

*A Quick  
Start*  
GUIDE



EARLITEEN  
SABBATH  
SCHOOL

**A Quick Start Guide for the Earliteen Sabbath School Leader**

Manuscript created by Barbara Manspeaker  
Managing editor: Phyllis Washington  
Editor: Cassie Martsching  
Design and layout: Alan Eno

Available from:  
*AdventSource*  
5040 Prescott Avenue  
Lincoln, NE 68506  
800.328.0525  
[www.adventsource.org](http://www.adventsource.org)

© 2008 North American Division Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists

All rights reserved. This book may be used and reproduced without permission in local church printed matter. It may not, however, be used or reproduced in other books or publications without prior permission from the copyright holder. Reprinting the content as a whole for giveaway or resale is expressly prohibited.

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN #: 978-1-57756-468-3

## The Earliteen Sabbath School Division

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.

Go to [www.childmin.com](http://www.childmin.com) for leader's resources, training, information about certification classes and a free newsletter, The Children's Leader.

In some churches earliteens are grouped with juniors into one Sabbath school class. In other churches earliteens are included with the youth. Because of 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.

<b>Sabbath School Divisions</b>		
<b>Beginner</b>	ages birth-2	2-Year GraceLink Curriculum
<b>Kindergarten</b>	ages 3-5	2-Year GraceLink Curriculum
<b>Primary</b>	ages 6-10 (grades 1-4)	4-Year GraceLink Curriculum
<b>Junior</b>	ages 10-12 (grades 5-6)	2-Year GraceLink PowerPoints Curriculum
<b>Earliteen</b> (if classes are divided)	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:** Coordinate and lead the earliteen Sabbath school

**Time frame:** 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 your 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

**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

**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)

## Top 10 Tasks for Earliteen Sabbath School Leaders

- Read this Quick Start Guide (you are already doing this)!
- **Read *Children's Ministries Manual: Ideas and Techniques that Work*.** It is full of great ideas and information that will make your ministry successful. This book is available from AdventSource at [www.adventsource.org](http://www.adventsource.org) or 800.328.0525.

- 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).
- 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 the 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?
- Get an up-to-date picture of your earliteen Sabbath school division – the earliteens and 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.)
- Create a budget for the entire year. (See Budgets on page 19.)
- Plan a calendar for the year that includes all division activities. Add appropriate church and conference activities. (See page 21.)
- Consult with the children's ministries coordinator concerning expectations, needs, budget, church calendar and areas of concern.
- Share your plans, calendar, budget and any other pertinent information with the children's ministries committee.
- 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.

### Personal

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

### Excel

Do well what you do. It's not 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 open up 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 – 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 the Adventist Children's Ministry Association? How about 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 to adapt and circulate to the teens. The information you collect will help you in planning your programs, events and calendar. Another way to get to know your earliteens is to visit them in their homes or take them on an outing. When you visit, 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 would you like us to know about you? \_\_\_\_\_

## Understanding Earliteens

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

### Physical

- Mature at widely different rates; girls generally experiencing growth spurts before boys of the same chronological age
- (Most of them) reach puberty during the earliteen years
- 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
- Capable of engaging in discussion and debate
- Have long attention span – provided they are interested in the topic
- Test the boundaries of convention and knowledge
- Interested in making money
- 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
- Always testing the values they grew up with
- Take themselves seriously
- Appreciate adults who are low-keyed and who joke with them

### Social/Relational

- Cave in to peer pressure; often afraid to take a stand
- Be somewhat clumsy in relating to each other
- Avoid doing anything in isolation from the group
- Extremely interested in the opposite sex
- 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

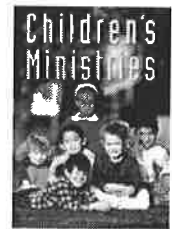
## Developmental Needs

- Collect and sift through information
- Make more of their own decisions
- Express their individuality in various ways (usually with varying degrees of success)
- Crave 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

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

Find more information on reaching earliteens *Children's Ministries Manual: Ideas and Techniques that Work.*



Available from AdventSource. Call 800.328.0525 or visit [www.adventsource.org](http://www.adventsource.org). Catalog #021992

For more information about learning read *Children's Ministries Manual: Ideas and Techniques That Work*, chapter 6.

## Faith Development for Earliteens

In Luke 2:52 we read that Jesus grew in wisdom (mental) and stature (physical) and He also grew in favor with God and man. These last two areas suggest both spiritual and social growth.

They key element of the 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 teens 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 teens to find answers.
- To be needed in the faith community.

### Much More Online

Find Sabbath school curriculum resources, puzzles, music, PowerPoint® presentations, materials list, discussion and more at [www.realtimefaith.net](http://www.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.

For more about faith development see chapter 4 of the *Children's Ministries Handbook* available from *AdventSource*.

