

Introduction

Hare Krishna.

Thank you for your interest in the Hare Krishna Sunday School program. By purchasing this introductory package you have taken the first step in starting your own branch of the worldwide community of Hare Krishna Sunday Schools. From Philadelphia to Los Angeles to New South Wales to Brisbane, this nine-year curriculum now spans six continents teaching children Krishna consciousness in a fun, age-appropriate manner.

Because this program exemplifies to students a practical way to apply Krishna consciousness to their daily lives, many parents are also becoming enlivened to modify their lifestyle to accommodate the spiritual advancement of their children. In this way, ISKCON's congregation is expanding around the globe.

To begin your Sunday School, we recommend carefully reading the enclosed material. Use the order form to send for the first session curriculum or save money by purchasing the complete set of workbooks and teacher's guides. Then follow the suggestions in this package to organize your first Parent-Teacher meeting. Be sure to utilize the enclosed countdown list for advertising your Sunday School, enrolling students, setting up your classroom(s), etc. This convenient checklist will ensure that the first day of Session One will be a success!

Finally, we are available by phone, mail, or e-mail to assist you with any questions or concerns you may have. This on-going teacher support is made possible by ISKCON Foundation who generously sponsors the Hare Krishna Sunday School program. Also, you will receive in the mail a free, bi-monthly newsletter filled with project ideas, interviews with fellow teachers who will share their success stories, and articles offering suggestions on new and exciting ways to teach Krishna consciousness to our youngest congregational members.

We wish you all the best in your new preaching endeavor!

Sincerely,
Tapasvini dasi
Sangita devi dasi

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Sunday School Structure and Organization

The Sunday School program is structured in the following way:

- ◆ *Each school year is comprised of FIVE sessions.*
- ◆ *Each session is comprised of EIGHT lessons, lasting approximately two months.*
- ◆ *Each lesson is approximately ONE hour long.*
- ◆ *Each session is independent of the others.*

The Hare Krishna Sunday School Curriculum

The Sunday School curriculum has been developed to provide a well-rounded, hands-on way of learning spiritual values and practices. For most courses, the students will receive a workbook, which is theirs to keep. Full of wonderful stories and activities, the workbooks are ideally taken home and shared with all family members.

Teacher's guides are also provided for each course, giving step-by-step instructions for each lesson. This is a valuable time-saver for teachers, as well as an essential tool for inexperienced teachers or volunteers.

To use the curriculum: When a title is ordered, one copy of a student booklet and one copy of a teacher's guide are sent. (There are a few courses that do not require student booklets.) The student copy is sent unbound and should be reproduced for each child in the class. The front cover can be copied onto colored card stock paper, which will serve as a sturdier cover. For variety, choose different color covers for each session.

By making and keeping an extra copy of the student book and the teacher's guide on file, you will avoid having to order again. After three years the curriculum will be studied again by a new group of students when the children in that class will have gradually moved up into the next age group. Curriculum is a one-time expense if done this way.

Age Divisions

Dividing the children into various age groups makes it possible to gear the lessons toward the developmental levels of the children. Because you will need separate rooms and individual teachers for each group, being able to make the recommended divisions will depend upon your resources.

The Sunday School curriculum has been developed for four age groups. Each age group has its own set of books designed for that particular age. Each group is called one of Krishna's names. They are as follows:

Gopal Class	4 – 5 year olds (or Pre-K and Kindergarten)
Madhava Class	6 - 8 year olds (Grades 1-3)
Damodar Class	9 - 11 year olds (Grades 4-6)
Madan Mohan Class	12 - 14 year olds (Grades 7-9)

Children join a group according to their age and stay in that class the entire year. *They should not change to a higher age level in the middle of the year.*

You may have to be flexible with the age groups, however. If you do not have enough students, teachers or classrooms to be able to divide into the suggested age divisions, broaden the division. Do limit the ages you will accept, such as 7 to 11, or 9 to 13. If you attempt to teach too broad of an age span, the younger ones will be lost and the older students bored.

Class Sessions

One complete year of Sunday School classes consists of five two-month sessions. Having a two-month session allows for a concrete time frame in which to teach a particular topic, regular opportunities for new registration, and more frequent reward incentives for students.

In an eight-week session, Lessons One through Six are the academic lessons. Lesson Seven of the session is reserved for a test or quiz. For Lesson Eight, it is recommended that a field trip be taken or have a picnic or simply a fun-and-games day. It is generally a better plan to keep the seven “real” lessons together and have the final lesson day scheduled as the fun day. Tests can be returned on that day, achievement awards handed out and it offers a short break between sessions.

Again, this is flexible. Many temples find that there is enough material in the curriculum to require a couple of extra lessons. Some have opted for ten-week sessions instead of eight-week sessions. When planning your session schedule, remember to take into account festival days in which you may want to cancel classes.

