

director's guide



Includes:

Policies and Procedures
Growth and Development Charts
Caregiver Training Articles/Curriculum
Forms and Records
Lil' Sprouts Club Outreach Plan
Lil' Sprouts Clip Art



CD-ROM with reproducible director's
guide text and additional resources

A Complete
Guide to
Nursery Ministry
and Outreach



director's guide

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About This Lil' Sprouts Director's Guide

This Lil' Sprouts Director's Guide is divided into three main parts. The first part will help you strengthen your nursery ministry by giving you instruction on organizing your nursery. The second part will help you strengthen your nursery ministry by giving you articles to use in training your nursery caregivers. The goal of the third part is to give you some ideas about using your nursery ministry for outreach.

Use all three parts to their fullest as you develop your Lil' Sprouts Club ministry in your church!

About the Lil' Sprouts Resource CD

This Lil' Sprouts Director's Guide contains a resource CD inside the back cover. The CD contains the entire director's guide as well as other features such as full color Lil' Sprouts clip art.

Part 1

Organizing the Nursery Ministry

This part of the Lil' Sprouts Director's Guide will help you strengthen your nursery ministry by giving you instruction on organizing your nursery. Implementing the ideas and suggestions will take time and careful thought, but the results will be well worth the effort you put forth. Don't get overwhelmed with all that is involved in directing a successful nursery ministry. Tackle one area at a time.

The Organizing Your Nursery part is divided into five main topics. Each of those topics is further divided so you can conveniently find the information you need. The five main topics are the following:

Nursery Personnel (page 7)

This section gives you instructions on organizing the nursery's personnel, including what to include in job descriptions and how to recruit and train caregivers.

Health and Safety (page 21)

This section covers important issues such as well-baby guidelines and preventing and reporting abuse. Implementing the ideas from this section will help you develop a safe and healthy environment.

Rooms and Supplies (page 29)

The Rooms and Supplies section will help you provide your nursery with appropriate equipment and supplies.

Ministering with Parents (page 35)

Parents form a vital partnership with your church's nursery ministry. This section helps you with communicating effectively with parents and with setting up procedures for working alongside parents.

Forms (page 43)

Adapt the forms in this section to meet your ministry needs or print them as they are.



Nursery Personnel

Topics Covered in This Section

- Setting up Your Church Nursery (page 8)
- Nursery Coordinator Qualifications (page 10)
- Caregiver Qualifications (page 11)
- Nursery Teaching Director Qualifications (page 13)
- Job Descriptions (page 14)
- Personnel Recruitment (page 16)
- Personnel Training (page 18)



Related Caregiver Training Articles

Relevant information related to nursery personnel is covered in the Caregiver Training Articles part of this director's guide. Many of the related articles have to do with the tasks personnel will carry out as they minister to babies and toddlers. Be sure to read the following Caregiver Training Articles.

- **Play**—Playing with Purpose (page 76)
- **Crying**—Coping with Crying (page 78)
- **Feeding Babies**—Filling Tummies, Filling Hearts (page 82)
- **Feeding Toddlers**—Finger Foods for Little Fingers (page 84)
- **Sleeping**—Resting and Refueling (page 86)
- **Biting**—Take the Sting out of Biting (page 88)
- **Child Growth and Development**—Look What I Can Do! (page 98)
- **Communication with Non-talkers**—Learn to Talk without Words (page 102)
- **Special Needs Children**—Special Care for Special Kids (page 110)

Health & Safety

Topics Covered in This Section

- Well-baby Guidelines (page 22)
- Abuse Prevention Guidelines (page 24)
- Abuse Reporting (page 26)
- Emergency and Disaster Response (page 27)

Related Caregiver Training Articles

Relevant information related to health and safety is covered in the Caregiver Training Articles part of this director's guide. Be sure to read the following Caregiver Training Articles.

- **Accidents and First Aid**—Helping Hurting Little Ones (page 58)
- **Illnesses and Infectious Diseases**—Spotting a Sick Child (page 60)
- **Safety**—Protect My Baby, Please! (page 68)
- **Hand Washing**—Twenty-second Infection Prevention (page 72)

Rooms & Supplies

Topics Covered in This Section

- Room Location and Layout (page 30)
- Equipment and Supplies (page 32)

Related Caregiver Training Articles

Relevant information related to rooms and supplies is covered in the Caregiver Training Articles part of this director's guide. Be sure to read the following Caregiver Training Articles.

