Preschool
Birth – Kindergarten
Space at Church

Post Office Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024
(615) 371-7905 / (800) 558-2090, ext. 7905
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*Theresa Thomas*

*Preschool Ministries Specialist* • *Tennessee Baptist Convention*

(615) 371-2082 • tthomas@tnbaptist.org • www.tnbaptist.org
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The Importance of the Preschool Learning Environment

It has been said that 95% of a person’s concepts are formed before he or she enters first grade. How important the first years of life are for laying foundations of all kinds! The environment in which a church’s preschoolers learn is extremely important for helping to lay foundations of all types, especially spiritual ones.

Preschoolers have many opportunities to learn at church. Sunday School, church weekday education, Mother’s Day Out, choir, and many other ministries must all be carefully planned and coordinated in regard to teaching space. What is best for preschoolers should always be the primary consideration in designing an effective preschool room.

Careful consideration of space, equipment, and other teaching resources is the first step in providing a quality-learning environment for preschoolers at church. God created preschoolers to be active learners. It is therefore logical to plan a preschool room to respect this design. A preschool room needs to include developmentally appropriate activity centers that allow the young child to make good choices. This allows each girl and boy to grow spiritually, physically, socially-emotionally, and cognitively. Leaders will also find that by respecting God’s design for teaching preschoolers, discipline difficulties are greatly eliminated!

The following pages are a compilation of suggestions that will help you create the best learning environment possible for preschoolers. The information offered represents an ideal; however, additional ideas are given to help you do the best with less than ideal resources.

Other sources of information from LifeWay* Christian Resources that are helpful in planning and designing a church preschool learning environment are:


*Contact LifeWay at 1-800-458-2772 or online at www.lifeway.com.
Preschool Education Space Guidelines

Organizational Models

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Size Guidelines
- 35 square feet per child
- No room smaller than 12’x16’ clear floor space, 16’x24’ preferred

Location
- First floor – ground level
- Near worship center and young adult classes/department
- Close to parking
- Accessible to playground
- Convenient to main corridors, but free from unrelated traffic in the preschool area
- Controlled Access for security

Corridors
- 8’ wide minimum and unobstructed
- Well lighted and inviting
- Doors staggered so they do not open across from each other
- Doors recessed to keep door swing from intruding into the corridor

Floors
- Carpet, tile, or a combination of both
- Carpet: commercial, tight loop, anti-static, stain resistant, anti-microbial
- Floors should be comfortable for seating and activities, easy to keep clean, allow freedom to participate in activities, and safe for preschoolers

Walls
- High quality, non-toxic, semi-gloss enamel paint
- Vinyl wallpaper with no strong patterns
- Neutral colors or soft pastels. Rooms with a lot of natural light may use soft blues or other cool colors. Rooms with little natural light may use yellow or warm colors.
- Caution: Bold colors, patterns, borders, or murals may distract from learning, make room look cluttered, encourage hyperactivity, and make it difficult to change room for learning objectives. If additional color is desired, add a soft color accent wall to the room.
Doors
- Solid doors with a window at adult eye-level for safety and security
- Fire-rated corridor doors that meet building codes
- Half-doors (Dutch doors) do not meet fire safety codes and may distract from learning
- 36’ wide to facilitate moving cribs and wheelchairs
- Note: Some codes may require a door to the outside for fire exits

Ceilings
- Acoustic tile

Windows
- 18”-24” above the floor
- Window ledges flush with wall
- Miniblinds when necessary to eliminate glare or to close out distractions
- Shatterproof glass

Lighting
- Fluorescent lighting with color corrected bulbs
- For infant classrooms, provide lights with dimmers

Electrical Outlets
- Two per wall with an additional outlet above counter
- Safety outlets and/or safety covers
- In infant through twos rooms, outlets should be 4 ½ feet above floor

Cabinets
- 26” counter with high neck sink and spray hose
- Wall cabinet (50” above floor) for supplies and teaching materials
- Diaper changing area
- Optional cubbies: individual spaces for personal items

Rest Rooms
- Connected to the room – can be shared with another room
- Child-size toilets
- Child-size lavatory with soap dispenser and paper towel at child’s level
- Tile floor
- Doors without locks
- Trash receptacle with lid

Specialty Rooms
- Kitchen Resource Room Indoor Play Area
- Laundry Welcome Area Sick Room
- Office Nursing Room

Resources from LifeWay
- *Preschool Sunday School for a New Century*, Cindy Lumpkin and Thomas Sanders
- *Teaching in Christian Weekday Education*, Pamela Boucher, Compiler
How to Choose Equipment and Toys for Preschoolers

☑ Is this toy or piece of equipment age appropriate?
☑ Can this toy be used in a variety of ways?
☑ Is the toy realistic and not cartoon-like?
☑ How often will this piece of equipment or toy be used?
☑ Can this piece of equipment or toy withstand heavy use?
☑ Does the toy have sharp edges?
☑ Are there any small pieces that might be broken off and swallowed by a child?
☑ Is the toy made from nontoxic and nonflammable materials?
☑ Can the moving parts of the toy pinch or trap a child’s finger?
Guidelines for Choosing Appropriate Bible Learning Activities

- Does the activity help the child feel valuable and worthwhile?
- Can the child experience success with the activity?
- Is the activity challenging?
- Does the activity allow the child to do the work?
- Does the activity allow the child to be creative and/or express himself?
- Does the activity relate to something important/relevant to the child?
- Is the activity the preschooler’s personal choice of the day?
- Does the activity relate to the purpose for the session?
- Is the activity enjoyable?
- Can the teacher accept the child’s finished product or effort?
- Does the activity provide an opportunity for first-hand experiences?
- Does the activity provide opportunities for relating to others?
Guidelines for Arranging a Room for Babies

- Heads of cribs are against the wall, leaving easy access to both sides.

