

# Church Weekday Education

**Reopening your church  
weekday ministry**



[ncbaptist.org](http://ncbaptist.org)

## COVID-19 has changed our world in weekday ministry.

What was once normal, may no longer work in this new environment. Now that restrictions are beginning to relax, it's time to start thinking about next steps. While it can be overwhelming to think of the changes that are necessary, we want to help you decide what is vital to make it a positive experience for everyone. As you review the suggestions below, reflect on the primary purpose and function of your weekday ministry.

Consider these three important questions:

1. What are the essentials and non-negotiables?
2. What can be eliminated or reduced?
3. What do we need to do to operate as effectively as possible?

### Evaluate the administrative tasks

- **Review your budget.**  
What can be eliminated or reduced? What needs to be increased or added? Determine the funds needed to operate and how many enrolled children will be required to meet budget needs.
- **Reopening.**  
Can you reopen in August or should you delay reopening? What is your church's perspective?
- **Determine the class sizes allowed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.**  
Can multiple classes be staggered with alternate times to accommodate class sizes and numbers allowed on campus? Can you alter times for attending? (Maybe hours could be shortened to accommodate for multiple sessions with different children during the day, such as three hours for 10 students in the morning and three hours in the afternoon for 10 different students in the afternoon. This allows for time in between classes for cleaning and disinfecting).
- **Determine specifics.**  
What classes will you offer? Can you reopen your weekday ministry with older children first? Could you phase in younger classes as restrictions are lifted?
- **Poll parents.**  
Determine who may be interested in returning with new safety measures in place. Start polling parents at the end of June or mid-July and offer timetables to see when they are willing to return.
- **Plan forward.**  
Will you begin taking registration applications now with the condition of a refund if you do not reopen?
- **Poll staff.**  
Determine who will be interested in returning with new standard operating procedures in place. Are senior adult teachers willing to return?
- **Develop plans & policies.**  
What will be your plan and policy should schools close again due to a mandated directive?
- **Determine how you will handle a positive test result in the preschool (staff or child).**  
What if there is a positive test with no symptoms? Will you close? When? For how long? How will you notify parents?

## Create physical and healthy safety measures

- Intensify cleaning and disinfecting efforts.
- If funds are available, have carpets cleaned and sanitized. Remove area rugs if possible. Plan and budget to have carpets cleaned at least once a year.
- Clean and disinfect rooms.
- Reduce toys in the room. Remove toys and furniture that cannot be cleaned and sanitized (especially cloth toys and stuffed animals). Wash and disinfect all toys in the room. Eliminate toy boxes and store toys away from children. Only bring out a limited number each day for play. Only use the number of toys that can reasonably be cleaned each day.
- Clean and disinfect all hard surfaces. Clean and sanitize door knobs, light switches, faucets, counters, chairs, tables, cribs, mattresses, bookcases and center areas.
- Wash all blankets, smocks and sheets.
- Open windows to air out the room.
- Designate rooms/areas that cannot be cleaned or cannot be cleaned between uses as off limit areas.
- Determine daily procedures to sanitize, clean and disinfect rooms, toys, and manipulatives after use. Include in the personnel handbook and have staff sign in agreement. Determine the actions that need to be taken if protocols are not followed.
- Determine procedures for cleaning the playground. Consider putting a cleaning or disinfecting solution in a lawn and garden pump sprayer to be use between classes. Allow the surfaces to air dry.
- Specify which disinfectant and cleaner should be used and when. Here is a helpful resource through [epa.gov](https://www.epa.gov).
- Create a schedule and checklist for employees to initial when disinfecting has taken place (like you might see in restaurant bathrooms) or another accountability system for cleaning.
- Designate a bin in each classroom for mouthed toys to be cleaned at the end of each session.
- Consider a schedule to deep clean each room (one room per day?).
- Plan for individual supplies like crayons, pencils, markers, glue sticks, and scissors to avoid sharing. Plan for no shared sensory activities (no group water or sand tables or bins, playdoh, kinetic sand, etc.)
- Consider new drop-off and pick-up procedures, possibly by staggering drop-off and pick-up or offering curbside pick-up and drop-off.
- Consider having only one staff member checking in the children, therefore only having one person touch the computer/sign-in sheet.
- Take children's temperatures at the check-in station (thermometers requiring no skin contact preferred).

