be a handy reference.

Plan the program for children ages 4 through the fifth grade, adjusting as you have more information from the Children's Chairperson. If you have any questions or need a little help, contact Judith Barrett, Faith Encouragement Ministries Program Director, Judith@faithencouragement.org.

Contact Judith Barrett if you would like samples of children's program for ideas.

Pray

Pray for the ministry, the weekend, the church, and the children. Ask God to lead you and keep your heart open to His guidance. As we plan and prepare for the best possible program for the children, we remember and trust that God is in control.

Planning with the Church's Children's Leader and Chairperson

It is important that the Children's Coordinator and the church's Children Chairperson work closely together prior to the weekend and discuss the following details for program success:

- Who the children are: the number of children expected and their ages; types of activities they enjoy and prefer; typical Sunday school attendance; what they are currently studying in Sunday school
- Facilities for the weekend: a dedicated room for the program to use; location of restrooms
- Outdoor facilities for some physical activity
- Importance of separate pre-weekend publicity by the church for the children and their families
- Develop a plan of activities and schedule together and then the final (more detailed) plan of activities and schedule based on the overall weekend schedule
- Provide a list of materials, equipment, and supplies needed for the program
- Make sure lunch is planned on Saturday for the children
- The visiting Teen team members may be available to teach Sunday School; serve as the liaison for the Teen Coordinator and the Children's Chairperson
- Stay in close communication, sharing ideas for success

Request that either the church's Children's Minister or other adult involved with the church's children commits to attending the entire weekend's Children's Program so that there will be continuity with the program after the weekend.

If the Children's Chairperson is unable to respond or plan the above with you, notify your Coordinator immediately.

Determining Your Team

The guidelines and best practices for providing safety and security for children is 1 adult for every 6 children ages 4-12. Because Faith Encouragement Ministries does require a minimum of two adults for the children's programs, that would translate to a minimum of two adults for the children's program for up to 12 children and a minimum of three adults for up to 18 children.

Because we request that the church does have an adult attend the Children's Program, it may not be necessary to bring an assistant with you. If up to 18 children are expected, you may want to bring an adult assistant who is familiar with your children's program.

The advantage of having someone come with you is that know you and your program. The advantage of having someone from the church work with you is that they know the children. If someone from the church is going to assist you, ask for their name and contact information so that you can share your program plan with them in advance. Share the name and contact information of your assistant with your Weekend Coordinator, whether it is someone you are bringing or someone from the church.

Safeguarding God's Children

Faith Encouragement Ministries requires any adult working with teens or children including the Children's Coordinator and all assistants to send the National Office a copy of their completion certificate for *Safeguarding God's Children* before the weekend begins. Most churches already require this training. If you or your assistants have not completed the training, the National Office has made arrangements for an online training course to be available for a small fee.

Weekend Overview

Friday Events

Weekend Event	Children's Coordinator and Assistant Actions
<i>Arrival</i> of visiting team members	<i>Meet</i> with the Church's Children's Chairperson or Leader for a <i>walk-through</i> of the facilities for the children. <i>Check</i> requested supplies and equipment (DVD player, etc.) for the weekend including <i>working order</i> of any equipment. <i>Locate</i> nametags for all including church children
<i>Team meeting</i> of visiting team	Children's Coordinator and Assistant <i>attend</i> the first half of the Team Meeting
<i>Team meeting</i> of children's team	Children's Coordinator <i>conducts</i> meeting of the children's team at the Children's Program location before the evening meal begins
<i>Evening Meal</i> for all	<i>Consider</i> making arrangements for you and your assistant to sit with some children and their families
<i>Program Opening</i> for all	Children's Coordinator and Assistant(s) are introduced.

Weekend Event	Children's Coordinator and Assistant Actions
	<i>Remind parents</i> that children must be picked up by them at the conclusion of the evening. <i>Accompany</i> Children to Children's Program location.
Adult Program	<i>Children's Program</i>
Adult Program Concludes	<i>Wait</i> for children to be picked up

Friday Evening Children's Program

Make arrangements to meet the Children's Chairperson prior to the scheduled team meeting for a walk-through of the facilities, to check the supplies, and to discuss any last minute plans or changes. You and your assistant(s) attend the Team meeting that the church leadership and all visiting team members attend. Be sure to make the Weekend Coordinator aware of any issues or last minute changes.

Plan for you and your assistant to sit with families with children for the evening meal.

The Friday evening children's program includes a getting acquainted activity, singing, prayers, and introducing the skit or song for Saturday evening. The skit or song is optional, depending on your assessment of the children. Your Weekend Coordinator and the Children's Chairperson needs to know before the weekend what you are planning so that the Saturday evening program can be accurately advertised and planned.

Saturday Events

Weekend Event	Children's Coordinator and Assistant Actions
<i>Team meeting</i> of visiting team	Children's Coordinator and Assistant <i>attend</i> the Team Meeting. Plan on leaving early to prepare for your day.
Adult Morning Program	<i>Children's Morning Program</i>
Adult Men's and Women's Lunch Programs	<i>Children's Lunch and Program</i>
Adult Break	<i>Break</i>
<i>Team Meeting</i>	Children's Coordinator and Assistant <i>attend</i> Team Meeting
<i>Evening Meal</i> for all	Encourage families to <i>sit together</i> for meal
<i>Program</i> Opening for all	Children may present song/skit <i>Teens may present song/skit</i> <i>Children leave before the Teen Witness speaks</i>
Adult Program	<i>Children's Program</i>
Adult Program Concludes	<i>Wait</i> for children to be picked up

Saturday Morning and Lunch Children's Program

The Children's Coordinator and assistant attend the Team meeting. Let the Weekend Coordinator know that you want to leave early to prepare for the day. Ask to provide your feedback early in the meeting.

The Saturday morning program is singing, activities, crafts, and some outdoor time, depending on weather. The group also learns and practices the optional presentation for the Saturday night program. The children and leaders eat lunch together. Arrange for the Saturday lunch to be served or made available where the children are meeting. In partnership with the church children's chairperson, plan a fun, active event for the early afternoon in addition to the program.

The children will be picked up by their parents at the end of the adult lunches. Saturday afternoon is a (well-deserved) break for you and the children.

Saturday Evening Children's Program

Encourage families with children to sit together at the evening meal.

The evening program frequently begins with a skit or song by the children, and then is followed by a skit or song by the teens. The children's and teen coordinators may plan a joint skit or song, especially if there is a small number of children or teens. You and the children leave together after the teen skit for the children's program.

The evening program may be a relaxing time with a kid's movie and snacks or other quiet activities. It has been a busy weekend!

Sunday Morning

Sunday School

You may want to visit the children's Sunday school class or the Visiting Teens may teach Sunday School. Discuss with the Teen Coordinator and the Children's Chairperson.

Sunday Service

The children attend church services with their parents.

Departure

The church provides a sack lunch for all the visiting team members.

Thank you for your love for God's children and all your hard work!