Online Resource for

sustainable children’s ministry
from last-minute scrambling to long-term solutions

Mark DeVries and Annette Safstrom
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes (allergies, etc.)</th>
<th>Anticipated Year of Graduation from Children's Ministry</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent's Cell Number</td>
<td>Child's School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Phone</td>
<td>Child's Birthday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent's Email</td>
<td>Parent's Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member Status</td>
<td>Child's Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent Names</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Zip</td>
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</table>
# Parent Contact Tracking Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child’s Name</th>
<th>Child’s Age/Class</th>
<th>Parent Name</th>
<th>Parent Contact Info (cell, home, email)</th>
<th>Last Contact Date/Notes</th>
<th>Next Contact Date</th>
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Church Nursery Guidelines

The church nursery needs to be a clean, attractive, and welcoming place for children. It is important that your congregation establish guidelines for your church nursery.

- Infant and toddler nurseries should be located near the sanctuary, restrooms, and fire exits.
- Nurseries should be attractive, safe, welcoming spaces.
- Information and guidelines should be consistent with the church safety policy.
- All who work and volunteer in the nursery should attend “Safe Church” training.
- Establish a nursery policy for your church.

A nursery policy should include the following:

Guidelines for a Safe Nursery

- Do a background check on everyone who has access to the children and youth in your church.
- Follow the practice of two adults present at all times, having windows in entrance doors, and having diaper changing stations in central locations. It is also helpful to have the changing table near the sink so that adults can wash their hands after each diaper change.
- Always have an adult in charge. It is best if the same person is there each week.
- Require all nursery workers to go through an orientation before working in the nursery.
- Have a backup plan for staffing the nursery.
- Minimum adult to child ratio recommendations:
  - one adult to three infants
  - one adult to four toddlers
  - one adult to six children three years and older
- Have only age-appropriate toys in the nursery. If a toy (or parts of a toy) is small enough to fit through a toilet paper tube, do not use.
- Regularly check floors for choking hazards such as coins, marbles, safety pins, jewelry, buttons, crayons, pen caps, nails, screws, etc.
- Avoid stuffed animals. They are great germ carriers.
- Establish a regular schedule for checking, cleaning, and replacing toys and other nursery equipment.
- Practice SIDS prevention: always put infants to bed on their back. (This policy is in accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics.)
- Check that mattresses are firm and flat; do not use blankets or pillows in the crib.
- Check that crib sheets cover the mattress snugly.
Church Nursery Guidelines

* Make sure that crib slats are spaced properly. You should not be able to pass a can of soda between the slats of a crib.
* Cribs should not have cutouts in the end panels or corner posts.
* Keep cribs away from windows.
* Have disposable, one-time use gloves available for required use when changing a child’s diaper.
* Post emergency exits and phone numbers, including poison control.
* Make sure nothing is on a counter that could be pulled over by a child (e.g., TV, DVD player).

Nursery Caregiver: Responsibilities and Duties

The nursery caregiver will provide proper care and nurturing to babies/toddlers during church services and special events.
* Arrive at least fifteen minutes prior to service or event—earlier if expecting a larger crowd for special services or events.
* Become familiar with nursery policies and facilities.
* Greet parents and sign in and out babies/toddlers.
* Take care of babies/toddlers in the nursery, following nursery policies for safety and proper care:
  - Change diapers/clothing as necessary; check diapers near end of service.
  - Rock, play with, sing to, play music for, and show picture books to babies/toddlers.
  - Feed babies when needed or as requested by parents.
  - Give snacks to toddlers.
* Change crib sheets after babies/toddlers have been picked up.
* Place dirty toys in container to be cleaned and disinfected.
* Encourage potty training children to try at least once.

Nursery Coordinator: Responsibilities and Duties

* Recruit and train volunteers to serve in the nursery.
* Organize the nursery and ensure its cleanliness and safety.
* Develop, post, and enforce nursery policies.
* Routinely inspect nursery equipment, toys, and supplies.
* Report repair-and-maintenance needs to appropriate personnel.
* Restock supplies when needed.
* Obtain and keep a library of picture books and music/songs on CDs for use in the nursery.
Church Nursery Guidelines

* Keep a current list of nursery caregivers with names, addresses, and phone numbers.
* Schedule nursery caregivers for every service and special churchwide events in which nursery care is needed.
* Collect and launder used crib sheets weekly.
* Clean/disinfect dirty toys as necessary.
* Oversee budget and expenditures for the nursery ministry.