## 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 [www.realtimefaith.net](http://www.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 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 “real-time” of being an agent of God's kingdom. A Christian never knows what he or she will encounter next. At [www.realtimfaith.net](http://www.realtimfaith.net) earliteens can explore each week's topic with other earliteens, and teachers can access additional resources and exchange ideas.

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

## 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 into 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 – looking 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.

Internalizing what we learn is most important. Knowledge alone does not change lives. Experiencing grace is vital. It is important to help them 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 its use. 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, fun, and does it make the Bible come alive?
- Does it apply to a teen's life today?
- Is it age appropriate?
- Is it well organized yet flexible?
- Does it actively involve teens?
- 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.

### Last-Minute Planners

We sometimes find ourselves on Friday evening with nothing ready for our Sabbath program. 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-range 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.

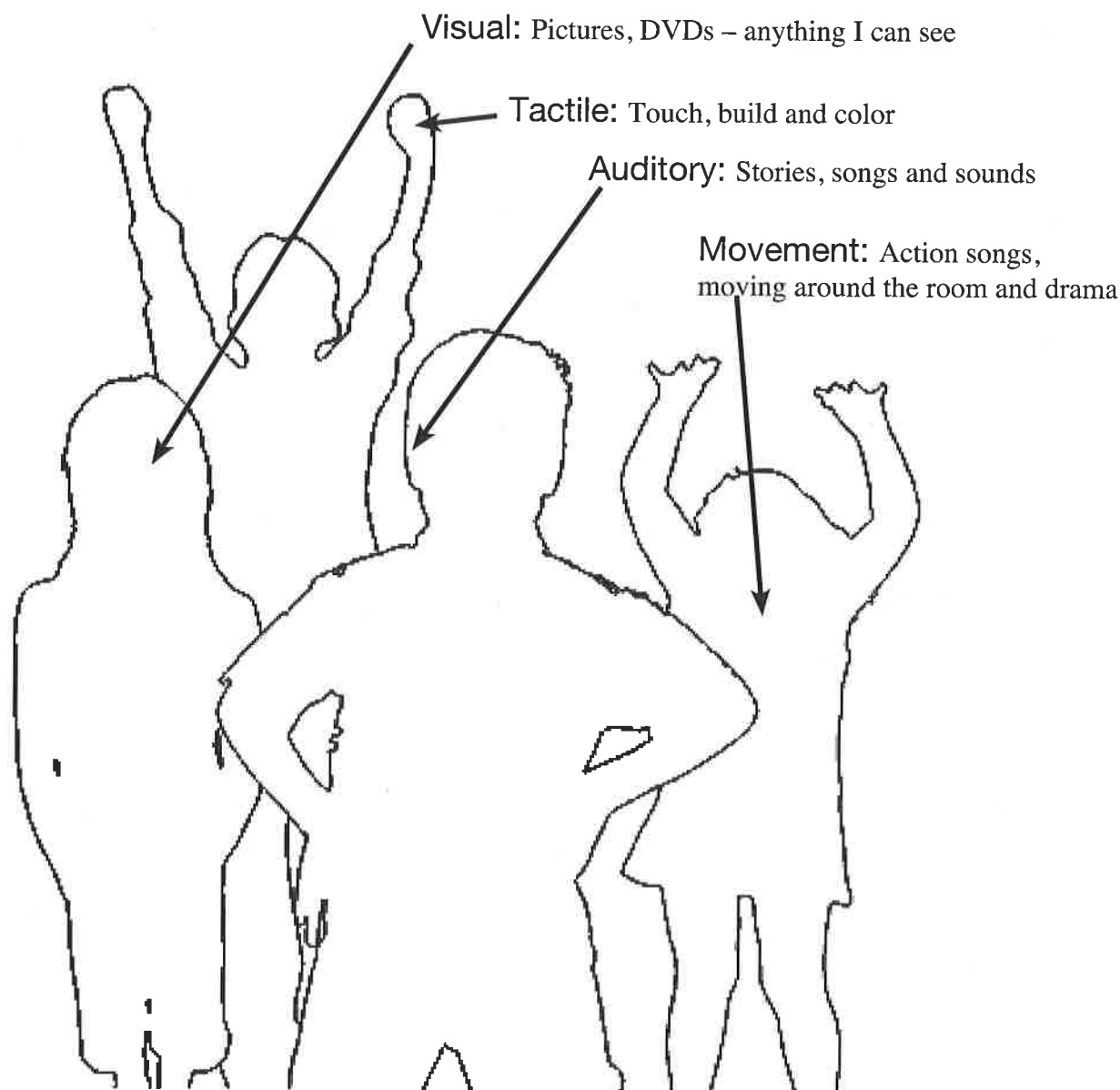
If you're not quite that organized yet, ask someone in the church to be your partner. They may not want to get up front but they can have everything ready for you to do. Working together is much more fun and efficient.