- One teaching picture, book, or a Bible is placed in each crib.

- A mobile that has objects (washable) with the designs positioned horizontally is hanging approximately 10 to 12 inches from a baby’s eye level. (The mobile is removed when the baby begins to pull up)

- When a nursing room is not available, place a sturdy folding screen in the corner of the room for nursing mother. Behind the screen is one adult-size rocking chair and a table for a box of tissues.

- Place a floor mat in a portion of the room (away from main traffic areas) where babies can play with toys and interact with teachers.

- Use adult-size rocking chairs, no more than 2 per room, with an enrollment of 8 babies.

- Use an unbreakable horizontal wall mirror for babies to discover themselves. Attach the mirror to the wall at the baseboard.

- Provide counter space for cleaning supplies, CD player, and a slow cooker.
Books and Puzzles for Babies and Ones

The following are suggestions and good examples of books and puzzles for babies and one-year-olds. Books and puzzles are chosen as they relate to a unit of teaching. They are kept in the room during the session or series of sessions that relate to the teaching unit. When the unit is complete, they are returned to a central storage area.

Bible

Read to Me Bible for Kids (NIRV or KJV) (Holman Bible Publishers - 1999); ISBN 1-5581-9844-X
Read to Me Bible for Kids (Holman Christian Standard Bible) (Holman - 2005); ISBN 1-4158-2812-1

Books (Legend – b: babies; 1: one-year-olds)
1. All About Baby!, (Dorling Kindersley, 1994); ISBN 1-56458-530-1 (b,1)
2. Baby Animals, Dogi (Reader’s Digest Children’s Publishing); ISBN 1-57584-268-8 (b,1)
5. Baby’s Toys, Ricklen (Simon and Shuster); ISBN 0-671-62078-9
6. Family Time, Miller (Little Simon, 1998); ISBN 0-689-800517 (1)
9. I See, Isadora (Greenwillow); ISBN 0-688-04060-8 (b,1)
10. I Touch, Isadora (Greenwillow); ISBN 0-688-10524-6 (b,1)
12. It’s Fun to Be One, Pragoff (Simon and Shuster); ISBN 0-689-71813-6 (1)
13. Little Lamb, The, Dunn (Random); ISBN 0-394-83455-0 (b,1)
16. Oh, Baby!, Stein (Walker and Company); ISBN 0-8027-8261-2 (b,1)
18. Smiley, Intrater (Cartwheel Books/Scholastic, 1997); ISBN 0-590-05899-1 (b,1)
19. Very First Words, Usborne (Usborne Publishing Ltd., 1999); ISBN 0-7460-3827-5 (b,1)
24. Who Says Quack?, (Grosset and Dunlap, 1991); ISBN 0-448-40123-1 (b,1)

Bible-Related Puzzles for Ones
1. Jesus Is Born, 0-6330-1392-7 (4-pcs.)
2. Miriam and Baby Moses, 0-6330-1995-X (4 pcs.)
3. Samuel, 0-6330-1987-9 (4 pcs.)
(Order by calling LifeWay, 1-800-458-2772)

Other Wooden Puzzles for Ones
1. Animals, J040112 (6 pcs.)
2. Birthday Party, J040021 (5 pcs.)
3. Community on the Go, J704010 (6 pcs.)
4. Easy Fruit, J120006 (4 pcs.)
5. Easy Shapes & Colors, J120008 (4 pcs.)
6. Easy Vegetables, J120007 (4 pcs.)
7. Farm Animals, J040010 (5 pcs.)
8. Friendly Farm Animals, J48084 (4 pcs.)
9. Pets, J040013 (5 pcs.)
10. Parts of the Body, J8011334 (5 pcs.)

(These puzzles are available from Frank Schaffer Publications, 1-800-417-3261)
Equipment and Accessories—Babies and Ones

The following is a list of basic items that are needed in order to teach babies and one-year-olds using developmentally appropriate methods. These items should be in all rooms and available to all teachers in each area of preschool ministry. “Equipment” is visible in the room at all times. “Accessories” are stored and made available to preschoolers as needed during a teaching session. Consult with the director of your ministry area for approval to add or remove items from the room.

