POSITION TRAINING

PWOC LDP

Leadership Development Program

Children's Coordinator

Welcome Leader,

Working on a PWOC Board can be such a delight!

This training is designed to set the correct trajectory for your position to set you up for success. Take the time to think through each element. Consider how the information applies to you and to your military installation. Ask questions! Track down answers. Be proactive.

As you are making plans for the year, be sure to include self-care. Put God and your health first—take care of yourself and your family! Your service in PWOC should be a blessing to your other areas of responsibility—if it is not, step back and make adjustments. Course corrections will be needed throughout the year.

May God bless you and direct your steps,

Your PWOC Sisters in Christ

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Summer Homework

READ **the PWOC Ministry Manual:** This will give you a great overview of the ministry of PWOC along with helpful tools and information.

CHECK OUT **theHubPWOC.net** for great resources and specifics for your position.

ASSEMBLE **a support team:** Ask 1-2 women to cover you in prayer throughout the year. It is helpful to ask non-local women so they can be objective in giving advice as needed.

COMPLETE **task items such as:** 1) Registering in a volunteer hours system, 2) Completing a Background Check for working with children, or 3) Taking a Food Handler's Course.

WATCH **the Personality Module** in this Leadership Development Program, unless your Board plans to do this training together.

A note about your Board Position Notebook:

In an ideal PWOC world, you were handed a super helpful position notebook (sometimes called a “continuity binder”) filled with everything you need to know, specific to your Board position, at your local installation. If you are one of the lucky ones, make your notebook even better by including all you learn this year. Add your own notes and resources to those of your predecessor.

If you do not have a position notebook, begin creating what you wish you would have received. Collect contact information for your key people. Record local protocol. Create event AARs. Write great Board Reports. Give the advice you wish you would have had. At the end of your term, you will have a valuable resource to hand over to your successor.

Position notebooks can be hardcopy, digital, or a hybrid. For more information and a list of items to consider including, see the section: **Keeping a Position Notebook** in Chapter 1 of the PWOC Ministry Manual.

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Children's Coordinator

The Children's Coordinator position oversees the children's program for PWOC, ensuring safety and spiritual care, in alignment with local and federal policy. She provides age-appropriate activities for children so they can enjoy their time at PWOC.

The following slides will help you "unpack" your position. The first line item on each slide comes directly from your position description in the PWOC Ministry Manual, followed by suggestions, questions, and comments to help you see how each element may play out at your installation. Text that appears in gold refers to resources in the PWOC Ministry Manual (PWOC MM) or the PWOC Leadership Development Program (PWOC LDP).

Children's Coordinator

1. **Assembles a Ministry Team to accomplish her position responsibilities—involving and developing women from the PWOC body who love children.**
    - Whether or not you need a team will depend on the size of your PWOC, your local policies, and whether you have paid workers. You may decide to pull a core group of women together who will help you run a quality children's program that includes curriculum, or you may just need a list of potential volunteers who will take turns serving.
    - Be aware of terminology, installations that use paid workers (Watchcare; such as Night Owls) must not refer any volunteer led rooms as watchcare due to contracts (non-compete clauses or other information). Speak to your DRE or RSO for clarity on the policies and contracts.

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2. If paid watchcare is provided onsite, coordinates with the workers regarding room assignments, child-to-adult ratios, safety requirements, health standards, and other details necessary to run smoothly. Ensures workers have what they need.

- If your PWOC has paid watchcare, you will function as a "liaison" between the workers and the PWOC Chaplain Sponsor, the Board, and perhaps the parents as well.
- What do they need? Are you expected to provide cleaning supplies? Snacks? Drinks? Paper goods? Clarify expectations.
- Which rooms will you use? Are these available? Work with your Administrative Coordinator to reserve rooms.
- Report building issues/damages to the appropriate service member or other Chapel staff.

