

How to Organize Preschoolers and Children in Sunday School

An organized preschool and children's Sunday School begins with an age-graded Sunday School. This allows for effective teaching and ministry to occur with small groups of children within a close proximity of age and development.

Consider these guidelines when grouping preschoolers and children:

- Younger preschoolers (Birth to two years of age) should be grouped according to their physical development.
- Older preschoolers and children should be grouped according to the number of students enrolled and on your prospects file.
- Preschool and Children's Departments should have a minimum of 2 teachers per department. Keep this in mind as you determine the number of departments needed.
- Younger Preschool Departments (babies through twos) should have a maximum enrollment of 12; threes through pre-kindergarten, 16; and kindergarten, 20. Children's Department enrollment is a maximum of 24 students.

An Age Group Chart is provided in [Essentials for Excellence: Connecting Preschool Sunday School to Life](#). Begin by filling out the chart with names and numbers of preschoolers according to birth date. Next, see where there are natural groupings or divisions of preschoolers. This will help you to determine how many preschool departments are needed.

The Children's Division begins with children who are enrolled in the first grade and continues through the sixth grade. You may want to list children and their grade on a sheet of paper to see how many children's departments are needed.

In some churches' preschool and children's departments may include a wide-range of ages. Small churches would not find it uncommon to have younger preschoolers combined with kindergarteners and first graders paired with preteens. These multi-age departments enable older preschoolers and children to work and learn with younger preschoolers and children. Although it is not a perfect scenario for learning, good Bible teaching and appropriate activities can be enjoyed by all with careful planning and interaction on the teacher's part. Because of the wide age span, differences in physical development and learning abilities, it is best not to combine preschoolers and school age children together in a department.

Preschool and children's departments should have the proper ratio of pupils to teacher.

- Babies should have one teacher for every two enrolled.
- Ones and twos should have a ratio of one teacher for every three enrolled.
- Three's through pre-kindergarten need one teacher for every four enrolled.
- Kindergarten classes need one teacher for every five students.

The recommended ratio for children's Sunday School departments is one teacher to every two to six children enrolled. Good teacher/child ratios make for good learning, good ministry and a good experience for all involved.

Article by Kim Harris for LifeWay