**Equipment for Babies**
1. Cribs (hospital style 27” x 42”)
2. Adult rocking chair
3. Changing table
4. Solid surface floor mat (42” x 42”)
5. Horizontal unbreakable mirror (24” x 48” attached to wall)
6. Slow cooker or bottle warmer
7. Screen for nursing area

**Equipment for Ones**
1. Rest mats or towels
2. Vinyl changing pad
3. Shelf for toys (closed back 26” x 36” x 12”)
4. Vertical unbreakable mirror (24” x 48” attached to wall)
5. Wooden doll bed (16” x 26” x 8”)
6. Child-size rocker

**Equipment for Babies and Ones**
1. Water source for disinfecting
2. Diaper bag cubbies or hooks
3. CD player
4. Small counter-top refrigerator
5. Trash receptacle with lid
6. Disposable gloves

**Accessories for Babies and Ones**
1. Baby Tap-a-Tune Piano (Little Tikes)
2. First Keys (The First Years)
3. Girattle (First Years)
4. Rock-A-Stack (Fisher-Price)
5. Snap-Lock Beads (Fisher-Price)
6. Tap-a-Tune Xylophone (Little Tikes)
7. Tap ‘n Turn Bench (Fisher-Price)
8. Balls (beach and large vinyl)
9. Dolls (washable plastic with no movable parts, sculpted hair)
10. Mobiles
11. Cardboard or vinyl blocks
12. Plastic grocery cart
13. Plastic or rubber ducks
14. Plastic saucers and bowls
15. Plastic toy telephones
16. Push and pull toys
17. Shape sorter (with no more than 3-4 simple shapes)
18. Simple rhythm instruments
19. Spinner toy
20. Sturdy plastic tool set
21. Teethers ( rattles and teethers need to be phthalate free)
22. Textured or nubby ball
23. Toddler pots and pans
24. Vinyl farm and zoo animal figures
25. Wind chime
26. Wooden or sturdy plastic cars and trucks

**Other Accessories:**
Other items suggested in your curriculum such as pictures and other toys. These items are kept in the room during the session or series of sessions that relate to the teaching unit. When the unit is complete, they are returned to a central storage area.
Guidelines for Arranging a Room for Ones

• Provide counter space for cleaning supplies, CD player, and slow cooker.

• Place a doll bed, child-size rocker, and unbreakable wall mirror (attached to the wall) across the room from the door.

• Provide cardboard blocks for block play. Place blocks in a large open area where ones can play without a lot of distractions.

• Provide a space for changing diapers (child-size mat) on the floor.

• Place cardboard blocks, toy shelf, rocking boat/steps, child-size rocker, mirror, and doll bed, along the wall. Leave an open space in the middle of the room for walking and movement by one-year olds.
Preschool Space at Church
The following is a list of basic items needed in order to teach preschoolers using developmentally appropriate methods. It is not an exhaustive list. These items should be available to all teachers in each area of preschool ministry. “Equipment” is visible in the room at all times. “Accessories” are stored in the room and made available to preschoolers as needed during a teaching session. Consult with the director of your ministry area for approval to add or remove items from the classroom.

### Art and Creative Play Equipment

1. **Easel** – Preschool size
2. **Table**—no more than 30” x 48”. Height is 10” above seat of chair.
3. **Chairs**
   - 8” – 2’s
   - 10” – 3’s
   - 12” – 4’s and 5’s
4. **Art cabinet or shelf** – no more than 36” in height

### Art and Creative Play Accessories

1. **Finger Paint**
2. **Tempera paint and containers**
3. **Paint brushes**
4. **Toothbrushes**
5. **Crayons**
6. **Markers** – washable
7. **Pencils**
8. **Scissors** – left and right handed
9. **Hole punchers**
10. **Assorted drawing and construction paper**
11. **Glue**
12. **Masking and Cellophane tape**
13. **Collage materials**
14. **Clothes pins**
15. **Smocks for children**
16. **Play dough accessories:**
   - Cookie cutters
   - Large and small rolling pins
   - Old scissors

### Block Center Equipment

1. **Block shelf** – no more than 36” in height
2. **Cardboard Blockbusters and/or large plastic blocks** – 2’s (available from Constructive Playthings
   www.cptoy.com; 800-448-1412)
3. **Wooden Unit Blocks** – 3’s-5’s
   - 3’s – 60 to 70 wooden unit blocks in 7 to 12 shapes
   - 4’s – K – 150 wooden unit blocks in 19 to 24 shapes

### Block Center Accessories

1. **Multi-ethnic family figures**
2. **Multi-ethnic male and female workers**
3. **Farm and domestic animals**
4. **Zoo animals**
5. **Tools**
6. **Transportation toys:**
   - Cars (different sizes)
   - Fire trucks
   - Dump trucks
   - Tractors
   - Boats (different sizes)
   - Traffic signs
   - Airplanes
Homeliving/Dramatic Play Equipment
1. Stove
2. Sink
3. Refrigerator
4. Table and chairs (see art)
5. Doll bed
6. Unbreakable Mirror
7. Rocking chair

Homeliving/Dramatic Play Accessories
1. Dolls (washable plastic with no moveable parts, sculpted hair)
2. Doll blanket
3. Doll clothes
4. Pots and pans
5. Dishes
6. Utensils (for 3's-K)
7. Measuring cups and spoons
8. Towels and cloths
9. Plastic bin (for washing babies, etc.)
10. Telephones (2)

Manipulatives
1. Legos/Duplos and/or Bristle blocks
2. Bean bags
3. Stringing beads and strings
4. Small magnetic board
5. Small dry erase board

Music Equipment
1. Cassette or CD player

Music Accessories
1. Cassettes or CD’s
2. Rhythm instruments: 12 to 15 rhythm instruments for each room
   • Drums
   • Bells
   • Rhythm sticks
   • Shakers
   • Triangles
   • Cymbals
3. Scarves and streamers for movement activities

