

Leaders Introduce the New Children and Youth Effort

Children and Youth will be implemented in January 2020 to help young people follow the Savior as they grow spiritually, socially, physically, and intellectually. For addresses in this magazine that discuss Children and Youth, see pages 40 and 53.

“The time has come for a new approach, designed to help today’s children and youth throughout the world,” President Russell M. Nelson said in a special broadcast on September 29, 2019.

“Instead of giving you many specific assignments,” he said to the children and youth, “we are inviting you to counsel with the Lord about how you can grow in a balanced way. It will be rewarding and fun, but it will also take some effort on your part. You will need to seek personal revelation. You will need to choose for yourself how to act on it. Sometimes the Spirit may prompt you to do things that are difficult. I think you are up to the challenge. You can do hard things.”

President Nelson also said that parents have an essential role to play. “Please build strong relationships with your children and youth,” he said. “Leaders at church can help, but these are your children. No one can have a greater influence on their success than you. Give them love, encouragement, and counsel, but resist the temptation to take over for them. They will do best as they exercise their own agency.

“This counsel applies also to our wonderful leaders and teachers of children and youth,” President Nelson continued. “We need to let the young people lead, particularly those who

have been called and set apart to serve in class and quorum presidencies. Priesthood authority will have been delegated to them. They will learn how to receive inspiration in leading their class or quorum.”

In the same presentation, President M. Russell Ballard, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, introduced the vision of Children and Youth: to “strengthen the rising generation’s faith in Jesus Christ, and help children, youth, and their families progress along the covenant path as

they meet life’s challenges.”¹ He said that “helping children and youth to gain a testimony of Jesus Christ will bless them and all of us all of our lives.”

After youth in the broadcast joined in an activity to demonstrate use of the *Introductory Guide for Children and Youth*, President Ballard said: “This is just the beginning. Today, we just got started on this activity. This is something that will go on in your families and as you work together. We invite you to continue the activity. . . .



Parents, please continue this at home.” He emphasized that “this is a home-centered, Church-supported program” and that “families are involved together in this program. That’s what’s going to make it so great.”

In many areas of the world, parents and leaders also received their own introductory guide. Other areas will have Children and Youth translated in their languages later in 2020.

Gospel learning, service and activities, and personal development (including setting and accomplishing goals) will be the keys parts of Children and Youth, and youth should lead in planning. Children and youth

seek personal revelation as they progress along the covenant path, with support from family, leaders, and others. President Ballard noted that Children and Youth is a worldwide effort and therefore is adaptable to “where you live and your family circumstances.”

Additional details and resources will be provided at a Face to Face broadcast for children and youth on November 17, 2019, featuring Elder Gerrit W. Gong of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Children and youth turning ages 8 to 18 during 2020, their parents, and Young Women leaders, Aaronic Priesthood advisers, and Primary leaders are invited to attend. Submit your questions about the Children and Youth program to Elder Gong at facetoface.ChurchofJesusChrist.org. After the live event, which will be broadcast in 18 languages, video will be archived so that it can be streamed or downloaded at any time. ■

See ChildrenandYouth.ChurchofJesusChrist.org as well as ChildrenandYouthLeaders.ChurchofJesusChrist.org for additional information, including information about the Face to Face event.

NOTE

1. *Children and Youth of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: An Introductory Guide for Parents and Leaders* (2019), 1.