Children's Coordinator

3. **If paid watchcare is not available, it is the Children's Coordinator's responsibility to oversee and manage: room capacity, child-to-adult ratios, safety requirements, health standards, sign-in, allergy alerts, behavioral standards, and communication with parents.**

- Who oversees watchcare for your Chapel Community? It is likely the same person who is in charge of the Background Check process for working with kids. This may be your Director of Religious Education (DRE). Arrange a meeting. Ask lots of questions! Find out the guidelines for adult-to-child ratios. Ask who is already background-checked. Ask about policies on sickness—how long does the child need to be fever-free, how long since they last vomited? What are the behavioral policies? What do you do if there is an issue?
- At first, you will have more questions than answers, but it will all come together eventually, and you will see a clear way forward.
- See PWOC Ministry Manual Appendix: ***Watchcare Registration Form.*** Use it as a starting point and tweak it for the needs of your PWOC.

Children's Coordinator

4. Recruits volunteers to serve. Works with the Religious Support Team to move volunteers through the background check process. Only volunteers with completed background checks can serve.

- Your room capacity will help you determine the max number of kids you can have in watchcare each week. About how many volunteers will you need to watch that number of children? Try to recruit enough volunteers so women are serving only once or twice a semester.
- Consider inviting the person in charge of Background Checks to a summer event and/or to your PWOC Kickoff. Encourage PWOC participants to fill out the initial paperwork right then and there!
- Keep track of the progress. Are the Background Checks moving through the system?

Children's Coordinator

5. **Considers using a room anchor (a volunteer who will commit to serving weekly in a classroom for an entire semester—much like a PWOC Bible Study Facilitator) to provide consistency for children. This eases the burden of finding volunteers each week.**
   - A room anchor really makes a difference in the demand for volunteers. She is not only taking the spot of a single volunteer on a PWOC day, but also filling that spot every week, which is the equivalent of about 12-15 volunteers (depending on the length of your semester) over the course of the semester if each one served only once. Three anchors in three rooms can cover up to 45 slots over the course of a semester!
   - It is also comforting to the kids to have someone familiar to them, who knows the routine, and who can provide predictability and stability.

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6. Ensures volunteers are up to date on required training. Cooperates with the Director of Religious Education (DRE) or local authority responsible for volunteer training.

- What training is required? When will it be offered? Is it online? Who has already completed this training and when? Who keeps track of this information?
- If needed, help arrange a training event. Work with the Publicity position to advertise the event.

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7. Works within installation and Chapel guidelines to provide care for children which may include providing ministry curriculum.

- As part of the Chapel environment, you should have the option to provide spiritual formation for the children. How can you help them grow in their faith? Does your Chapel already have appropriate curriculum? Find out what is available for the age groups you have. You may be able to outsource this element to a group like The Good News Club who would come in and offer instruction.

- If you have paid watchcare workers, you will need to coordinate schedules with them. Perhaps you and your team will come in for 20 minutes to present a story with an activity. Take the time to build positive relationships with workers.
- What is your vision? What is the vision of your President? Will you incorporate faith-based curriculum or simply offer a watchcare service?

Children's Coordinator

8. If offering a school-age room, familiarizes herself with the local rules of what is permissible. PWOC can offer spiritual formation (instruction) but may not be permitted to offer academic instruction.

- It can be against policy to present any sort of school curriculum since PWOC is not certified in the field of education. Find out what you can and cannot offer. Your school-age room may need to look more like a study hall, with kids bringing their own work, for at least a portion of the time.
- Spiritual formation is different since it falls under the Religious Education Program that Chapels provide. Will you use religious curriculum? What is available?

Children's Coordinator

9. **Coordinates with the President to determine the parameters of regular PWOC meeting day. When will children go to their age appropriate rooms? What will be the minimum and maximum ages? Should a school-age room be offered?**
   - The adult-to-child ratio tends to go down significantly at 12 months. Offering watchcare for infants may not be feasible. Check your local guidelines.
   - What is your age range? How many classrooms do you have available? How will you split up the age groups?
   - In an effort to not overtax volunteers, it can be a nice balance to include children in the whole-group time of PWOC (typically worship, devotion, announcements). If fellowship follows the whole-group time, moms can get snacks for their kids and take them to the restroom. Once fellowship is done, when Mom goes to class, kids go to class! This gives your volunteers and your room anchors some "adult time."

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10. Coordinates with the 2VP Programs to determine the timeframe on Program Days.