Sand, Rice and Water Play Equipment
1. Sand and water table or plastic bins

Sand, Rice and Water Play Accessories
1. Measuring cups
2. Funnels
3. Small plastic containers
4. Shovels
5. Pails
6. Spades
7. Spoons
8. Scoops
9. Plastic eyedroppers
10. Sieves
11. Items that will and will not float:
   • Corks
   • Wood
   • Styrofoam
   • Rock
   • Rubber ball
   • Feather

Science and Nature
1. Magnifying glasses (unbreakable)
2. Magnets
3. Measuring spoons
4. Eye dropper
5. Egg timer
6. Compass
7. Flashlight
8. Tape measure
9. Hand mirror
10. Tuning fork
11. Touch box or bag (feel)
12. Prisms
13. Color cells

Other Equipment
1. Shelves for manipulatives, puzzles, science and nature, and books – as space allows
2. Tables and chairs (see art) – as space allows
3. Trash receptacles with lids

Other Accessories
Other items requested in your curriculum such as pictures and dress-up clothes. These items are kept in the room during the session or series of sessions as they relate to the teaching unit. When the unit is complete, they are returned to a central storage area.
Books and Puzzles for Twos

The following are suggestions and good examples of books and puzzles for two-year-olds. Books and puzzles are chosen as they relate to a unit of teaching. They are kept in the room during the session or series of sessions that relate to the teaching unit. When the unit is complete, they are returned to a central storage area.

Bible

Read to Me Bible for Kids (NIrV) (Holman Bible Publishers, 1999); ISBN 1-5581-9844-X
Read to Me Bible for Kids (Holman Christian Standard Bible, 2005); ISBN 1-4158-2812-1

Books

1. All About Baby!, (Dorling Kindersley, 1994); ISBN 1-56458-530-1
2. Baby Animals, Dogi (Reader's Digest Children's Publishing); ISBN 1-57584-268-8
3. Big Like Me, Hines (Greenwillow, 1989); ISBN 0-6880-08354-4
5. Family Time, Miller (Little Simon, 1998); ISBN 0-689-800517
10. I Touch, Isadora (Greenwillow); ISBN 0-688-10524-6
12. In the Yard, Brown (Dorling Kindersley, 1993); ISBN 1-56458-267-1
13. Little Lamb, The, Dunn (Random); ISBN 0-394-83455-0
17. On the Farm, Brown (Dorling Kindersley, 1993); ISBN 1-56458-269-8
21. Smile!, Intrater (Cartwheel Books/Scholastic, 1997); ISBN 0-590-05899-1
29. When We Get Home, Ballard (Greenwillow, 1999); ISBN 0-688-16168-5
30. Who Says Quack?, (Grosset and Dunlap, 1991); ISBN 0-448-40123-1

Bible-Related Puzzles  (4 to 6 pieces)

1. Breakfast With Jesus, 0-6330-1472-3 (5-pcs.)
2. Jesus Fed the People, 0-6330-1394-3 (5 pcs.)
3. Jesus Is Born, 0-6330-1392-7 (4 pcs.)
4. Jesus Reads the Bible, 0-6330-1393-5 (5 pcs.)
5. David and the Sheep, 0-6330-1986-0; $9.95
6. Miriam and Baby Moses, 0-6330-1995-X; $9.95
7. Samuel, 0-6330-1987-9; $9.95
8. Bible Times Fishing, 1-4158-2061-9

(Order these puzzles by calling LifeWay, 1-800-458-2772)
Wooden Puzzles
1. Animals, J040112 (6 pcs.)
2. Automobile, J040113 (9 pcs.)
3. Birthday Party, J040021 (5 pcs.)
4. Boy, J606041 (6 pcs.)
5. Butterfly, J506020
6. Community on the Go, J704010 (6 pcs.)
7. Easy Fruit, J120006 (4 pcs.)
8. Easy Shapes & Colors, J120008 (4 pcs.)
9. Easy Vegetables, J120007 (4 pcs.)
10. Friendly Farm Animals, J48084 (4 pcs.)
11. Fruits, J040055 (5 pcs.)
12. Giraffe, J506025 (7 pcs.)
13. Girl, J606040 (6 pcs.)
14. Kitten, J506016 (5 pcs.)
15. Pets, J040013 (5 pcs.)
16. Parts of the Body, J8011334 (5 pcs.)
17. Rain, J040022 (4 pcs.)
18. Robin, J506018 (4 pcs.)
19. Table Setting, J040042 (7 pcs.)
20. Tools, J040015 (6 pcs.)
21. Transportation, J040009 (6 pcs.)
22. Vegetables, J040057 (5 pcs.)

(These puzzles are available from Frank Schaffer Publications, 1-800-417-3261)
Books and Puzzles for Threes—PreK

The following are suggestions and good examples of books and puzzles for three and four-year-olds. Books and puzzles are chosen as they relate to a unit of teaching. They are kept in the room during the session or series of sessions that relate to the teaching unit. When the unit is complete, they are returned to a central storage area.