Training for All Nursery Workers

* Have a nursery-worker orientation that includes an explanation of expectations, discipline policies, information on child development, information on fire and emergency procedures, and training in infant CPR.
* Have regularly scheduled orientations and refresher courses.

Guidelines for a Clean Nursery

* Have nontoxic cleaning supplies readily available to nursery workers but well out of the reach of children. Childproof cabinet latches are recommended.
* See that nursery carpets, floors, and furniture are thoroughly cleaned on a regular basis.
* Check premises for adequate ventilation and test for the presence of lead, especially in buildings built before 1970.
* Have clean crib sheets readily available and have a plan for making sure used crib linens and changing table covers are washed and returned each week.
* Have disposable, one-time use changing pads available for required use when changing a child’s diaper.
* See that toys are washed on a regular basis with a nontoxic detergent, and that toys handled by children with colds are washed immediately.

Good Communication with Parents

Have a check-in system for parents that includes having them fill out information cards on their children. Have parents leave their cell phone numbers so they can be contacted if the need arises.
* Keep up-to-date information on all children.
* Only children free of fever, diarrhea, or contagious rashes should attend nursery. If a child is visibly ill, the parents should be contacted immediately.
* Ask parents to label their child’s diaper bag, bottle, spare clothing, toys, etc.
* Be sure to talk with parents each Sunday about any concerns and joys related to their child.
Necessary Nursery Supplies

- disposable diapers
- paper lining for changing tables
- premoistened wipes
- tissues
- cotton balls
- first-aid kit with syrup of ipecac, thermometer, alcohol/antibiotic ointment, bandages, cold packs
- name tags and markers
- plastic bags and ties for soiled clothes
- disinfectants and nontoxic cleaning solutions
- paper towels
- electric outlet covers
- emergency manual
- posted fire exit plans/maps
- graham or soda crackers (check for allergies and preferences listed on parent information cards)
- children's books and toys
- telephone
- fire extinguishers
- smoke and carbon monoxide detectors (check batteries often and replace twice a year)

Furniture

- rocking chairs
- child-size table and chairs
- cribs
- changing table(s)
- childproof locks on all cabinets for supplies
- hooks for hanging coats and diaper bags
- bulletin board for announcements and pictures
- baby swings and walkers are optional (strict guidelines should be established for the use of these items)
Weekly Classroom Feedback Form

What worked well this week?

How was check-in? (circle one)
1. Perfect.
2. We had some hiccups (list on the back of this form).
3. A parent might be upset. We need to talk.

How was the lesson? (circle all that apply)
1. Easy peasy. Kids were engaged and actively learning.
2. It was difficult to keep the kids’ attention, but once they engaged, many of them were participating and learning.
3. The kids didn't seem to get it.
4. I think it was over their heads.
5. I think it was below their learning/experience level.

How was the craft/activity? (circle all that apply)
1. It was a perfect complement to the lesson, and the kids loved it.
2. The kids liked it, but didn't connect the activity to the lesson.
3. It connected well, but the kids didn't engage well.
4. It was over their heads.
5. It was too young for this age group.

Equipment or supplies that need attention, repairs, or replenishing?
1. DVD player/TV/sound equipment
2. Goldfish/graham crackers
3. Diapers/wipes
4. Cabinet doors
5. Crayons/glue/craft supplies
6. Other: ________________________

What else could make next week even better than this week?
Sample Organizational Chart 1

Children’s Ministry Director

- Children’s Ministry Committee Chair
- Early Childhood Team Leader
- Preschool or Elementary Team Leader

  - VBS Coordinator
  - Nursery Volunteers
  - Preschool Lead Teacher
  - Elementary Lead Teacher

  - Database Manager
  - Early Childhood Lead Teacher
  - Preschool Assistant
  - Elementary Assistant

  - Missions Coordinator
  - Early Childhood Assistant
  - Preschool Assistant
  - Elementary Assistant
Tips for Choosing Curriculum

* If you are a part of a denomination or association of churches, start there. They are likely to have a catalog of resources that fits the culture and theology of your church.

* You may also want to check out one of the more mainstream publishers like Group’s KidMin curriculum (group.com/sundayschool), David C. Cook (davidccook.com/curriculum), Orange (whatisorange.org), or D6 (d6family.com/curriculum). You can find a comprehensive list of children’s ministry curricula at Kidmintools.com.
Volunteer Position Description

Major Event Coordinator

Overview: The major event coordinator helps the children’s ministry achieve its mission by coordinating special memory-making events that will joyfully engage children or their parents, invite them to experience the abundant life in Christ more fully, and connect them to each other, to the life of the church, and to the children’s ministry. The major event coordinator will develop and coordinate the work of a team of people who will work together to handle all the logistics of the event.