- **Nursery Environment**—Creating a Caring Environment (page 64)
- **Music**—Nursery Ministry and Music (page 104)
- **Toys and Books**—Choosing Great Toys and Books (page 106)

Ministering with Parents

Topics Covered in This Section

- Communicating with Parents (page 36)
- Problem Solving with Parents (page 38)
- Check-in/Check-out Procedures (page 40)
- Recordkeeping (page 41)

Related Caregiver Training Articles

Relevant information related to ministering with parents is covered in the Caregiver Training Articles part of this director's guide. Be sure to read the following Caregiver Training Articles.

- **Separation Anxiety**—Help Parents Make the Break (page 80)
- **Discipline in the Nursery**—Moving beyond “No! No!” (page 90)

Forms



Forms in This Section

- Caregiver Application (page 45)
- Incident Report (page 49)
- Check-in/Check-out Sheet for Babies (page 51)
- Check-in/Check-out Sheet for Toddlers (page 52)
- All about Me Child Information Sheet (page 53)

Part 2

Caregiver Training Articles/ Curriculum

This part of the Lil' Sprouts Director's Guide will help you strengthen your nursery ministry by giving you articles to use in training your nursery caregivers. The articles are arranged for you to present to caregivers in four sessions. The articles make up part of a caregiver training curriculum.

The rest of the information to create the caregiver training curriculum comes from the Organizing Your Nursery Ministry part of this director's guide.

See the section on Personnel Training (page 18) for more information about using the information and articles in this director's guide as a caregiver training curriculum.

Session 1

Learning Essential Policies and Procedures (page 57)

Session 2

Maintaining a Clean and Safe Nursery (page 63)

Session 3

Caring for and Responding to Nursery Children (page 75)

Session 4

Understanding and Teaching Nursery Children (page 93)



Session 1

Session 1—Learning Essential Policies and Procedures

The first session of the caregiver training curriculum deals with important policies and procedures for your nursery ministry. The material for this session involves Caregiver Training Articles as well as information that reflects your own policies and procedures that you develop as a result of working through the Organizing Your Nursery Ministry part of this director's guide.

Caregiver Training Articles for Session 1

- **Accidents and First Aid**—Helping Hurting Little Ones (page 58)
- **Illnesses and Infectious Disease**—Spotting a Sick Child (page 60)

Other Topics You Should Cover in Session 1

- The well-baby policy your church puts into place (page 22)
- The risk management policy your church agrees to adopt (page 24)
- The emergency procedures for your nursery (page 27)
- The check-in/check-out and record keeping procedures for your nursery (page 40)
- Information on the recognition and reporting of potential child abuse (page 26)

Note: This is a lot of information to cover in one training session. Speed the process along by having the caregivers read the articles ahead of time. Then highlight information from the articles that you want to emphasize. You may need to split this training session into two sessions in order to feel like you adequately cover the information.

See the section on Personnel Training (page 18) for more information about using the information and Caregiver Training Articles in this director's guide as training curriculum.

Session 2

Session 2—Maintaining a Clean and Safe Nursery

The second session of the caregiver training curriculum deals with maintaining a clean and safe nursery. The material for this session involves mainly training articles.

Caregiver Training Articles for Session 2

- **Nursery Environment**—Create a Caring Environment (page 64)
- **Cleanliness**—Clear the Cobwebs and Crushed Cereal (page 66)
- **Safety**—Protect My Baby, Please! (page 68)
- **Diaper Changing**—Diaper Duty (page 70)
- **Hand Washing**—Twenty-second Infection Prevention (page 72)

Other Topics You Should Cover in Session 2

- Standards of Hygiene for Caregivers

Note: This is a lot of information to cover in one training session. Speed the process along by having the caregivers read the articles ahead of time. Then highlight information from the articles that you want to emphasize.

See the section on Personnel Training (page 18) for more information about using the information and Caregiver Training Articles in this director's guide as training curriculum.

Session 3

Session 3—Caring for and Responding to Nursery Children

The third session of the caregiver training curriculum deals with how to care for nursery children and how to respond to their different needs. The material for this session involves training articles.

