



CHILDREN AND YOUTH:

A Focus for Everyday Life

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It may have surprised you that the Children and Youth program doesn't include detailed checklists of every goal you should do. You are already doing so many amazing things! Instead, this personalized approach was created to help you come closer to the Savior in ways that are inspired by your individual needs and interests.

The main purpose of Children and Youth is to help you strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ. Luke 2:52 teaches us that in Jesus Christ's youth, He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." He lived a balanced life, and so can you. By focusing on the spiritual, social, physical, and intellectual aspects of your life, you can become more like the Savior.

HOW IT WORKS

Children and Youth encourages you to grow spiritually, socially, physically, and intellectually by engaging in gospel learning, service and activities, and personal development.

DETAIL FROM BESIDE STILL WATERS, BY SIMON DEWEY; PHOTOGRAPHS BY RANDY COLLIER



GOSPEL LEARNING

Just as the Savior “increased in wisdom” (Luke 2:52), you can grow in your knowledge and understanding of the gospel. Every gospel principle you learn will help you know how the Savior can strengthen and bless you in all parts of your life.

We have so many resources we can use to learn more about gospel principles and become like the Savior. For example, prayer, scripture study, and the Spirit provide the foundation. Your family and Church leaders can help you learn more about the Savior. The *Come, Follow Me* curriculum and seminary can help guide your study. As you use your resources to learn about Jesus Christ and His gospel, your relationship with Him will improve.



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ care deeply about you and about the person you are becoming. As you make goals to grow into the person Heavenly Father wants you to become, you can come closer to Him and His Son.

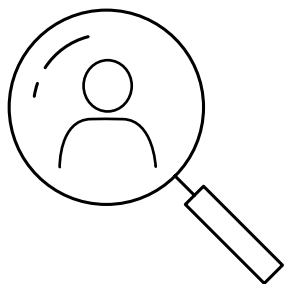
Everyone is unique, so your goals to personally improve should be tailored to your needs. For example, if you want to learn to play hymns on the piano, you might make a goal to practice daily. If you want to get better at scripture study, you might set a certain time each day to read. Seek the guidance of the Spirit to come up with a plan that will work best for you.



SERVICE AND ACTIVITIES

Serving others is one of the main things the Savior did while He was on the earth. By finding simple and natural ways to help those in your family and community, you are following His example and committing to becoming more like Him.

Meaningful group activities can help you and other youth find ways to serve others as well as grow spiritually together. Fun, uplifting activities are healthy. And when you gather together as a group of young, faithful Latter-day Saints, you can often learn and accomplish much more than you can on your own.



CHILDREN AND YOUTH IS FOR YOU

The person who most benefits is you! As you set your own goals to study and live the gospel, participate in service and activities, and develop personally, you will learn more about yourself and who you really are. The work of becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ can be challenging, but it is the most rewarding goal we can set for ourselves.

TWIN SISTERS PUT CHILDREN AND YOUTH INTO ACTION

Youth just like you have already started seeing the blessings of striving to become more like Jesus Christ in their everyday lives. Danika and Natasha R., 15, from Ohio, USA, are twin sisters who decided to do just that. Their dad is from Thailand, and because they sometimes visit family there, Danika and Natasha decided they wanted to learn more about Thai food and language.

Danika made a goal to learn to cook some Thai soup recipes. She shopped for the ingredients and practiced new cooking techniques with her dad. Natasha wanted to learn to communicate with her family in Thailand, so she set a goal to learn one new Thai word each day. She used a website to aid her language study and practiced pronouncing words with her dad.



As Danika and Natasha worked on their goals, they wanted to share what they learned with the other young women in their ward. Their leaders helped them organize an activity to learn more about Thailand. At the activity, Danika cooked soup for everyone while Natasha taught them some Thai words.

The sisters also included their friend Grace in the activity. Grace had a personal goal to get better at public speaking, so she gave a presentation on how to use chopsticks so they could eat their soup!

By practicing their goals and working with their leaders and other young women, Danika and Natasha were able to plan a fun night to enjoy with their friends.





BLESSINGS OF PARTICIPATING IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Danika and Natasha share that they have received many blessings from striving to learn more about their heritage and celebrating it with their family and other young women. Their experience didn't come without challenges. Natasha explains, "I was in school while I was learning Thai, so it was sometimes hard to find time to do it." Danika adds, "At the activity, I had a little bit of trouble making the soup on my own since my dad wasn't there." But the sisters both agree that in the end, it was worth it.

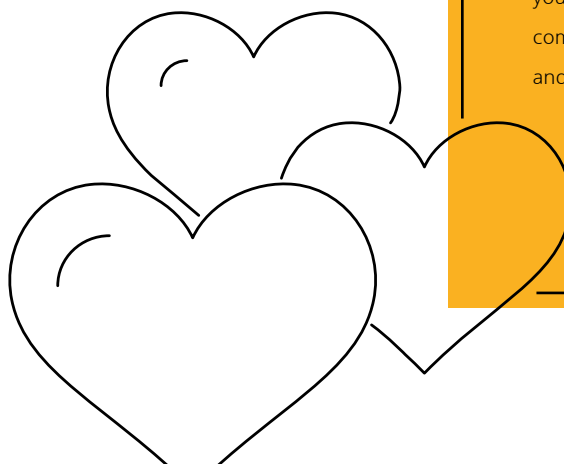
Danika says, "I like that I got to spend time with my dad, and it helped me feel closer to my family." She also explains, "Making and keeping my personal goals helped me come closer to Jesus Christ by giving me a clear path to helping myself and others. Instead of mindlessly milling around like some nights, I had a set standard to follow and keep to, and that gave me more time to think about Christ."

Natasha says making and keeping her goal "really got me to think deeply about what I needed and wanted to do to become closer to Christ." She also notes

that although she has shifted her focus to a new goal, she was inspired to keep learning Thai: "My original goal was to learn Thai so I can speak to my family in Thailand, so I want to keep learning Thai so I can talk to them."

Danika and Natasha's balanced approach to their personal development helped them learn more about their dad's culture, have fun with friends, and come closer to their family and the Savior—and that's what Children and Youth is all about.

Your participation in Children and Youth can also help you build relationships with your family, other youth and ward members, and especially the Savior as you focus on how to become your best you. **NE**



TIPS FOR PARTICIPATING IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The best way to approach your growth is to prayerfully personalize your goals so that they work for you, your family, and your circumstances. Here are some tips:

1. Seek Personal Revelation

Heavenly Father will guide you as you seek and follow inspiration.

2. It's Not Just at Church

You'll get the most out of Children and Youth if you make plans to improve in all parts of your life, not just at church meetings and activities.

3. Include Your Family

Family members can help you develop your goals and track your progress.

4. Use and Share What You Learn

When you share what you are learning with family, friends, and others, you are helping to fulfill the Lord's commandment to spread the gospel and gather scattered Israel.