## Create physical and healthy safety measures (continued)

- Require hand washing before entering the classroom and at set times throughout the day. Soap and water should be used instead of hand sanitizer.
- Have bins labeled for each child. Parents should remove the contents of the backpack/diaper bag at check-in and place them in the bin. Only items that have been personally labeled with the individual child's name are allowed to be left at preschool to avoid cross contamination (pacifier, bottles, lunch, change of clothes, etc.) Have the parents take the backpack/diaper bag back to their car. Bins should be sanitized at the end of the day.
- One parent for drop-off and pick-up.
- Parents are not allowed past the check-in station (or in the building).
- No siblings allowed at drop-off or pick-up.
- Consider only allowing one entry and one exit at a time.
- Think about lunch and snack time. How will you manage? How will you manage distance between children? Can these times be eliminated from the schedule?
- Consider procedures for screening all staff/substitutes/volunteers. (i.e. temperature, daily questionnaire, etc.) at the check-in station.
- Are you considering using masks? If so, perhaps it is not time to reopen. Children will be easily frightened by the use of masks and it can communicate to parents that their child is at risk.
- Plan to re-train staff. Go back to square one with all staff. Consider having zoom meetings with breakdown by age or class. Demonstrate correct methods for hand washing, diaper/pull-up changing, sanitizing toys and surfaces, and cleaning room, etc. Emphasize new expectations.
- Consider having staff sign off on a handout of their understanding/agreement of the new standards.
- How will you sanitize shoes/change of clothes? A suggestion would be for children to bring extra shoes to wear only at school.
- How will you sanitize the playground between uses? Limit use of the playground to one class at a time.
- Plan for learning centers in the classroom that allow for children to spread out and avoid close contact.
- Ensure diaper changing stations are equipped with sanitizer, gloves and wipes to clean diaper changing surfaces after each diaper change. Discard cloth coverings on diaper changing mattress so that plastic covering can be sanitized between each diaper change.

## Develop communication plans

- Communicate now before you reopen. Parents may be reluctant to allow their child to return to the preschool setting. Clearly communicating to parents and staff regarding new and updated policies and procedures (via Facebook, emails, letters, etc.) will go a long way in winning their trust.
- Create a method of communicating developments, updates and procedures to parents in this changing environment (opening new classes, adjusting schedules, new cases, closures, etc.).
- Emphasize a sick child policy. Consider adding a statement in handbooks such as, “A child given any medications with fever reducers will not be allowed at school.”
- Educate staff and parents about COVID-19 symptoms and be clear about your policy for exclusion (i.e. temperature of 100.4, cough, shortness of breath, etc.).
- Educate parents about the importance of hand hygiene.
- Because information and the latest protocols are constantly changing, frequent communication and accountability with staff is vital. Plan on developing frequent scheduled methods of communicating with staff.
- Communicate to staff specific arrival and departure expectations. Emphasize the health requirement that you must stay home if symptomatic or sick. Emphasize specific cleaning/disinfecting expectations and the “new normal” for how job duties will be performed.
- Communicate with staff frequently to monitor physiological, psychological and emotional health.
- Post visuals for routines — hand washing procedures, diaper changing, cleaning and sanitizing.
- Post signs stating that visitors aren’t allowed in the building.

## Resources

- [NC Division of Health & Human Services Guidance for Childcare Facilities](#)
- [CDC Reopening Guidance for Childcare Program](#)
- [CDC Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open](#)
- [CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)
- [Diaper changing procedure](#)
- [How to clean toys using a bucket and sanitizer](#)
- [Cleaning toys](#)
- [Washing hands](#)
- Handwashing for children:
  - [Video One](#)
  - [Video Two](#)

## Free printables

- [NC Department of Health and Human Services sign for entrance to facility](#)
- [Cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting printout](#)
- [Handwashing poster](#)
- [Healthy childcare posters](#)
- [Cleaning solutions flyer](#)
- [Diapering flyer](#)