Caregiver Training Articles for Session 3

- **Play**—Playing with Purpose (page 76)
- **Crying**—Coping with Crying (page 78)
- **Separation Anxiety**—Help Parents Make the Break (page 80)
- **Feeding Babies**—Filling Tummies, Filling Hearts (page 82)
- **Feeding Toddlers**—Finger Foods for Little Fingers (page 84)
- **Sleeping**—Resting and Refueling (page 86)
- **Biting**—Take the Sting out of Biting (page 88)
- **Discipline in the Nursery**—Moving beyond “No! No!” (page 90)

Note: This is a lot of information to cover in one training session. Speed the process along by having the caregivers read the articles ahead of time. Then highlight information from the articles that you want to emphasize.

See the section on Personnel Training (page 18) for more information about using the information and Caregiver Training Articles in this director's guide as training curriculum.

Session 4

Session 4—Understanding and Teaching Nursery Children

The fourth session of the caregiver training curriculum deals with knowing about and interacting with the nursery children. Teaching nursery children is also part of this session. The material for this session involves training articles.

The Nursery Teaching Director should lead this training session or at least share the presentation responsibilities with the Nursery Coordinator.

Caregiver Training Articles for Session 4

- **The Importance of Nursery Bible Curriculum**—Beyond Babysitting to Real Ministry (page 94)
- **How to Use Lil' Sprouts Bible Curriculum**—Lil' Sprouts Bible Curriculum Basics (page 96)
- **Child Growth and Development**—Look What I Can Do! (page 98)
- **Communicating with Non-talkers**—Learn to Talk without Words (page 102)
- **Music**—Nursery Ministry and Music (page 104)
- **Toys and Books**—Choosing Great Toys and Books (page 106)
- **Special Needs Children**—Special Care for Special Kids (page 110)

Note: This is a lot of information to cover in one training session. Speed the process along by having the caregivers read the articles ahead of time. Then highlight information from the articles that you want to emphasize.

See the section on Personnel Training (page #18) for more information about using the information and Caregiver Training Articles in this director's guide as training curriculum.

Part 3

Nursery Ministry Outreach

The goal of this part of the Lil' Sprouts Director's Guide is to give you some ideas about using your nursery ministry for outreach. When parents have a child, particularly their first one, they tend to think about seeking help from a church. The information in this part will help you think through and plan how you might seek them out and offer to meet their needs. Obviously their need for Christ is the ultimate focus of Lil' Sprouts Nursery Outreach.

The Nursery Ministry Outreach includes information on the following topics.

Overview of Lil' Sprouts Club Outreach Ministry (page 117)

This section gives you the basics of the outreach ministry.

Lil' Sprouts Club Outreach Personnel (page 118)

This section helps you understand the different roles that people play in conducting this outreach ministry.

Making Lil' Sprouts Club Visits (page 120)

Those who make visits to perspective home will benefit from this section.

Forms and Products (page 123)

The forms you will need in conducting the Lil' Sprouts Outreach Ministry as well as the products you can use are included in this last section.





Personnel Training

Everybody has their own ideas about how a nursery should be run. Some would run a tight ship while others would have almost no rules at all. Unless the Nursery Coordinator trains her recruits, all of them will run the nursery like they think it should be run. Obviously that would result in chaos!

Training personnel is essential so that everybody is on the same page. The nursery is a great place to hold the training session. That way the recruits can see firsthand what the trainer is talking about.