Responsibilities

* Meet with the children’s ministry staff well before the event (typically between three and twelve months prior, depending on the event) to develop an implementation plan.

* Agree on a targeted number of participants for the event.

* Work with the communications coordinator to develop a promotional process for engaging the targeted number of participants.

* Ensure that a clear process is in place for collecting RSVPs for the event.

* Coordinate the work of all volunteers for the event, working with the children’s ministry staff to recruit an appropriate number of team members to execute the event.

* Use the major event notebook template to ensure that all logistics are covered (e.g., food, transportation, set-up, pickup and drop-off times and locations, and number of adult leaders needed, typically one for every five to seven students).

* Coordinate a user-friendly registration process, distributing forms through the mail, online, and at children’s ministry programs.

* Oversee the collection of money, forms, or verbal RSVPs.

* Ensure that at least one adult has been designated as the photographer for the event and that the photographer gives pictures to the communications coordinator and to the children’s ministry staff after the event.

* Update an event notebook to be used by next year’s coordinator of this event.

* Makes sure the event is executed in a way that is consistent with the values of the children’s ministry and helps the children’s ministry accomplish its mission and goals.
Creating a Major Event Notebook

The major event notebook is a crucial piece of the framework for any church’s children’s ministry. The first time a MENTBK (major event notebook) is created, you will be putting it together as you plan and execute the event. A MENTBK keeps you from having to reinvent each event each year. It provides a record of what has been done in the past, who did it, and for how much. And it offers a systematic checklist to make sure all the bases get covered well in advance of the event.

Setting the Stage

* Identify your major events for the year.
* Determine whether you want your event notebooks to be in electronic or printed form, or both.
* If you choose to have an electronic version (highly recommended), you’ll want to use a shared application such as Dropbox or Google Drive. With both, you can create a master MENTBK folder that contains all the templates you need and a separate subfolder for each event.
* Each time you begin a new event, copy the blank template and in the place of “Blank” put the name of the event.
* If you choose to use a physical notebook (not recommended, but some churches prefer physical copies of everything), put together your notebook in a three-ring binder. You’ll want a section with all the blank templates and a separate section in the notebook for each major event.
* Create tabs or sections for each of the following tasks:
  - overall information sheet and volunteer list
  - timeline
  - budget
  - program summary
  - schedule
  - promotions
  - roster of participants
  - communication
  - food
  - transportation
  - meeting notes
  - postevent evaluation
  - documents needed for the event
* Add to the notebook a copy of church’s tax-exempt form for volunteers to purchase needed supplies.
* Add to the notebook a copy of your church’s reimbursement form and procedures needed to turn in receipts.

**Customizing a MENTBK for VBS (sample)**

In addition to the sections outlined above, an event such as VBS might also include additional tabs or sections unique to this event:

- Volunteer schedule/rotation
  - snack providers
  - shepherds
  - teachers
  - teen volunteers
- Music program
- Art and crafts
- Registration
- Service project
Children’s Ministry Major Event Notebook

Name of event: ________________________________________________________________
Date/time of event: ____________________________________________________________
Location of event: _____________________________________________________________
Purpose of event: ______________________________________________________________
Staff liaison: _________________________________________________________________
    Contact info: _________________________________________________________________
Co-coordinator: _______________________________________________________________
    Contact info: _________________________________________________________________
Co-coordinator: _______________________________________________________________
    Contact info: _________________________________________________________________
Targeted ages/groups: __________________________________________________________
Childcare needed: Y or N __________ How many workers needed? _________________
Space/rooms needed: __________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
Person responsible for reserving: _______________________________________________
    Contact info: _________________________________________________________________
Publicity coordinator: _________________________________________________________
    Contact info: _________________________________________________________________
Decorations coordinator: _______________________________________________________
    Contact info: _________________________________________________________________
Major Event Notebook Template

Food volunteer: ________________________________________________________________
  Contact info: ________________________________________________________________

Program/leader of event: _______________________________________________________
  Contact info: ________________________________________________________________

Clean-up volunteer: ____________________________________________________________
  Contact info: ________________________________________________________________

Equipment coordinator: _________________________________________________________
  Contact info: ________________________________________________________________

Supply coordinator: _____________________________________________________________
  Contact info: ________________________________________________________________

Other volunteers: ______________________________________________________________
  Contact info: ________________________________________________________________

Other volunteers: ______________________________________________________________
  Contact info: ________________________________________________________________
Children's Ministry Major Event Notebook
(Fill in what needs to happen when)

