

Children and Youth—Overview and Frequently Asked Questions

(For Sandpoint Stake Primary use, we have shortened the notice emailed after the Nov 17, 2019, Face to Face with Elder Gong to just those instructions for leaders of Primary children. More information for youth and families is included in the full 11 page document)

Children and Youth of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a new effort to help the rising generation strengthen their faith in Jesus Christ and progress along the covenant path as they meet life's challenges. It focuses on helping each child and youth follow the example of the Savior and grow in a balanced way spiritually, socially, physically, and intellectually (see Luke 2:52).

The new Children and Youth effort includes three areas of focus:

- Gospel learning
- Service and activities
- Personal development

Two types of emblems are included in this effort: emblems of belonging, which every child will receive the year he or she turns 8; and emblems of achievement, which youth receive. This effort is centered in the home and supported at church. Families determine how best to apply these areas of focus at home.

Overview for Children

Beginning in January of the year they turn eight, children are invited to participate in Children and Youth of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Here's what it will look like for them.

At the beginning of each year, the bishop may visit the Primary class of the children turning eight and welcome them to Children and Youth. During the discussion, he gives each child two emblems: a ring and a picture of the temple. Each child also receives a copy of Personal Development: Children's Guidebook. Parents and members of the Primary presidency may attend this visit.

As part of Children and Youth, children will participate in the following:

Gospel Learning At home, children study the scriptures on their own and with their families. Come, Follow Me— For Individuals and Families has been prepared to help in such study. At church, children build upon what they've learned at home as they study the scriptures with their Primary class. Lesson materials are found in Come, Follow Me—For Primary.

Service and Activities

Children participate in service and activities with their families. In addition, children (beginning in the year they turn 8) also meet regularly for Primary activities. Generally, children are organized by age-groups, and boys and girls meet separately—although they may combine for certain activities or in locations with few children. Primary activities are generally held two to four times per month. If distance and costs, time constraints, safety, and other circumstances make this schedule impractical, Primary activities may be held less frequently.

Working with the bishopric, the Primary presidency recommends members to be called as Primary activity leaders. These leaders can be Primary teachers or other members of the ward or branch. At least two leaders attend each activity. Leaders can be two women, two men, or a married couple. Leaders complete the training at protectingchildren.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

Activity leaders plan service and activities that are fun and engaging and that build testimonies, strengthen families, and foster personal growth. Activities should be balanced among the four areas of growth: spiritual, social, physical, and intellectual.

Overnight camps are not held for children. However, local leaders may choose to hold day camps for Primary children participating in Children and Youth.

Service and activity ideas for home and church are available at childrenandyouth.ChurchofJesusChrist.org and, beginning in 2020, on the Gospel Living app.

Personal Development

Children set goals to grow spiritually, socially, physically, and intellectually. Parents and, where needed, leaders help children discover, plan, act on, and reflect on their individually selected goals. Then children discover and set new ones. Children may work on as many goals as they want, but they are encouraged to work on at least one goal in each of the four areas each year. Children, supported by parents, might choose to use Personal Development: Children's Guidebook to set and record goals.

Goal ideas are available in the guidebook, at childrenandyouth.ChurchofJesusChrist.org, and, beginning in 2020, on the Gospel Living app.

Frequently Asked Questions

Below are answers to questions children and leaders may have about this new effort. However, because this effort is meant to be adapted to individuals, many questions will be answered through seeking personal inspiration.

General questions

What should determine the focus of service and activities? Service and activities should be balanced across the four areas of growth (spiritual, social, physical, and intellectual) suggested by Luke 2:52 and grow out of the needs and interests of individuals, families and Primary activity groups. They can introduce children to new experiences, teach them life skills, and help them fulfill their covenant responsibilities. Where it is helpful, an activity may occasionally support an individual, family, or group goal.

Do parents and leaders track goals set by children? No. Parents, supported by leaders when needed, could ask children what they are working on and how they can help, but adults are not responsible for keeping track of progress. Children may wish to keep some goals private. Children can use their guidebook, the Gospel Living app, or another approach that works best for them to set goals and reflect on or record progress. Children may need help in recording and remembering goals. Parents generally provide such help.

Church-support questions

Some children who are not Church members attend our activities. Can they participate in the Children and Youth effort? Of course. Children should invite their friends to participate in gospel learning, service and activities, and personal development. And leaders should work closely with parents of these children to help them understand the effort and determine how they and their children would like to be involved.

Is it acceptable to have group goals in addition to the personal goals set by children? Yes. Children, working with their leaders, may choose goals according to the needs of their group.

Should an annual meeting be held? It is not necessary to hold an annual meeting for children. The bishop may visit the Primary class of children who will turn eight during the year.

Questions for Primary

Do children need to memorize the Articles of Faith as part of Children and Youth? Memorizing the Articles of Faith is encouraged but not required.

Should all children receive a Children and Youth ring in 2020? Every child who will turn 8 to 11 during 2020 should receive the new Children and Youth ring in 2020. Each year thereafter, children receive their ring at the beginning of the year they turn 8 or as they enter the program. The current green CTR ring will remain a part of Primary. When children begin the CTR 4 class, the Primary presidency or their Primary teacher will give them a green CTR ring.

Should we still hold the Temple and Priesthood Preparation meeting? Yes. The Primary presidency, under the direction of the bishopric, holds the Temple and Priesthood Preparation meeting for girls and boys in the Valiant 10 class before the January in which they move to Young Women classes and Aaronic Priesthood quorums. For more information, see Handbook 2, 11.5.5.

Questions about recognition, emblems, and imagery

How do units order and receive the emblems to start the Children and Youth effort? A form will be sent to units by the end of 2019.

Primary presidencies should gather for the ward or branch clerk quantities and sizes needed for children turning 8–11 in 2020. Clerks should order at store.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/childrenandyouth or through their local distribution center. For 2020, children's emblems will be paid for by the Church. In 2021 and beyond, units will order needed emblems and materials through the regular curriculum ordering process. They will be paid for with local unit funds.

How can the Children and Youth logo, associated imagery, and themes be used? The logo and other visual elements of Children and Youth will be available in 2020. They may be used for personal, noncommercial use. Individuals and families may use the logo and imagery within their homes to support the Children and Youth program. Stakes, wards, and branches may use the logo and imagery for Church activities and purposes. To request permission to use the logo and imagery in other settings, visit permissions.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

Can local units create their own requirements and awards for Children and Youth? No. Stakes, wards, and branches should not establish requirements for children to earn local awards.