

# Key Principles for Safe Activities

## 1. Identify a specific purpose.

- Before planning an activity, youth and adult leaders consider the spiritual and temporal needs of members who are invited to participate. Leaders seek the guidance of the Spirit when deciding what kind of activity would help meet those needs.

## 2. Plan for needs at the activity.

- Consider using the Detailed Service and Activity Plan or the Event and Activity Plan to guide your efforts.
- Be mindful of safety guidelines when planning the activity.
- Prepare to review the safety information needed for this event or activity with participants.
- Plan to hold a “safety moment” as needed before, during, or after the activity.

## 3. Be considerate of participants’ needs.

- Activities should be appropriate for the participants’ age, abilities, and maturity.
- All participants should have an opportunity to develop the necessary skills to participate safely.
- Consider the risk factors of individuals, including fitness level, medical issues, food allergies, or physical limitations. Include options for individuals with specific needs.

## 4. Obtain necessary permissions.

- Inform parents of planned activities.
- If activities include an overnight stay, travel outside the local area, or higher than ordinary risks, parents should complete and sign the Permission and Medical Release Form.
- Obtain bishopric or stake presidency approval for activities that include an overnight stay or travel outside the local area.
- If needed, obtain a certificate of insurance for the facility, property, or location where the activity will occur.
- If needed, secure the appropriate permits from private individuals or government entities.

## 5. Provide adequate and active supervision.

- Consider the size of the group, skill level of the participants, and degree of challenge when determining the total number of adults needed to supervise the activity. Provide a minimum of two adults for each activity.
- Encourage use of the buddy system. Pair up youth to help them look out for each other.
- All adults participating in activities for children and youth should complete children and youth protection training ([ProtectingChildren.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://ProtectingChildren.ChurchofJesusChrist.org)) before the activity.
- Leaders should avoid one-on-one situations with youth unless both the leader and the youth are clearly visible to nearby adult leaders.
- Whenever possible, an adult should not be alone with a youth in a vehicle.

## KEY PRINCIPLES FOR SAFE ACTIVITIES

### 6. Evaluate needs for training, certification, or expertise.

- If activities take place at a distance from emergency services, consider whether individuals trained in first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), or advanced first aid need to accompany the group.
- Activities such as a challenge course, zip line, whitewater rafting, climbing, rappelling, swimming, or shooting can present higher than ordinary risks to participants. To minimize exposure to illness or injury during such activities, consider whether individuals with applicable training and certification or professional guides need to accompany the group.
- Activity venues, facilities, and equipment should meet standards set by nationally recognized associations or organizations that serve youth.

### 7. Consider travel requirements.

- Long-distance travel for activities is discouraged.
- When participants travel in private passenger vehicles, each person should use a seat belt.
- Drivers should be licensed, responsible adults, and each vehicle should be covered by reasonable insurance.
- Drivers should not engage in distracting behavior while driving.

### 8. Follow equipment safety guidelines.

- Provide and use the appropriate equipment for each activity, such as helmets, gloves, ropes, safety glasses, or personal flotation devices (PFDs).
- If hand, power, or other tools and equipment are used, base their use on the manufacturer's recommendations and local or national regulations.

### 9. Review emergency and communication plans.

- As appropriate, review emergency procedures with activity leaders, including how to respond if they encounter severe weather or other emergencies typical for the area.
- If the activity is dependent on the weather, consider having proper gear and a backup plan.
- Identify the contact information for the local emergency services near the activity (police, fire, nearest medical facility, or ambulance). Provide this information to activity leaders so that it is readily accessible.
- In areas of limited communication, consider how to contact emergency services.

**“And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order. . . . It is expedient that [we] should be diligent, that thereby [we] might win the prize; therefore, all things must be done in order” (Mosiah 4:27).**