

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
OFFICE OF THE FIRST PRESIDENCY
47 EAST SOUTH TEMPLE STREET, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84150-1200

December 14, 2018

To: General Authorities; General Auxiliary Presidencies; Area Seventies; Stake, Mission, District, and Temple Presidents; Bishops and Branch Presidents; Stake, District, Ward, and Branch Councils

(To be read in sacrament meeting)

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Age-Group Progression for Children and Youth

We desire to strengthen our beloved children and youth through increased faith in Jesus Christ, deeper understanding of His gospel, and greater unity with His Church and its members. To that end, we are pleased to announce that in January 2019 children will complete Primary and begin attending Sunday School and Young Women or Aaronic Priesthood quorums as age-groups at the beginning of January in the year they turn 12. Likewise, young women will progress between Young Women classes and young men between Aaronic Priesthood quorums as age-groups at the beginning of January in the year they turn 14 and 16.

In addition, young men will be eligible for ordination to the appropriate priesthood office in January of the year they turn 12, 14, and 16. Young women and ordained young men will be eligible for limited-use temple recommends beginning in January of the year they turn 12. Ordination to a priesthood office for young men and obtaining a limited-use temple recommend for young women and young men will continue to be individual matters, based on worthiness, readiness, and personal circumstances. Ordinations and obtaining limited-use recommends will typically take place throughout January.

We encourage local leaders to implement these changes throughout January 2019. Additional information is enclosed and is also available at childrenandyouth.lds.org.

Sincerely yours,







The First Presidency

This letter is being translated and will be distributed to units identified as Albanian, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cambodian, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified), Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Estonian, Fijian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Icelandic, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Kiribati, Korean, Lao, Latvian, Lithuanian, Malagasy, Malay, Maltese, Marshallese, Mongolian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Samoan, Serbian, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, Tahitian, Thai, Tongan, Ukrainian, Urdu, and Vietnamese. If leaders need this letter in additional languages, they may contact the Area Presidency. Area leaders can forward requests to the Priesthood and Family Department at ext. 2-2933. 16636

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THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Church leaders desire to strengthen children and youth through increased faith in Jesus Christ, deeper understanding of His gospel, and greater unity with His Church and its members. Beginning in January 2019, children will complete Primary and youth will progress from one class or quorum to another as age-groups, instead of on their birthdays. Ordination to Aaronic Priesthood offices and obtaining a limited-use temple recommend will continue to be based on individual worthiness, readiness, and personal circumstances and will typically take place throughout January.

1. What is the schedule for age-group progression?

Children will typically complete Primary and begin attending Sunday School and the Beehive class or deacons quorum at the beginning of the year they turn 12. Young women will typically progress between Young Women classes and young men between Aaronic Priesthood quorums in January of the year they turn 14 and 16. This progression will take place as age-groups, not on the individual birthdays of children and youth.

Some children or youth may not move between organizations, classes, or quorums according to the typical schedule due to personal circumstances. The bishop and parents counsel together to decide what is in the best interest of each child or youth.

2. When are young men eligible to be ordained to an Aaronic Priesthood office? When are young women and young men eligible to obtain a limited-use temple recommend?

Young men will be eligible for ordination to the appropriate priesthood office in January of the year they turn 12, 14, and 16. Ordinations will typically take place throughout January. Young women and ordained young men will be eligible for a limited-use temple recommend beginning in January of the year they turn 12. However, being ordained to a priesthood office for young men and obtaining a limited-use temple recommend for young women and young men continue to be based on worthiness, readiness, and personal circumstances.

3. Are ages for ordaining young men to priesthood offices doctrinally mandated?

No. Ages for ordination to Aaronic Priesthood offices have varied throughout Church history.

4. When should these adjustments be implemented?

Local leaders should implement these adjustments throughout January 2019. Movement between classes and organizations typically takes place at the beginning of January. However, sustainings and ordinations may need to take place throughout the month to accommodate family and interview schedules.

5. When are youth interviews held?

The bishop interviews each young woman when she completes Primary and moves to a new class. He interviews each young man when he completes Primary and when he moves to a new quorum and is ordained to a priesthood office. Youth who are 12 to 15 should meet with the bishop yearly and with one of his counselors at another time during the year. Youth 16 to 18 should typically meet with the bishop twice each year.

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6. Do bishoprics recognize in sacrament meeting those who complete Primary, those who move to a new class or quorum, and young men who are ordained to a priesthood office?

Bishoprics do not recognize children and youth in sacrament meeting when they move between organizations, classes, and quorums. Young men who are being ordained to a priesthood office are presented in sacrament meeting for a sustaining vote. They do not come to the podium but stand in the congregation as their names are presented and they are sustained.

7. Must the transition date for age-group progression always be January?

No. In areas of the world where January is not a natural transition date, areas may implement these changes based on the local transition date now followed.

8. How do Primary and Sunday School classes change?

Eleven-year-olds who have completed Primary attend Sunday School. Each Sunday School presidency organizes youth ages 11 to 18 into classes according to age. Classes could be organized for each age-group, or they could be combined for more than one age-group. The Valiant 11 Primary class is discontinued.

9. Can youth who are not yet 12 attend camps? Can youth who are not yet 14 attend dances and youth conferences?

Yes. Generally, youth in a class or quorum may enjoy the privileges that are appropriate for that class or quorum. With their parents' approval, Beehives and deacons may attend camps before their 12th birthdays. Likewise, Mia Maids and teachers may attend dances and youth conferences before their 14th birthdays. However, a young woman or young man should be at least age 16 before beginning to date (see *For the Strength of Youth* [2011], 4).

10. Can youth who are not yet 14 have ministering assignments?

Yes. All Mia Maids and teachers may be invited to participate in ministering and may have ministering assignments. They need not wait for their 14th birthdays.

11. How do these changes affect activity days?

Where practical, Primary continues to hold activity days for girls and, outside the U.S. and Canada, for boys. Children may begin attending activity days in January of the year they turn 8 and continue until they complete Primary.

12. How do these changes affect Cub Scouts and 11-year-old Scouts in the U.S. and Canada?

Until a new initiative for children and youth launches in 2020, progression in Cub Scouting and 11-year-old Scouts remains much the same. Boys continue to join Cub Scouts and 11-year-old Scouts and to progress between dens on their birthdays. However, when they move from Primary to Aaronic Priesthood quorums, they leave 11-year-old Scouting and participate in Scouting with the deacons quorum.