Training Tools

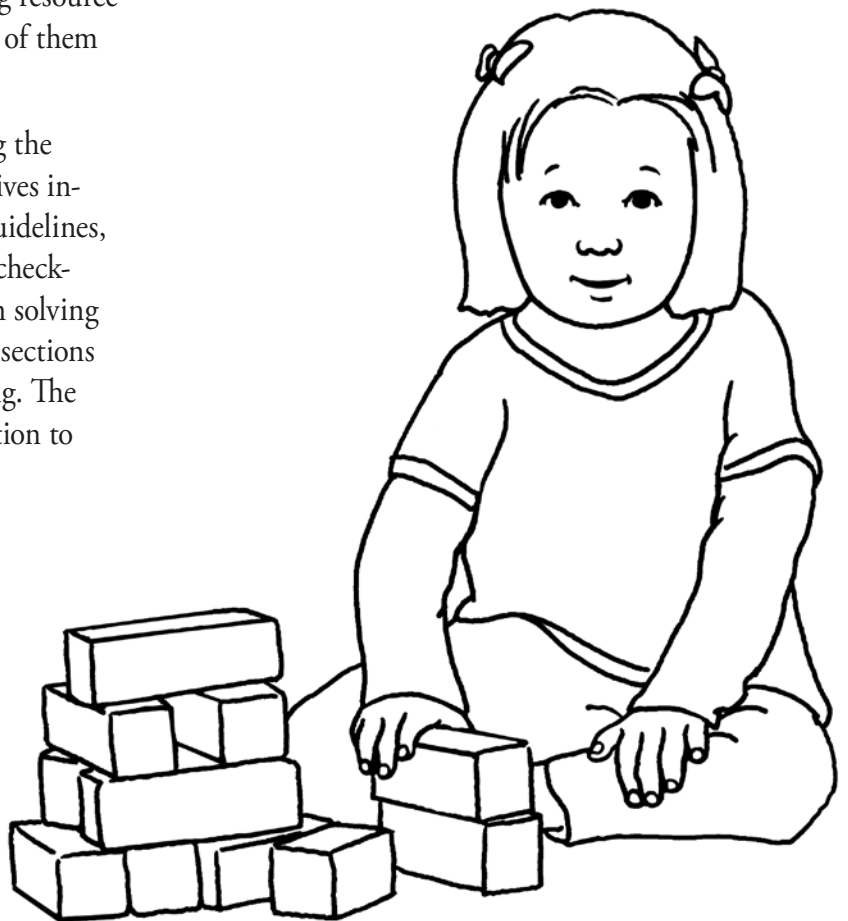
The Caregiver Training Articles part of this director's guide provides the Nursery Coordinator with prepared training tools to use in training sessions. The Coordinator should decide which articles to cover in which training sessions. (See suggested curriculum on page 19). All of the articles are available on the accompanying resource CD. The Coordinator can print as many copies of them as she would like.

Along with the training articles, the Organizing the Nursery Ministry part of this director's guide gives information on abuse prevention and reporting guidelines, emergency and disaster response, check-in and check-out procedures, recording keeping, and problem solving with parents. Some of the information in those sections would also be helpful as information for training. The Nursery Coordinator should tailor the information to

fit the needs of her church. The Organizing the Nursery Ministry part is also fully accessible on the resource CD that accompanies this book. The Coordinator can print any of those sections to hand out to caregivers in training sessions.

Training Curriculum

The information on page 19 is a suggested training curriculum a Nursery Coordinator could follow to prepare her caregivers to minister effectively. The topics with asterisks by them are included as Caregiver Training Articles in this director's guide. (See page 55). Most of the rest of the topics are covered in the Organizing the Nursery Ministry section of this director's guide. The Nursery Teaching Director should lead Session 4. (See the Job Descriptions on pages 14 and 15 for information on the Nursery Teaching Director.)



<p style="text-align: center;">Session 1</p> <p>Learning Essential Policies and Procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Management Policies • Emergency Procedures • Accidents and First Aid* • Illnesses and Infectious Diseases* • Well-baby Policy • Check-in and Check-out Procedures • Recognition and Reporting of Potential Child Abuse 	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 2</p> <p>Maintaining a Clean and Safe Nursery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursery Environment* • Cleanliness* • Safety* • Diaper Changing* • Hand Washing* • Standards of Hygiene for Caregivers
<p style="text-align: center;">Session 3</p> <p>Caring for and Responding to Nursery Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play* • Crying* • Separation Anxiety* • Feeding Babies* • Feeding Toddlers* • Sleeping* • Biting* • Discipline in the Nursery* 	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 4</p> <p>Understanding and Teaching Nursery Children (Led by Nursery Teaching Director)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Importance of Nursery Bible Curriculum* • How to Use Lil' Sprouts Bible Curriculum* • Child Growth and Development* • Communication with Non-talkers* • Music* • Toys and Books* • Special Needs Children*