Bible
Read to Me Bible for Kids (NirV or KJV) (Holman Bible Publishers - 1999); ISBN 1-5581-9844-X
Read to Me Bible for Kids (Holman Christian Standard Bible) (Holman -2005); ISBN 1-4158-2812-1

Books
1. All the Places to Love, MacLachlan (Harper Collins Juvenile Books); ISBN 0-06-021098-2
2. Autumn Leaves, Robbins (Scholastic Trade); ISBN 0-590-29879-8
13. How a Seed Grows, Jordan (Harper Collins); ISBN 0-06-445107-0
15. I Love My Daddy Because, Porter-Gaylord (Dutton Books); ISBN 0-525-44625-7 (hardcover)
16. I Love My Mommy Because, Porter-Gaylord (Dutton Books); ISBN 0-525-446257
17. I’m Busy Too, Simon (Whitman); ISBN 0-8075-3464-1
21. In the Woods: Who’s Been Here, George (Morrow/Avon); ISBN 0-688-16163-4
26. Jonathan and His Mommy
30. Round Trip, Jonas (Morrow/Avon); ISBN 0-688-09986-6 (paperback)
32. Smalls, (Little Brown); ISBN 0-316-79880-0
34. The Very Special Night, Odor (Standard); ISBN 0-78470-272-1
38. *We Can Do It*, Dwight (Star Bright Books); ISBN 1-887-73434-1
40. *What Comes in 2’s, 3’s & 4’s?*, Aker (Simon & Schuster); ISBN 0-671-79247-4

### Bible-Related Floor Puzzles
2. *Jesus, God’s Son, Was Born*, ISBN 0-8054-3326-0 (24 pcs.)
(These puzzles may be ordered from LifeWay, 1-800-458-2772)

### Bible Related Wooden Puzzles (10-13 pieces)
1. *Jesus and the Children*, ISBN 0-6330-1397-8; $10.95
(These puzzles may be ordered from LifeWay, 1-800-458-2772)

### Wooden Puzzles (These puzzles are available from Frank Schaffer Publications, 1-800-417-3261)
1. *Birthday Party*, J040041 (6 pcs.)
2. *Boy*, J606041 (6 pcs.)
3. *Breakfast*, J066000 (10 pcs.)
4. *Car Mechanic*, J066019 (13 pcs.)
5. *Cat and Kittens*, J065012 (13 pcs.)
6. *Construction Workers*, J606525 (11 pcs.)
7. *Dinner*, J066002 (14 pcs.)
8. *Doctor*, J606527 (11 pcs.)
9. *Farmer*, J606016 (15 pcs.)
10. *Fruits*, J040055 (5 pcs.)
11. *Giraffe*, J506025 (7 pcs.)
12. *Girl*, J606040 (6 pcs.)
13. *Hospital*, J506654 (12 pcs.)
14. *Hot Day at the Beach*, J115011 (11 pcs.)
15. *House*, J506651 (12 pcs.)
16. *Lunch*, J066001 (12 pcs.)
17. *Nurse*, J606022 (11 pcs.)
18. *School Crossing Guard*, J606523 (13 pcs.)
19. *Sheep and Lambs*, J506028 (10 pcs.)
20. *Table Setting*, J040042 (7 pcs.)
21. *Teacher*, J606020 (17 pcs.)
22. *Tools*, J040045 (9 pcs.)
23. *Panda and Cub*, J506032 (10 pcs.)
24. *Penguin Family*, J506034 (8 pcs.)
25. *Police Officer*, J606521 (12 pcs.)
27. *Windy Day*, J115012 (11 pcs.)
Books and Puzzles for Kindergarten

The following are suggestions and good examples of books and puzzles for five-year-olds. Books and puzzles are chosen as they relate to a unit of teaching. They are kept in the room during the session or series of sessions that relate to the teaching unit. When the unit is complete, they are returned to a central storage area.

Bible

Read to Me Bible for Kids (NIRV or KJV) (Holman Bible Publishers - 1999), ISBN 1-5581-9844-X
Read to Me Bible for Kids (Holman Christian Standard Bible) (Holman -2005), ISBN 1-4158-2812-1

Books

1. All the Places to Love, MacLachlan (Harper Collins Publishers); ISBN 0-06-021098-2
6. Construction Zone, Hoban (Greenwillow); ISBN 0-688-12284-1
8. Daddy Will Be There, Grambling (Greenwillow); ISBN 0-6881-4983-9
9. Exactly the Opposite, Hoban (Greenwillow); ISBN 0-6880-8861-9
13. How a Seed Grows, Jordan (Harper Collins); ISBN 0-06-445107-0
18. So Many Circles, So Many Squares, Hoban (Greenwillow); ISBN 0-6881-5165-5

Bible-Related Floor Puzzles

2. Bible Times Market Place, ISBN 1-4158-2067-8
6. Jesus, God’s Son Was Born, ISBN 0-8054-3326-0
(These puzzles may be ordered from LifeWay, 1-800-458-2772)
Floor Puzzles
1. Construction Side, FS56509, 34 pcs.*
2. Noah’s Ark, #400, 24 pcs.**
3. Transportation, FS3712, 24 pcs.*

*These puzzles can be ordered from Frank Schaffer Publications, 1-800-421-5565.
**These puzzles can be ordered from Lights, Camera, Interaction!, 1-800-284-3048.