One year before the event:

Six months before the event:

Four months before the event:

Three months before the event:

Two months before the event:

One month before the event:

Three weeks before the event:

Two weeks before the event:

One week before the event:

Three days before the event:

The week after the event:
Budget

Children's Ministry Major Event Notebook

Name of event: _________________________________________________________________

Amount budgeted for event: ____________________________________________________

Who will manage the budget for this event? _______________________________________

Contact info: __________________________________________________________________

Is a fee being charged to the children/families? Yes No

Amount: _______________________________________________________________________

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<th>Breakdown of expenses</th>
<th>Projected</th>
<th>Actual</th>
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<td>Supplies</td>
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<td>Promotions</td>
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<td>Transportation</td>
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<td>Breakdown of expenses</td>
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<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
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<td>Fees from children or families</td>
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<td>Funds from budget</td>
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<tr>
<td>Profit/Loss</td>
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Program

Children’s Ministry Major Event Notebook

Coordinator of program: _____________________________________________________________
Location of program: ______________________________________________________________
Equipment needs: __________________________________________________________________
Who will set up equipment? ________________________________________________________
Where do things need to be set up? __________________________________________________
   (Attach a diagram if necessary)
Who will take down/put away equipment? ___________________________________________
Supply needs: ____________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________
Who will collect/purchase supplies? _________________________________________________
When and where do supplies need to be placed? _______________________________________
Who will clean up supplies? _________________________________________________________
Where do leftover supplies go? ______________________________________________________
Other needs for program: __________________________________________________________

Who is going to send thank you notes (can be mailed from the church)? ___________________
Were any vendors used for the program? If so, include their contact information and the cost:
Decorations vendor: __________________________________________________________________
   Contact info: _____________________________________________________________________
   Service provided and cost: _________________________________________________________
Music vendor: _______________________________________________________________
  Contact info: _____________________________________________________________
  Service provided and cost: ________________________________________________

Sound vendor: _____________________________________________________________
  Contact info: _____________________________________________________________
  Service provided and cost: ________________________________________________

Lights vendor: _____________________________________________________________
  Contact info: _____________________________________________________________
  Service provided and cost: ________________________________________________

Program vendor: ___________________________________________________________
  Contact info: _____________________________________________________________
  Service provided and cost: ________________________________________________
**Schedule of the Event**

**Children’s Ministry Major Event Notebook**

See the example below or use the schedule template on the following page.

**Example: Fall Kickoff, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**

5:00 p.m.  Decoration team arrives to decorate

6:00  Staff arrives

6:30  Other volunteers arrive in order to prepare for program

7:00  Children and parents arrive

Welcome time

Mixer/games/activities: getting everyone engaged

Serve snacks and drinks

7:30  Official welcome from leader

Announcements

  - Introduction of volunteers
  - Pep rally—it’s gonna be a great year

7:45  Parents go to their information session

  - Hand out packets of information
  - Go over forms
  - How parents can help

Youth: get their input and ideas

  - Calendar: what’s coming up
  - Promote special events
  - How important each person is and why we want them to be involved

8:15  Group regathers

  - Closing music and prayer

8:30  Good night

8:45  Volunteers clean up

Check in on anything that needs to be followed up
<table>
<thead>
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<th>WHAT AND WHERE</th>
<th>WHO</th>
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Promotions

Children's Ministry Major Event Notebook

Overview: Promotions coordinator will coordinate the communication and promotions efforts related to this event in an effort to attract the targeted number of participants to the event.

Coordinator: ___________________________________________________________
Contact info: __________________________________________________________

* Information necessary to promote event:

What? _____________________________________________________________________________
Who? _____________________________________________________________________________
Where? ___________________________________________________________________________
When (date and time)? _____________________________________________________________
Cost: _____________________________________________________________________________
How? _____________________________________________________________________________
Purpose: __________________________________________________________________________
Contact person for more information: _________________________________________________
Special artwork: ___________________________________________________________________

* Ways in which event should be promoted (check all that apply):

☐ Email
☐ Church newsletter
☐ Student mailing
☐ Parent mailing
☐ Website (church)
☐ Facebook page
☐ Phone calls to parents
☐ Announcements made by the senior pastor during worship service
☐ Announcements—other
☐ Newspaper ad (if so, which paper?) __________________________
☐ Fliers for church
☐ Fliers for community (if so, designate where?) ______________________________________
☐ Other: ___________________________________________________________

Date promotions should begin ________________________________
Date promotions should end ________________________________
Promotions