*Caregiver Training Article

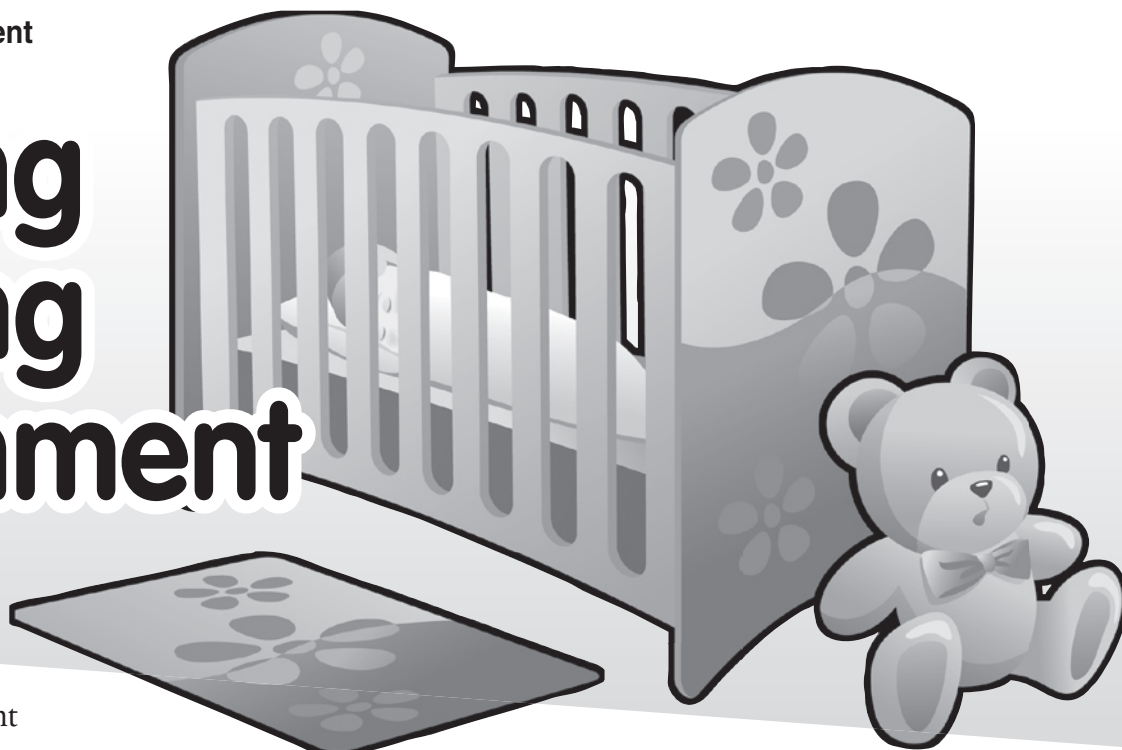
Role playing is a good method of training caregivers about emergencies, parental conversations, and other situations that might occur in the nursery. Consider setting up scenarios or case studies for the caregivers to work through.

A communication bulletin board for caregivers is a good way to continue education and to keep every worker informed of changes in procedures or policies.

The Nursery Coordinator should determine how much training a caregiver needs before being allowed to work in the nursery. The first two sessions outlined above should probably be considered the minimum.

Annual retraining may be conducted to refresh caregivers regarding important aspects from the initial training. Training sessions should be enjoyable and should allow for networking time between the caregivers.

Creating a Caring Environment



The nursery's environment says much about your nursery ministry. The nursery environment gives the first impression parent's see. Ask yourself "If I were visiting this church for the first time, would I feel comfortable leaving my baby here?" There are several factors that contribute to the overall nursery environment: location, size, cleanliness, appearance, organization, and staff.

Location

Ideally, the church nursery should be on ground level. Parents of young children often have their hands full and sometimes arrive late. Placing your church nursery on ground level is more convenient. Many states have fire-codes that mandate the nursery be located on ground level. The nursery should have adequate and clearly marked exits.

If possible, the nursery should be reasonably close to the sanctuary. Parents want to be close to their children and need to be able to get to the nursery quickly if they are paged. However, if your nursery is next door to the sanctuary, be sure it is sound-proof.

Be sure your nursery is clearly marked and signs easily point parents in the right direction. Ushers and greeters should know the location of the nursery and the corresponding rooms for each age range. Ushers should escort visitors to the nursery. If you have a large church, provide maps of the facility that clearly mark the nursery location.