Wooden Puzzles
1. Continents, JO46003 (7 pcs.)*
2. Dentist, JO66005 (12 pcs.)*
3. Dinner, J066002 (14 pcs.)*
4. Grocer, J606083 (17 pcs.)*
5. Giant Food Pyramid Puzzle ***
6. Hebrew Alphabet, #122**
7. Jet Airplane, J606002 (14 pcs.)*
8. Lawyer and Judge, J066017 (15 pcs.)*
9. Mail Carrier, J606524 (12 pcs.)*
10. Numbers 1-20, J051007*
11. People Puzzles, LM368***
12. Teacher, J606020 (17 pcs.)*
13. Uppercase See-inside Alphabet, J051003*

* These puzzles can be ordered from Frank Schaffer Publications, 1-800-417-3261
** These puzzles can be ordered from Lights, Camera, Interaction!, 1-800-284-2948
*** Lakeshore Learning Materials, 2000 Early Childhood Catalog, 1-800-428-4414

Bible-Related Wooden Puzzles (14-20 pcs.)
10. The Tent Church, ISBN 1-4158-2064-3

These wooden puzzles may be ordered from LifeWay, 1-800-458-2772

Jigsaws in a Box
1. Construction in a Box*
2. Vehicles in a Box*
3. Zoo in a Box*

Playtime Puzzles (all see-inside puzzles)
1. Parts of a Flowering Plant, J48010 (6 pcs.) *
2. Parts of a Tree, J48009 (9 pcs.) *
3. Rain Forest Animals at Home, J48005 (8 pcs.) *

*These puzzles can be ordered from Frank Schaffer Publications, 1-800-417-3261
Guidelines for Arranging a Room for Twos, Threes, Fours, Pre-Kindergarten, and Kindergarten

• Place the homeliving/dramatic play center across the room from the door.
• Group quiet activities together.
• Arrange more active, noisy activities near each other.
• Locate “messy” activities near a water source or rest room.
• Place nature materials near a window.
• To create space in a room, use the floor for some activities.
Principle-based ——— Preschool Ministry

**Principle 1:**
All decisions and procedures are based on what is best for preschoolers.
“Children are a gift from the Lord. They are a reward from Him.” Psalm 127:3

This principle influences decisions about:

- **Teaching vs. babysitting**
  In some churches preschoolers are loved, cared for and taught using a planned curriculum. Other churches simply find someone who will ‘watch’ them so that adult activities will not be disturbed. Preschoolers are always learning; it is simply a matter of what they learn and how we use the time we are given with them.

- **Teaching methods used**
  God created preschoolers to be active. Therefore, teaching methods should take advantage of the opportunity to teach Bible truths as they move about the room, experimenting with and exploring carefully chosen materials.

- **Curriculum choices**
  Curriculum greatly influences the spiritual foundation being laid in the life of a preschooler. Curriculum needs to be within their understanding, include a variety of teaching methods, be active rather than passive, allow the child to do the activity rather than the teacher, and be Biblically-based.

- **Rotating teachers**
  One of the basic ways preschoolers learn is through consistent relationships. When teachers rotate they cannot build on previous sessions or gain a personal understanding of the child and his or her life.

**Principle 2:**
Rooms, furnishings, and supplies belong to the preschoolers assigned to the room.

This principle influences decisions about:

- **Use of rooms, cabinet space, and furnishings**
  The room and everything in the room belongs to the age-specific preschoolers assigned to the room.

- **Speakers or Video monitors in the room**
  Speakers and monitors are for teachers. They do not benefit the child; instead, they deprive the child of a valuable relationship with the adult.

**Principle 3:**
Everything in the room relates to the ministry and session in progress.
“But everything should be done in a proper and orderly way.” 1 Corinthians 14:40.

This principle influences decisions about:

- **Permanent Murals, pictures, and posters**
  Preschoolers are easily distracted by irrelevant materials. The best teaching can take place when all visuals in the room support the concept being taught in the session in progress.

- **Set-up and takedown process**
  Teachers provide a variety of materials (i.e. books, puzzles, block accessories) for each session they teach. At the end of the session these materials are removed so the next ministry using the room may provide its own materials for the best possible teaching session.
Principle 4:
Fantasy is not mixed with reality, because preschoolers need to know that everything at church is true.

This principle influences decisions about:

• **Books, pictures, puzzles, etc.**
  Teaching materials should depict people and animals in the way God created them.

• **Use of cartoon or fantasy characters**
  Even though some may see these characters (i.e. Veggie-tales, Sesame Street) as teaching Biblical truths or values, the child sees vegetables or animals with voices and/or faces. This is not real. Reverence for the Bible dictates a more discriminating approach.

• **Room décor**
  Choose wall coverings, crib sheets, blankets, and window coverings free from fantasy figures.

• **Special events and holidays**
  A picture of Santa kneeling at Baby Jesus’ manger is mixing fantasy with reality. When the child discovers that Santa is pretend, he may assume that Baby Jesus is pretend. Caution: Halloween has no place within preschool rooms at church. Fall fun is more appropriate using real pumpkins, fall leaves, and learning about animals preparing for winter.

Principle 5:
Teachers model Christian cooperation through planning together the use of rooms, equipment, and accessories.

“We work together with God.” 1 Corinthians 3:9.

This principle influences decisions about:

• **Room arrangement**
  Teachers who share space meet together to plan the arrangement of equipment and storage of accessories.

