



Be Ready for
CHURCH FIRES

.....
A Resource for Sabbath School Teachers



safetysabbath.org



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Fire Drill Guide

for Sabbath School Teachers

Before the Drill

Holding safety drills can create risks for your class. With your church Safety Committee and safety officer, plan what your class should do if the training is conducted during Sabbath School.

Review the provided rubric, communicating what effective evacuation looks like to your class.

PREPARE PARENTS

Tell parents to expect a drill and explain why it is important. Share the ***How to Talk to Your Child About Fire Drills Parent Handout*** that outlines the material you plan to go over with their children. Encourage parents to discuss with their children at home what a fire drill is and how to respond to a fire emergency. On the Sabbath before the drill, give parents the ***Emergency Safety Guide for Parents*** handout when they check their child in for Sabbath School.

PREPARE YOUR CLASS

Children may be scared or upset by a safety drill. **Say: *We hold safety drills to help us be ready if a real emergency happens***





and everyone can stay safe. Go over what the children can expect during the training, so they feel prepared to participate. Remind the children that if they must leave their classroom, they shouldn't take anything with them. This can slow them down when they must hurry.

Use the ***Be Ready for Church Fires Sabbath School Activity Guide*** to explain what "evacuation" means and the importance of getting out quickly and safely. Plan with them how they should respond to the fire alarm, including helping any classmates with physical disabilities.

DURING THE DRILL

1. When the fire alarm sounds, explain to your class that a fire drill is in progress. Tell them you need them to be silent and listen to you at all times as you tell them what to do to keep them safe. Be aware of your surroundings, including exits, and the rare chance that this may be a false alarm or an active shooter situation.
2. Tell your class that, just like you planned earlier, it is time to evacuate. Teach the children to feel doors for heat before opening doors and to look down hallways for fire or smoke before exiting the room. Lead your class from the building to your designated spot outside and away from the building. When possible, make sure windows and doors are closed behind you.
3. Once your class has evacuated to safety, tell the students that if this were a real emergency, now would be when you would call 9-1-1 and report the emergency.
4. Once the all-clear signal sounds for the drill, have your class return to their classroom. Explain that in a real emergency, your class would remain outside until their parents check them out or emergency personnel clears the building for re-entry.

AFTER THE DRILL

Children may be scared or upset by an emergency drill. Remind them that we hold safety drills so when a real emergency happens, we can all stay safe.

Read the rubric instructions. Assess the evacuation and score each field. Calculate the total score and discuss improvements with your class.

Pray with your class for safety for your church and all Adventist churches.





Be Ready for Church Fires

Sabbath School Activity Guide

Use this guide to plan appropriate activities for the age range of your class.

1. Have children share what the words “safety” and “danger” mean.
 - a. **Safety**—*protected from or not exposed to danger or risk; not likely to be harmed or lost.*
 - b. **Danger**—*the possibility of suffering harm or injury.*
2. Have children list some of the hazards that come from a fire.

Examples: Burns, smoke inhalation.
3. Have children share what a “safety drill” is, and why your church holds safety drills.

Suggested answer: *When there is an emergency, everyone will be ready to prevent bad things from happening.*
4. Demonstrate with children how your class will evacuate quietly and quickly if there is a fire. Lead them to the safe place where your class will meet.
5. Have the children talk about why they must leave things behind when they leave the classroom. Encourage them to discuss how that will make them feel.
6. Have children write down or draw things that can cause a fire in a church.

Examples: *damaged electrical wires, overloaded outlets, stove or oven fires, candles.*
7. Have children identify two exits from their classroom and two exits from the church building. If your classroom does not have two exits, plan with your class what you will do if you are not able to evacuate.
8. Teach children how to escape from a second (or higher) floor when blocked by fire. Review how to prevent smoke from entering the room by using materials to fit under the crack of the door.
9. Demonstrate how to test if there is fire behind closed doors by touching the door and doorknob first to check if it feels hot.
10. Teach children how to crawl on the ground to prevent smoke inhalation.
11. Give the children the “Two Ways Out Maze” to complete.





How to Talk to Your Child About **Fire Drills**

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

In the event of a church fire, your child's Sabbath School Teacher will evacuate your child and their class to a safe designated check-point outside the church building. Here are the evacuation steps you can review with your child before the fire drill, so your child is ready to participate and learn how to stay safe during a real fire.