Join the Adventist Children's Ministries Association for networking, ideas and a members-only newsletter.  
[www.acma-online.org](http://www.acma-online.org)



## How Teens Learn

The teens in your earliteen Sabbath school class learn through exploring and using all of their senses. Here are some ideas that will help you reach all the teens in your class.



For more information about learning read *Children's Ministries Manual: Ideas and Techniques that Work*, chapter 6, page 65.

## 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 the teens in your Sabbath school class learn.

### Dynamic

Experiential learner, creative and a leader  
Results-oriented  
Insists on doing it their way; will take risks  
Needs action and involvement  
Lots of ideas on how to do something differently

#### Application

Likes dramatics  
Likes to produce creative projects  
Enjoys real life simulations  
Case studies – reflective thinking

### Innovative

Needs to know why they need to learn something  
Good imaginations  
People-oriented, likes to be affirmed, likes to talk  
May be the conscience for the group  
Sociable, wants everyone to be happy and win

#### Application

Likes to do arts and crafts  
Enters into small group discussions  
Enjoys role play and drama  
Group work

### Common Sense

Likes to immediately use what they learn  
Not interested in details  
Likes to make choices  
Wants to get involved  
Good at problem solving

#### Application

Enjoys crafts  
Role playing involving the application of the lesson  
Enjoys debates and experiments  
Likes to write and plan

### Analytic

Likes to know facts and details  
Likes routine  
Likes things organized  
Likes to study

#### Application

Demonstrations  
Competitions  
Quizzes and puzzles  
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 through Bible proof, the heart people will need to experience grace. Be sure your earliteens internalize what they learn biblically.

## 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? Do 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 the teens sit in. While it isn't necessary to make the room like their living room at home, a more casual atmosphere, rather than classroom-style, is preferable and can still have an atmosphere of reverence. Placing the chairs in a circle is more conducive to discussion and eliminates pranks by those sitting behind.

Are your decorations teen 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 with 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?

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 can work as a bulletin board the teens 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 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 only speak 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. It may be wise to invest in a noise patroller. When the noise exceeds an acceptable level, a red light flashes. Be reasonable in your limits. Teens learn best by being involved. 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 their 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 teens help create the rules, they will be more likely to follow them.
- Never try to force or shame a teen 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.
- Physical and verbal attacks are always inappropriate and should never be used as discipline.
- Young people can be very aggressive. If you have an aggressive young person in your classroom try the following ways to stop the behavior:
  - Act immediately, even if you have to ask them to leave. Unobtrusively place a hand on the shoulder of the person disrupting the class.
  - 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, annoys, 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 teens busy and involved.

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



## Ministering to Parents

Here are some suggestions worth thinking about:

- Earliteens are making their first move to spread their wings and venture out from the family, spending more time with their peers. Help parents understand that this is normal. Parents and teachers also need to understand that peers are number one.
- Help a parent know how to talk to their teen 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, 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 teens and a short program that interests the parents.
- Listen to parents and provide encouragement.

### Parenting Newsletter

In each issue of **ADVENTIST PARENTING** you will find addressed issues of family faith and practical advice by age category to help you raise confident, God-centered kids. **ADVENTIST PARENTING** also points to resources about topics such as instilling values like honesty and kindness, building your child's self-esteem, developing your child's relationship with Jesus, and discipline, as well as uniquely Adventist topics such as making Sabbath fun for you and your child. Sign up at [www.adventistparenting.org](http://www.adventistparenting.org)

Most importantly, be sure whatever you do interests them 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 appropriated time.
  - Never between church services
  - Ask when and where it would be convenient to meet
  - If you choose calling, 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 primary department.
- Pray with the person. They need to feel God has called them and He will bless in the work they do.
- Allow them total freedom in the decision to join your team.

### Who Do You Recruit?

- Find members who have earliteen work at heart. Ask them to pray for your department.
- Select people who have had experience working with teens. 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.
- Inspire adult Sabbath school classes to adopt or sponsor “missionaries” to the earliteen division.
- 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.
- Put up a bulletin board in the hall and display pictures of volunteers.

### 12 Tips for Keeping Volunteers

- Start them slow – immerse them in your vision
- Be a model – be real and transparent
- Build trust – believe in them
- Invest your time in them – be a coach – encourage them
- Ask for commitment – check on them systematically
- Set goals for growth
- Supply the tools they need – conduct regular equipping meetings
- Communicate on a regular basis
- Care enough to confront
- Ask for ideas and opinions when appropriate
- Thank them
- Give them someone to work with

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

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

- Volunteers expect that meetings will benefit them, and want to be involved in the planning.
- Be respectful of their time by beginning on time, ending on time and keeping it relevant.
- Use humor, energy, creative touches and involvement.
- Begin programs with ice-breaker 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 want to stay, and others will count it a privilege to join.