• **No Locked cabinets**
  Since the materials in the room belong to the preschoolers, it is not necessary to have one full set of materials for Sunday School and another full set for weekday or missions ministries. The majority of storage and resources are available for use at any time by all teachers. Then a smaller shelf/cabinet can be designated for each ministry to store ministry specific items. All teachers respect the space designated and do not remove items from that area.

• **“Special” requests from parents, care during adult activities such as weddings, and volunteer vs. employed leaders**
  Consistency is vital to leaders, children and parents. This can occur only when everything related to the preschool ministry is governed by church adopted policies and procedures. No one is exempt from the accepted policies and procedures.

• **Outreach efforts**
  Sunday School and weekday teachers may go together to visit a child they both teach. Teachers may also partner with other age-group leaders to minister to the entire family.

Adapted from: You Can Have a Principle Based Preschool Ministry, Sue Raley, TN Baptist Convention
Sharing Classrooms and Resources

Preschool rooms at church are used by many different preschool ministries – Sunday School, weekday, choir, missions and discipleship. The classroom does not belong to any one person, group of teachers, or ministry, but instead it belongs to the preschoolers. Just as the church sets aside areas for worship, music ministries, and meal preparation, the preschool area is space that is “given” to the preschoolers by the church. It belongs to them in the sense that everything within that space is for the best possible care and teaching.

The different preschool ministries of the church each have a particular focus, but the methods and philosophies of teaching preschoolers are the same. A diversified preschool program requires that a room be ready for another preschool ministry as soon as the room is vacated. Each ministry group deserves the whole classroom and has the right to use the classroom for its own purpose.

Consider these general guidelines:

- **Establish a Church Preschool Committee or Team** that is responsible for developing guidelines and policies for all preschool ministries. Maintain consistent expectations for teachers in all preschool ministries.
- **Assign a church staff member** to supervise the work of all preschool ministries.
- **Educate** all preschool leadership in appropriate teaching philosophies and methods for a consistent approach to teaching preschoolers.

- **Communicate** Work to prevent conflict. Schedule regular times for all preschool leadership to meet together and coordinate the use of equipment, accessories, and supplies. (We are more apt to be considerate of someone we have met than a faceless image we never talk to or see.)
- **Determine basic equipment and accessories** that remain in rooms at all times. Post a room arrangement diagram in plain view.
- **Visuals** should always be current and relative to the program area of focus. At the end of a teaching session remove any visuals that will not be used by the next ministry scheduled to use the room.
- **Provide adequate storage.** A resource room where materials and supplies may be checked in and out should be available for all ministries.
- **Combine** A separate set of scissors and crayons for each preschool ministry does not model sharing and is not good stewardship. Combining resources and budget dollars with other preschool ministries can create the opportunity to purchase better quality equipment and make available more choices of resources for all teachers.
- **Procedures and schedules for custodial care** and materials need to be clearly established.
Teaching on a Shoestring

The following is a list of items that may be saved for “teaching on a shoestring.” Some items include a suggestion in parenthesis. Think safety as you use small items. All materials should be appropriate for the age of the user.

**ART**
- Aluminum pie pans (paint, glue)
- Berry baskets (gadget painting)
- Braid, lace, rickrack scraps (collage)
- Cardboard (collage, crayon rubbings)
- Cloth scraps (collage)
- Coat hangers (mobiles)
- Crayon pieces (to be melted into chunk crayons)
- Roll-on deodorant bottles (painting)
- Feathers and feather duster (painting, collage)
- Felt scraps and upholstery samples (collage)
- Frozen juice cans (containers)
- Golf balls (golf ball painting)
- Grater (crayon shavings)
- Greeting cards, magazine covers and picture (pictures – no fantasy)
- Margarine tubs (containers)
- Adult shirts (painting smocks)
- Mesh bags (collage, rubbings)
- Paper bags
- Paper crinkle cups from candy or cookie boxes (collage)
- Ribbon, string, yarn scraps (collage)

**BLOCKS**
- Cardboard pieces (roofs, bridges)
- Cardboard tubes and cones (stand-up figures)
- Carpet samples
- Craft sticks (cargo, roofs, bridges)
- Dowel rod or broom handle sections (logs)
- Golf tees (hammering into layered cardboard)
- Log or piece of wood (hammering with nails)
- Milk cartons (stuff with newspaper and cover with contact plastic to make blocks)
- Rocks (small ones for cargo)
- Sheet or window shade (draw roads on surfaces)

**HOMELIVING**
- Apron (child-size made from remnant)
- Baby dish, spoon, bib
- Baby lotion and powder containers – empty
- Blanket or beach towel
- Camera
- Cash register receipts
- Clock – winding type
- Cookie cutters
- Diaper bag
- Dishcloth, plastic dish scrubber
- Feather duster
- Flashlight
- Food container – empty
- Gloves, mittens
- Hats
- Jewelry, watches
- Keys, briefcase
- Lids from coffee cans for plates

**MUSIC**
- Aluminum pie pans (tambourine)
- Dowel rod sections (rhythm sticks)
- Film canister (shakers)
- Metal bandage box (shakers)
- Oatmeal boxes, coffee cans (drums)
- Sandpaper, wooden blocks (sand blocks)

**PUZZLES**
- Bolts and nuts (matching)
- Buttons (sorting)
- Egg carton, muffin pan (sorting)
- Extra teaching pictures (mount on cardboard and cut into puzzle pieces)
- Film canisters (smell or sound canister to match)
- Gloves (match)
- Postcards (sort or match cards)

**YOUNGER PRESCHOOLERS**
- Mixing bowl, measuring spoons (nesting)
- Plastic clothes hangers (mobiles)
- Spray can tops (fill and dump, puzzles, sorting)
- Wooden spoons

Charles Bridgers, adapted by Janet Ivey
Setting Up a Resource Room

Setting up a resource room makes good sense. Providing a place for resources and sharing them with all preschool ministries is good stewardship and provides a way to monitor the use of supplies. When shared items are gathered and stored in a closet or room, this provides a much wider choice of teaching materials for all teachers to use. A resource room also provides a place for teachers to put items with missing pieces, unsafe toys or materials, or items needing repair or replacement.

