



*Creating a professional standard in Children's Ministry*

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# ACMA Local Chapter Guidelines

*Thank you for your interest in an ACMA Local Chapter. Whether you are forming a new group or connecting an existing group to be an ACMA Local Chapter, we are excited to partner with you in raising the standard for Children's Ministry.*



**ACMA Local Chapters are the grassroots means of expanding the vision of ACMA**

*A network group is a powerful tool to be encouraged, learn, and fellowship with like-minded people. Proverbs encourages us to seek the counsel of others: "Without counsel purposes are disappointed but in*

*the multitude of counselors they are established." Proverbs 15:22*

*This guide serves as a resource to help you manage a successful ACMA Local Chapter.*

*As you develop your group, please send us thoughts and ideas your group has experienced so we can share these with others.*

*We are here to encourage you. If we can be of assistance, please contact me at [michelle@acmaonline.org](mailto:michelle@acmaonline.org) or 859-519-8055.*

*Sincerely,*

*Michelle Romain  
 ACMA Director*

# MANAGEMENT

*Successfully manage your group*

## ACMA Local Chapter Requirements:

- Chapter Leader must be an ACMA member
- Chapters must conduct monthly meetings
- Chapters are limited to one per city
- Chapters must be cross-denominational
- Chapter Leader agrees to convey ACMA information

## Share the Responsibility

*Delegate responsibilities to other group members, even if your group is small.*

A great leadership guideline is to duplicate yourself, meaning train someone to be able to do your job. This allows you to do more projects. Responsibilities may include secretary, webmaster, new member representative, refreshments, social events coordinator, etc.

## Communicate with your Group

*Communication is the key to a successful group*

Continue communication between meetings via email/electronic media. Always follow up your meeting with the minutes as a reminder for those who attended and as information for those who could not attend. Be sure to send reminders of upcoming meetings and deadlines.

Use electronic media to organize and communicate with your group.



Facebook, Twitter, and a group website are great ways to encourage your group and keep members informed of issues.

The website, [cmconnect \(www.cmconnect.org\)](http://www.cmconnect.org), is designed for Children's Ministry leaders. Here you can develop a site just for your network group and list your group members and upcoming events.



## Be Consistent

*Meet regularly*

It is difficult to accommodate everyone's schedule; however, once a meeting date is established, be consistent in having meetings. An irregular schedule is one of the surest ways to discourage group attendance.

Follow through on discussions and agendas. If your group plans a project, give time-lines to monitor progress and see them to completion.

Plan your schedule and topics. Establish a schedule for several months out so you have a time to develop the topics and events.

Be respectful of members' time. If your meetings are scheduled to last for two hours, be finished at that time.



## MEMBERSHIP

*Grow your group*

*Note: Local Chapter members do not have to be members of ACMA. Not everyone is eligible yet. It is our hope that as your group develops, each member will become part of the the ACMA membership.*

### Invite Others

ACMA Local Chapters are limited to one per city (exceptions will made for large metropolitan areas). Local Chapters are cross-denominational and designed to encourage all Children's Ministers in their ministry and leadership skills. Therefore, there is a wide base to recruit members. Each member should take the personal responsibility of inviting other ministers to join the group.

Consider a semi-annual open house for non-members to visit a special meeting.

If you are starting a new group, think small to avoid discouragement. Invite two or three Children's Ministers with whom you are acquainted or from the closest churches. Meet at a local coffee shop for an hour and share your passion for a Local Chapter. Ask for their ideas on how to grow the group.

### Refer Colleagues

ACMA Local Chapters are network groups. Each member should be in the habit of referring a skill of a colleague in the group as needed. This allows members to develop their skills in sharing them with others. (Referral examples are someone who understands inter-city ministry, organizes special events, knows balloon art, etc.)

Allow members the opportunity to share their skills with the group.

### Provide Team Building Opportunities

Provide opportunities for members to get to know each other. Be careful not to assume after a few meetings everyone knows each other.

Continue team building ideas throughout your meetings. Search the internet for team building games and ideas.

### Make New Members Feel Special

As visitors come to your group, be sure they feel connected right away.

Have a good record system to keep contact information on members and visitors.

### Establish a Mentoring/ Accountability System

Set up a mentoring and/or accountability system within your group. Offer members the opportunity to pair up to encourage and hold each other accountable in their ministerial and personal life.



## DISCUSSIONS

*Conduct exciting meetings*



**Make a Questionnaire.** Periodically offer a questionnaire asking what topics the group would like to discuss. Put these in your schedule.

**Utilize resources outside of your group** such as discussing a book or inviting a special speaker.

**Conduct Round Robin discussions.** Divide your group in to two teams – A and B. Place two Team A members at each table. Give each table a topic. Have two Team B members go to each table and discuss the topic with Team A members for three minutes. At time, the Team B members rotate to the next table (Team A never leaves the table).

**Conduct a panel discussion.** Collect a panel of five members who are strong in a certain subject to form a discussion panel for the group to ask questions.

**Collaborate on a project.** All Children's Ministers are a team going towards the same goal; they are not in competition with each other. Choose a group project such as missions, special event, etc. that the whole group can participate in as individuals or in their ministry. The ACMA Belize Missions project is an excellent opportunity to be involved (see the ACMA website for details).

**Discuss the ACMA Leadership Encouragement.** Each month an ACMA Board member will write a brief leadership discussion for the ACMA Local Chapters to share. Discuss these in addition to your regularly planned topics.

**Have Themed Discussions.** Each meeting's discussion should have a specific theme to keep the group focused. This also allows individuals to plan ahead and bring ideas and resources that can help the rest of the group. Be creative with your themes

such as: Special Needs, Alternatives to VBS, or "Bring Your Sr. Pastor" Day.

**Remember to have fun.** Meetings should have a variety of schedule that includes more than just business and training. This brings bonding to the group and encourages participation. Ideas include serving refreshments; meeting outside of the regular schedule (family day at a baseball game); team building games, etc.

## EXTRA

**Share Your Resources.** Through emails or the group website, members can offer their used resources to other members (e.g. VBS materials, preschool toys, etc.). As well, members can make requests to the group for needed resources.