* Specific dates for

  - Deadline for ad in newspaper: 
  - When mailings go out: 
  - When information should be posted on the web: 
  - When emails should be sent: 
  - Deadline for information to go into church newsletter: 
  - Phone calls should be made: 
  - Announcements should be made: 
  - Fliers should go up: 
  - Date to follow up with Communications Coordinator: 

Were any vendors used for promotions? If so, include their contact information and the cost:

  Graphic art vendor: 
    Contact info: 
    Service provided and cost: 
  Newspaper ad vendor: 
    Contact info: 
    Service provided and cost: 
  Printing vendor: 
    Contact info: 
    Service provided and cost: 
  Other promotions vendor: 
    Contact info: 
    Service provided and cost: 
## Roster of Participants

**Children’s Ministry Major Event Notebook**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Parent Contact Information</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
Communications Plan

Children’s Ministry Major Event Notebook

How does a child or family sign up for this event? ____________________________

Who is in charge of the roster? _____________________________________________

Who is in charge of collecting fees (if applicable)? _____________________________

Does a checklist or what-to-bring list need to be mailed to the children/families? Yes No

If so, who will create it? ____________________________________________________

Who will distribute it? _____________________________________________________

When does the checklist/to-bring list need to be distributed to the children or parents?
________________________________________________________________________

Do the children need a medical release form filled out for this event? Yes No

If so, who will
○ get forms to children and parents? _______________________________________
○ make sure forms are collected? ___________________________________________

What is the date that all forms should be collected? ___________________________

Are there any other forms that need to be filled out for this event? Yes No

If so, list the forms below and the name of the person who will take care of distribution and collection of those forms.
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Other:
## Food

### Children’s Ministry Major Event Notebook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
<th>Who</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Snacks</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Meal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drinks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Napkins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plasticware</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bowls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

How many people are being fed? ____________________________

Time food is to be delivered: ____________________________

Location of where food is to be delivered: ____________________________

Who is setting up food? ____________________________

Who is serving food? ____________________________

Who is cleaning up food? ____________________________

Who is going to write thank you notes to volunteers who provided/helped with food? ____________________________
Food

Thank you notes mailed (can be mailed from church) by: ________________________________

Were any vendors used to provide food? If so, include their contact information and the cost:

Vendor:  __________________________________________________________

   Contact info:  ______________________________________________________

Food provided and cost:  ________________________________________________

Other notes:
Off-Campus Event Transportation

Children’s Ministry Major Event Notebook

Location of event: ___________________________________________________________________

Time to arrive: ______________________________________________________________________

Length of stay: _____________________________________________________________________

Departure time: ____________________________________________________________________

Details of the activity: _______________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

Do reservations need to be made?      Yes      No

If so, who will make the reservations? ________________________________________________

Deposit required?      Yes      No

If so, amount of deposit _________ due by ________________.

Who will submit the check request? _________________________________________________

Are other reservations necessary?      Yes      No

If so, list details below: _____________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

Carpool or transportation needed?      Yes      No

Were any vendors used to provide transportation? If so, include their contact information and cost:

Vendor: ___________________________________________________________________________

Contact info: _____________________________________________________________________

Service provided and cost: ___________________________________________________________

Permission slips for youth and for drivers of cars/van?      Yes      No

___________________________________________________________________________________

Who will take care of this? ___________________________________________________________

Emergency phone number to be given to parents: ________________________________________

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Off-Campus Event Transportation

Where is the first-aid kit? _____________________________________________________________

Who is responsible for the first-aid kit? _______________________________________________

Other details listed below:
Meeting Notes

Children’s Ministry Major Event Notebook

Meeting date:

Participants:

Decisions made:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
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Notes:
Additional Documents

Children’s Ministry Major Event Notebook

___ Copies of promotional materials
___ Copy of church’s tax-exempt form for volunteers to purchase needed supplies
___ Copy of church’s reimbursement form and procedures needed to turn in receipts
___ Copy of or link to the children’s ministry database
___ Copy of church’s child-protection policy
___ Instructions on what to do in case of an injury
___ A map of the layout of the event
Postevent Review

**Children’s Ministry Major Event Notebook**
To be filled out and turned into the director of the children’s ministry (or interim staff) and a copy kept in this notebook.

Name and date of event: ________________________________________________________

Attendance: ______  in childcare _______  children ______
family units _______  teen helpers _______  adult volunteers _______

Were the goals or purpose of the event met? How?

What worked well?

What did not work well?

What would have been more helpful for the coordinator to know that will be helpful for the following coordinator to know?

What needs to be done differently next time?

Your name and contact information: _____________________________________________