Storing these resources in a central location can encourage good stewardship of materials. A resource room aids teachers in finding what they need and enables in ordering supplies. Organizing and maintaining a resource room takes time and a bit of creativity but is well worth the effort.

The following are some ideas on how to set up a resource room:

- Find a central location that is accessible to the preschool rooms.
- Layout a floor plan that divides the room into divisions of art, blocks, books, homeliving, music, nature and science, puzzles and manipulatives, infant toddler supplies, audiovisuals, teacher resources, and other activity centers that are found in your classrooms. Label each division to aid teachers in looking for areas of resources. A worktable that is kept uncluttered is an asset.
- Provide sturdy shelving for storing items. Be sure to measure items that will be stored in order to provide shelving that will accommodate large bins or baskets, or oversized paper.
- Books, puzzles and teaching pictures may be categorized and filed by placing them under the subject areas of: God, Jesus, Bible, Creation, Family, Self, Church, and Community and World. Assign each subject area a color. Place a poster in the resource room identifying colors with their corresponding subjects.
- To help identify books place a small piece of colored tape on the spine of each book to identify its subject. Very thin books can be put in an empty detergent box to keep them from falling over. Cut off the tope of the box and cover with contact plastic in the color that represents the subject area.
- Provide shelving 5-6 inches apart for puzzles. Assign each puzzle its own number and write the number on the bottom of each puzzle piece. If several puzzles are spilled, the number aids in putting them back together. Also write the number, the title of the puzzle, and the number of puzzle pieces on the edge of the puzzle. This information assists teachers in locating a puzzle. A dot of color from a permanent marker on the edge helps to further identify puzzles by subject area.
- File teaching pictures by subject areas. Bible-related pictures may be further categorized by: Old Testament: Creation through Moses, Judges and Kings, Prophets, other Old Testament Stories; New Testament: Jesus’ Birth and Childhood, Jesus’ Ministry, Jesus’ Parables and Stories, Jesus’ Last Days, Early Church.
- Provide a place, such as a file cabinet for storing resource kit items. These can be filed using the categories above. You might also want to add other categories like recipes, door posters, and sample letters.
- Provide prop boxes or bins for dress-up clothes and community helper items. These may be labeled Doctor’s Office, Bible Story Costumes, Present-Day Dress-Up, etc.
- Provide labeled containers to store similar items such as masking tape, crayons, scissors, etc.
- Provide baskets and encourage church members to collect reusable resources such as fabric scraps, juice cans, film canisters, etc. (See “Teaching on a Shoestring”.)
- Enlist someone to maintain the room on a weekly basis. Schedule a workday periodically when teachers can assist with cleanup, repair and organize resources.

from Sunday School for a New Century; Breakthrough Preschool Sunday School Work

Preschool Space at Church 33
Sources for Preschool Equipment and Accessories

LifeWay Church Sales*
One LifeWay Plaza MSN 138
Nashville, TN  37234-0138
Phone: 800-622-8610

Children’s Factory
245 West Essex Ave.
St. Louis, MO   63122
Phone: 877-725-1696
Fax: 877-726-1714
http://childrensfactory.com

Community Playthings
359 Gibson Hill Road
Chester, NY 10918-2321
Phone: 800-777-4244
Fax: 800-336-5948
http://communityplaythings.com

Discount School Supply
P.O. Box 7636
Spreckels, CA  93962-7636
Phone: 800-627-2829
http://www.discountschoolsupply.com

Early Childhood Manufacturers’ Direct
Phone: 800-896-9951
http://www.ecmdstore.com

Environments, Inc.
Post Office Box 1348
Beaufort, SC  29901-1348
Phone: 800-EI-CHILD (1-800-342-4453)
Fax: 800-EI-FAX-US (1-800-343-2987)
http://www.environments.com

Jonti-Craft
P.O. Box 30
171 Hwy 68, Wabasso, MN  56293
Phone: 800-543-4149
Fax: 507-342-5617
http://www.jonti-craft.com

Kaplan Early Learning Company
1310 Lewisville-Clemmons Road
Lewisville, NC   27023
Phone: 800-334-2014
http://kaplanco.com

Reynolds
P.O. Box 6058
Abilene, TX    79608
Phone: 800-588-4031

Constructive Playthings
Phone: 800-448-1412
http://www.cptoys.com
http://www.LakeShoreLearning.com
http://www.angeles-group.com

*NOTE:  While LifeWay is not a manufacturer of preschool furniture and supplies, they are a distributor for many of the companies listed here.  Check with one of their representatives for possible discounts on equipment and accessories for your church.