Size

The ideal space allotment for nursery rooms is thirty-five square feet per child. Cramped and overcrowded facilities will turn away families. Children need room to explore and move. Caregivers need enough room to play with and safely care for each child.

Keep in mind the amount of equipment placed in each room. Swings, bouncy seats, and exercisers consume space. You won't need four swings if you only have three infants.

To provide enough space, consider dividing your nursery into sections. Many churches have separate rooms for each age group: infants, crawlers, and toddlers. Other churches divide their space with half-walls. Some churches provide a "sleeping babies" room so children can nap separate from the busyness in the rest of the nursery. Check your state's regulations regarding childcare protocols. Some states require children under twelve months be cared for separately from older toddlers.

Lastly, don't forget about nursing mothers. Provide a quiet, private place for mothers to nurse their infants. Don't allocate them to a closet or rocker facing the corner of the nursery. The room should be large enough for two or three comfortable rocking chairs. It should be a calm and soothing place for mothers to feed their babies.

Cleanliness

How clean the nursery is communicates volumes about the nursery environment. Parents will feel much more comfortable leaving their children in a nursery that looks and smells clean. Countertops, tables, windowsills, and diapering areas should be disinfected and kept clear. Floor covering should be washed or vacuumed after each session. Toys should be washed or wiped after each session. Disinfect equipment with bleach solution or disinfectant wipes. Remove and wash all laundry weekly. (For more guidelines on cleanliness, see the article on page 66.)

Appearance

Hand in hand with cleanliness is the overall appearance of your nursery. Is it bright and cheerful? Or is it dark and cramped? Fresh paint and soft floor coverings will go a long way towards providing a pleasant appearance. Choose a décor that is cheerful but not overly busy. Choose a bright and clean décor, but not one that is overly sterile.

Nursery lighting should be even and subdued, but not dim. Windows are a wonderful way to let in natural light. However, if the window receives direct sun, it will need to be shaded as direct sun is too glaring. Some states have requirements regarding the height and covering of windows. Be sure to keep all blind cords out of reach of children.

The nursery temperature should be kept around 72 degrees Fahrenheit. The nursery should also be well ventilated, but be sure to check for drafts, especially around the cribs.

Organization

Keeping nursery toys and supplies organized can be a challenge. Many different staff members use the nursery along with several small children. This makes maintaining any semblance of organization difficult at best.

Keep toys organized by providing low shelves that are easily accessed by the children. Keeping toys in bins and boxes only encourages the dumping of all the toys. Well displayed toys invites play. If the number of toys outgrows the shelves and storage areas, it is time to weed out a few toys or sort them into separate sets. First, get rid of any broken, outdated or toys with missing parts. Then, if there are still too many toys, sort them into two sets. Put one set into storage and the other set on the shelves. Rotate the toys every two

or three months. The children will enjoy having “new” toys every few months.

Pick up toys periodically throughout the session. Stop and take a look at the floor. If children cannot walk without tripping over dozens of toys, it's time to pick up. If you see that a toy is no longer in use, quickly scoop it up and put it away. Don't wait until the end of the nursery session. Parents waiting to pick up their children don't want to see their child crossing an obstacle course of toys to get out.

Cabinets and drawers are essential for keeping blankets, burp cloths, diapers, and cleaning supplies. These supplies should all be out of children's reach. Cleaning supplies should be locked.

Organize outerwear and diaper bags by providing a marked hook on the wall and/or a cubby for each child. Do not let diaper bags pile up on the nursery counter. Again, diaper bags should be out of children's reach. Parents should label all personal items. Be sure to put away any personal items immediately after use.

Caregivers

Finally, your caregivers are a key component in the kind of environment the nursery provides. (See the information on nursery personnel on page 11.) Caregivers should be friendly, cheerful, and caring. They should genuinely enjoy ministering to children and families. They should be prompt to their assigned time and have a servant's spirit. The nursery staff's attitude communicates volumes about your nursery ministry.

Take time to evaluate your nursery's environment. It will be an asset to your nursery ministry and in turn to your church's ministry. You will have more opportunities to minister to children and families if your nursery provides a clean and welcoming environment for everyone.