- The 2VP Programs will likely have a different schedule for Program Day and may not be thinking about how that might affect the kids' classes. Bring any concerns you have to her attention. Be gracious. Assume good will.
- You may need to give moms a heads-up if the morning routine will be significantly altered.
- If you have been using room anchors, Program Day may be a good opportunity for them to take a break. See if you can find others willing to take their spot for one week.

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11. **Coordinates with the Financial Liaison to purchase necessary supplies, working within budget constraints.**
    - Do you need supplies for cleaning? Snacks? Crafts? Do you need paper goods? What else? Can you cooperate with Hospitality for some of these items? What about gifts for your volunteers?

- There may be outdated equipment in your classroom space. Furniture, toys, and other items that remain in the room should not need to come out of your PWOC budget. See if there are other options.
- Find out how long the Purchase Order Request process takes and plan accordingly.

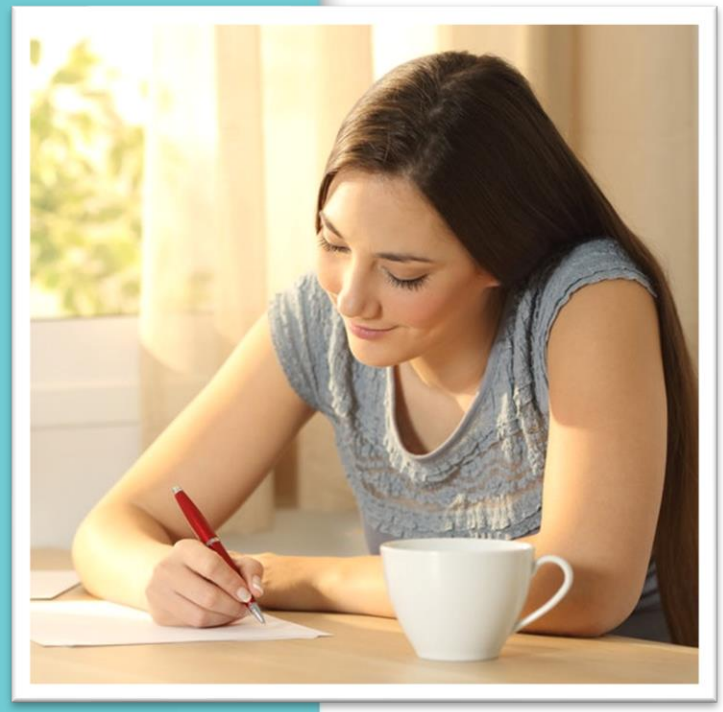
Children's Coordinator

12. Coordinates with Participation to interface with parents for sign-in and sign-up as needed.

- If you can be available in the welcome area every PWOC day, that is ideal. If you are unable to do so, perhaps you can train someone to take your place. The Participation Ministry Team may also be able to cover this responsibility for you, but do not make this assumption.
- You will need to have a Registration Form for children who are new (see PWOC MM Appendix: ***Watchcare Registration Form*** for an example—tweak it to make it your own).
- You will need sign-in sheets, divided by classrooms/ages, for each PWOC day. This can be handled online beforehand, but in-person sign-ups guarantee you will not have "no shows" that take up spaces.
- Know that first time visitors will likely be most nervous about leaving their child(ren) in the care of another. Do your best to put them at ease.

Children's Coordinator

13. Recognizes paid workers and/or volunteers—letting them know how much they are appreciated.



- Take good care of your people—spoil them a little bit! Consider putting on a special event in their honor, perhaps once a semester, such as a thank-you lunch after PWOC.
- Consider writing a heartfelt note. Small gestures can go a long ways toward making your volunteers feel seen and appreciated.
- Consider giving an end-of-semester gift to each volunteer if your budget allows.

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Some final thoughts...

Child care is a "make or break" element of PWOC.
If children love PWOC, their moms will be encouraged to return,
but of course the reverse is also true.
You will not be able to control everything,
but do your best to set a positive, fun atmosphere.
Pray for the children in your care. Keep tweaking your procedures
until you find things that work well.
Know that Jesus has a special place in His heart for children
and He notices when we take good care of them!
May God bless you and refresh you as you serve in this important
role.

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