Tell your child:

Soon, our church will have a fire drill. A drill is when we practice what to do if our church catches on fire. During the training, we will pretend that our church is on fire. We need to act quickly to stay safe and not get hurt. Here is what you should do.

1. **Listen**—*During the drill, always listen to your teacher and do what they say. Listening carefully and obeying what your teacher says will help keep you safe.*
2. **Evacuate**—*If the building is on fire, you need to leave the building and go outside. You will be safe there. Don't take anything with you. If you carry something, it will slow you down. Things can be replaced. You cannot be replaced. I want you to keep you safe. Your teacher will tell you which exits to use and where to go. If you see fire or smoke ahead, tell your teacher right away. If there is a lot of smoke and you are having trouble breathing, get down on the floor and crawl as*





fast as you can to the exit. Smoke from a fire rises to the ceiling, so it will be easier for you to breathe if you crawl along the floor.

Ask: *What are two exits you can use to get out of your classroom?*

- Wait**—*Your teacher will tell you where you can find your outside evacuation checkpoint. That is the place you should go after you get out of the building. When you get to the checkpoint, wait until your teacher tells you it is safe to go back inside or until mommy or daddy come to pick you up. If you get separated from your teacher, keep going to the checkpoint and wait there until the teacher, Mommy or Daddy, or emergency personnel like a firefighter or police officer tell you what to do.*

Ask: *After you leave your classroom, where will you go to and what will you do when you get there?*

Note to parents: Your church will have a designated checkpoint for you to pick up your children. Ask your child's Sabbath School teacher for the checkpoint location.

Children may be scared or upset by an emergency drill. Remind them not to panic.

Say: *Safety drills help you learn how to stay safe when a real emergency happens. Pray with your child for safety for your church and all Adventist churches and that if anything bad happens, they will be ready and stay safe.*

Please be prepared to participate in our church's upcoming safety drill and keep our church family and visitors safe!





BE READY

Emergency Safety Guide for Parents

As parents, your first thought in an emergency is to secure the safety of your child. When your child isn't with you, you must trust the trained leadership of others to keep your child safe. Here is how to protect your child during a church emergency.

1. BRING YOURSELF TO SAFETY FIRST

In an emergency, you should follow church emergency procedure and bring yourself to safety first. Going immediately to your child may be the most dangerous thing you could do. It could put both yourself and your child in more danger. Your church has a system in place to protect everyone in the building. Bring yourself to safety first.

2. FOLLOW THE PLAN

Follow the designated emergency plan for the current crisis. The method can include evacuation, lockdown, or to shelter-in-place. Follow directions from your church emergency response team, emergency personnel, and your personal emergency response plan of what you will do in an urgent situation. Just like you, your child will be following the emergency plan along with their Sabbath School teacher and class.

3. AFTER THE EMERGENCY, FIND YOUR CHILD

After the crisis is resolved, and emergency personnel have announced it is safe to resume normal activity, locate your child at the designated checkpoint and check them out of Sabbath School into your custody. Affirm your child for following directions and staying safe.





Talk to Your Child About Emergency Situations

Knowing what to do in an emergency situation is the number one thing that can keep your child safe. Speak to your child about possible emergency situations and teach them what to do to stay safe. The three most important lessons your child can learn in any emergency situation are:



LISTEN TO THE TEACHER

Say: *If there is an emergency, listen quietly to your teacher and do what he/she says immediately. You might be afraid, but try not to cry or yell. Your teacher and the other people in the church have prepared to keep you safe.*



STAY ALERT

Say: *Always pay attention to what is happening around you. If you hear, see, or feel like something is wrong, tell your teacher or another adult you trust. If you must leave the building, look and listen for danger and quickly move to someplace safe. If you must run, make sure you run from side-to-side (zigzag). (Demonstrate to your child what this looks like.) Running this way will keep you safer.*



KNOW WHERE EXITS ARE

Ask: *Do you know two ways out of your Sabbath School classroom? If there is an emergency and one exit is blocked, do you know another way to get out of the room?*

By preparing your children ahead of time for emergency situations, you will be confident that they will not panic and will be more aware of their safety and how to keep others safe from harm until you are safely reunited.





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