## Guidelines for Volunteers

Because our society is filled with pain, problems and litigation caused by improper conduct of adults working with youth, it is imperative that those working with teens at church have meaningful guidelines for conduct – to protect both themselves and those under their care. As a ministry volunteer, you want parents and others to feel comfortable and confident with you. Photocopy the following page for each helper in your division. Make it into a poster to display in your classroom.

**Be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse; be aware of the legal requirements in your locality for reporting child abuse.** In nearly all places, a caregiver can be held legally responsible for failing to report suspected or actual abuse. Working with youth at church is not only a privilege; it is also a deep responsibility that must be handled with utmost care. If you suspect a problem, consult with the children's ministries coordinator before moving forward.

## **An Important Message for Adults in Earliteen Sabbath School**

- 1. Never leave teens you are responsible for unattended. Provide adequate supervision at all times, no matter what.**
- 2. Never be the only adult serving as a volunteer. Always have at least one other person present.**
- 3. Always ask a teen's permission before touching him or 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 shorts. If an injury is within this area, make sure another adult works with you as you provide care.**
- 4. Teens need to be touched appropriately. However, keep hugs brief and shoulder-to-shoulder or side-to-side. Always keep your hands at (not below) the shoulder level.**
- 5. If the door to the classroom does not have glass in or around it, the door should be left open so the teacher is in full view.**
- 6. Never transport young people to and from home or events without another person with you.**
- 7. If you take your group on overnight outings, it is required that a background check be done on all adults going with you.**

## 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.

#### 4. 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 you raise additional money to accomplish your 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     | _____              |
| Guide or Insight take-home papers              | _____              |
| 2. Supplies to be purchased                    |                    |
| Activity supplies                              | _____              |
| Paper products                                 | _____              |
| Supplies recommended<br>in the teacher's guide | _____              |
| 3. Equipment or major additions needed         | _____              |
| 4. Outreach activities                         | _____              |
| 5. Additional nurture activities               | _____              |
| 6. Printing and photocopying                   | _____              |
| 7. Other                                       | _____              |
|  | <b>TOTAL</b> _____ |

## 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 about what is going to happen, when and where.

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

January Craft day	February TV Turnoff Week	March Worldwide Day of Prayer for Children at Risk
April Training seminars – 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 teens that will be touched by your ministry.

## Resources

**Children's Ministries Manual: Ideas and Techniques that Work** (also available in Spanish and French). Quantity discounts are available (catalog #021992). For a complete listing of children's ministries resources visit *AdventSource* at [www.adventsource.org](http://www.adventsource.org). You can place your order or request a catalog by calling 800.328.0525.

**The Adventist Book Center** offers magazines, **Real-Time Faith** materials, books and much more. Visit [www.adventistbookcenter.com](http://www.adventistbookcenter.com) or call 800.765.6955 to reach the ABC that is closest to you.

Join the **Adventist Children's Ministries Association** and receive benefits such as a newsletter, special deals on Children's Sabbath school materials and online training. A lifetime membership only costs US\$50. To sign up go to [www.acma-online.org](http://www.acma-online.org).

Find Sabbath school programs online, answers to your questions, and everything you need to know about the **Real-Time Faith** curriculum at [www.realtimfaith.net](http://www.realtimfaith.net).

Sign up for the free quarterly **Children's Leader** newsletter at [www.childmin.com](http://www.childmin.com). You'll also find lots of great ideas on this site.

Visit the **General Conference Children's Ministries** website at [www.childrensministries.gc.adventist.org](http://www.childrensministries.gc.adventist.org). Its goal is to serve those who work with children by providing ideas, resources and information. There is also a section called "Just for Kids" with devotionals, activities and craft ideas for children.

To see events and programs that help children with special needs visit [www.NathanielsHope.org](http://www.NathanielsHope.org).

**The National Children's Ministries Agency** exists to serve the local church, its pastors and laity in their pursuit of excellent ministry to the children of their church and their communities. Visit [www.4kids.ag.org](http://www.4kids.ag.org).

[www.kidology.org](http://www.kidology.org) aims to equip and encourage those who minister to children by providing practical training, creative teaching resources and personal consultation.

### Baptismal Preparation Materials

**Kid Zone Bible Guides** from Voice of Prophecy are available at [www.vop.com](http://www.vop.com).

*It's My Choice* by Steve Case, available from *AdventSource* at [www.adventsource.org](http://www.adventsource.org) or 800-328-0525. *Catalog #010125* Price: \$2.95

*41 Bible Studies* set by Cindy Tutsch, available from *AdventSource* at [www.adventsource.org](http://www.adventsource.org) or 800-328-0525. *Catalog #602900*



