

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

May 12, 2017

To: General Authorities and the following leaders in the United States and Canada: Area Seventies; Stake, Mission, and District Presidents; Bishops and Branch Presidents

Dear Brethren:

Safety in Church Activities

Stake presidencies and bishoprics are responsible to oversee the planning of Church-sponsored activities. When considering activities, leaders should use good judgment and approve only those activities with a minimal risk for injury or illness. Stake and ward council meetings provide opportunities to prayerfully plan activities and to discuss safety guidelines and safe practices. This is important both to preserve the safety of participants and to protect the Church from significant liabilities.

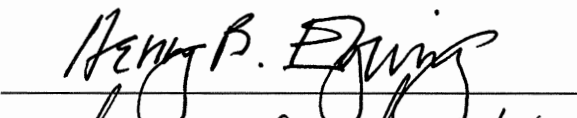
Leaders should be as careful with the safety of participants in their activities as they would be with the safety of their own children. Leaders of youth and children, in particular, should be mindful that parents trust them with the safety of their sons and daughters.

Safety guidelines are included with this letter and at safety.lds.org. Please ensure that these guidelines are carefully considered and implemented.

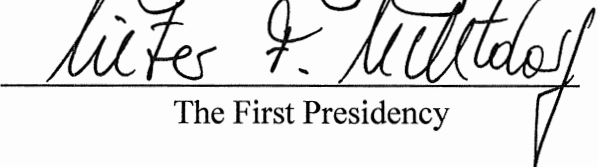
Sincerely yours,



Thomas S. Monson



Henry B. Eyring



Dieter F. Uchtdorf
The First Presidency

This letter is being translated and will be distributed to units identified as French and Spanish in the United States and Canada. Distribution in these languages will be complete within two weeks. If leaders need this letter in languages not listed above, they may contact the member of the Presidency of the Seventy who supervises the area. Area leaders can forward requests to the Priesthood and Family Department at ext. 2-2933.

14922

Reaffirming Safety Guidelines for Activities (United States and Canada)

May 12, 2017

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Following are general guidelines for planning activities for Church members, especially children, youth, and young single adults. Additional guidelines, policies, and training resources are found in chapter 13, “Activities,” of *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), on the Church Safety and Health website (safety.lds.org), and on the Ministering Resources website for ward and stake council members (ministering.lds.org).

Leaders who participate in Scouting activities should be registered with Boy Scouts of America (BSA) or Scouts Canada and should have completed Youth Protection and related training through their local councils. Safety training is also available to Scouting leaders through local Scouting roundtables and other Scout-sponsored meetings, the Scouting Safely website (scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety), and the LDS-BSA Relationships website (ldsbsa.org).

General Guidelines

1. Care should be taken to promote the physical, emotional, and spiritual safety of those participating. Leaders should be as careful with the safety of participants in their activities as they would be with the safety of their own children. All conduct and interactions should abide by Church standards and exemplify Christlike behavior.
2. Leaders, parents, and youth should understand that participation in an activity is not a right but a privilege that can be revoked if they behave inappropriately or if they pose a risk to themselves or others. Leaders should communicate these expectations to parents and participants and counsel together on how to address concerns that may arise.
3. At least two adult supervisors should be present at every activity. To protect leaders, youth, and children, leaders should always avoid one-on-one situations with a youth or a child unless the leader and young person are clearly visible to nearby adult leaders.
4. Prayerfully plan safe activities. This not only protects the well-being of participants, but it also protects the Church from significant liabilities. When activities require specific physical skills or experience, then additional planning, organization, and preparation are required. It may be necessary to obtain specialized training or use professional guides. Instruct all participants in safety practices unique to the activity. Activities should be appropriate for the participants’ ages, ability, and maturity. Leaders and youth should have fitness levels appropriate for the activity, and individual medical risk factors should be carefully

Safety Guidelines (U.S. and Canada)

May 12, 2017

Page 2 of 2

considered. For more information, visit the Youth Activities website (lds.org/youth/activities).

5. Ward activities are planned under the direction of the bishopric and the ward council. The stake presidency and stake council should oversee the planning of stake activities, which must be approved by the stake presidency (see *Handbook 2*, 13.2.1, 13.3.1). Activity leaders should identify applicable requirements, carefully plan, and verify appropriate safety measures are in place before presenting a plan to priesthood leaders for approval. The Activity Plan form (33809) should be used when planning overnight activities (see *Handbook 2*, 13.6.12) or activities involving travel outside the local area (see *Handbook 2*, 13.6.24). The form is to be used to create, outline, and present activities for review and approval according to these guidelines.
6. Be prepared for emergencies that may occur, including preparing and discussing plans for possible situations that may arise. Know in advance how to contact parents, Church leaders, Scout leaders (if applicable), and law enforcement and emergency services.
7. Stake and ward leaders who plan, conduct, and supervise activities should be knowledgeable about Church Activity Medical Assistance (CAMA) and personal liability insurance guidelines. For more details, see *Handbook 2*, 13.6.9, or visit dmba.com/churchactivity.
8. Provide parents with adequate information about outings or activities so they can make an informed decision about their youth's participation. Use the Parental or Guardian Permission and Medical Release form (33810) for activities that require specific skills, that are held out of the area, or that are held overnight. Remember that parents who send their children to Church activities are trusting the Church—and, by extension, the leaders planning the activities—with the safety of their children.
9. All leaders should be familiar with and follow all vehicle and travel-related guidelines; see *Handbook 2*, 13.6.24. Drivers should not use mobile phones or engage in other distracting behaviors while driving.
10. Notify the bishop and stake president promptly if an accident, illness, or injury occurs on Church property or during a Church-sponsored activity.
11. If an accident on Church property or during a Church-sponsored activity involves a fatality or overnight hospital stay, immediately notify the Risk Management Division at Church headquarters (telephone 801-240-4049 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-4049).