Regular classes are not scheduled for summertime, when many students travel and attendance is sporadic. If you wish to keep Sunday School classes going throughout the summer, an art or activity class may be the best solution. Suggestions for special summer sessions will be addressed in the bi-monthly Sunday School newsletter.

Weekly Class Schedule

Scheduling your class time will depend on the needs and facilities of your local temple. You may wish to hold Sunday School class at the same time as the adult lecture, thus freeing parents to attend. If that’s not feasible, you may have to schedule your classes at a different time. Whatever you do, try to make it as convenient as possible for the parents, so as to encourage regular attendance.

One hour is sufficient for class time. A longer class may cause you to lose the children’s interest.

A different spiritual topic will be covered during each two-month session. Some sessions will have all age groups studying the same topic, only on different levels. Other sessions will have unrelated topics, exclusive to each particular age group.

A student booklet, worksheets and tests, which you may copy for your students, will be provided. Lesson-by-lesson teaching guides will also be provided. Teaching suggestions are given separately by age group, but if you have a small enrollment, you may adapt and teach the classes together.

Tuition

There may be some hesitation in charging a fee but it solves practically all of the problems associated with a free, drop-in class structure. Parents and students are much more likely to take the program seriously if they must pay for it. You will see your attendance increase and become more regular. With regular attendance, the class can progress systematically. You will know how many students to expect from week to week. And most of the financial needs of operating the Sunday School can be covered by the tuition fee.

The fee can be minimal, for example, \$15 per student per two-month session. The option of registering for the entire year for a \$10 savings can be offered. Please do not set the fee so high that people will be discouraged from signing up. Discounts can be offered for families with 2 or more children enrolled in your school.

Registration

Parents are allowed to register their children only on specified registration dates. The two weeks prior to the beginning of a new session can be designated as the registration period. **No new registration is permitted once a session has started.** Anyone wanting to register after a session has started should be encouraged to apply for the next session. This will prevent new students from entering your class in the middle of a session and disrupting the progression of the class. Be diplomatic if you have someone wanting to register in mid-session. Explain to the parents that they will get much more out of their tuition if the children attend the entire course.

Every two months there will be a registration period. Tuition is to be paid at the time of registration. A handout with Sunday School information and times can be given to new applicants, along with the Sunday School requirements.

Achievement Awards

To motivate the children to attend regularly, as well as participate in class, achievement awards are given at the end of each session. To qualify, the student must have attended at least 6 out of the 8 classes and passed the final quiz. We grade the final quizzes very leniently so that children will feel some success and encouragement in attaining the achievement awards.

In this Introductory Kit you will find a reproducible award chart. It is a very simple way to mark the children's progress and is a visual encouragement to the students throughout the year. The award charts can be placed on a *separate* Sunday School bulletin board in a visible location.

If you prefer, ribbons can be awarded at the end of the session, a different color for each session. Ribbons must be ordered from a trophy shop. The session number (Session One, Session Two, etc.) and year can be printed on them. Anticipate the date of the awards ceremony and order the ribbons two to three weeks in advance.

Awards Ceremony

Children, like all of us, respond well to encouragement. To praise them in their Sunday School work, you can schedule a short awards ceremony after each session. Those who qualified for the achievement awards can receive them at that time. “Certificates of Participation” can be given to those who didn’t qualify but were registered.

Whatever you do, make it public. The awards can be given out in the temple room during the Sunday Feast or in a smaller gathering with parents. Each age group can chant the session verse they learned, songs can be sung, or projects displayed. A public presentation accomplishes many things. Participating students are encouraged to continue and are proud of their achievements. The Sunday School program itself gains recognition among the congregation. Finally, *all* parents love to see their child get an award.

Gaining Support and Participation

Once the structure is in place (classrooms, teachers, curriculum, times, etc.), all you need are students. Advertise the Sunday School classes through your local temple newsletter. A special mail-out can be sent to all parents. Make regular announcements at the Sunday Feast several weeks before classes begin.

Parent-Teacher Meetings

Before you start the Sunday School year, we recommend that you hold a meeting with all interested parents. This meeting can be held for the purpose of informing parents of the goals of Sunday School and the upcoming changes (tuition charge, registration, curriculum, schedule, rules, etc.). It is also a good time to ask for support from the parents regarding volunteering their time and finances.

Below is a suggested agenda for your parent meeting. Every temple has its unique situation, so adjust the agenda according to your local needs.

For your meeting, have on hand the following:

- ◇ simple refreshments
- ◇ registration forms
- ◇ a few copies of the student booklets for the parents to see
- ◇ handouts showing class times and age groups

Opening the meeting

Introduce yourself and any other teachers or volunteers. You might want to go around the room and have the parents introduce themselves.

Topics to be discussed at the Parent-Teacher Meeting:

Sunday School goals

Explain the following goals of the Hare Krishna Sunday School:

1. To provide the Vedic literature in a manner in which the children can appreciate
2. To learn scriptural slokas and stories
3. To teach the practical application of the Krishna consciousness philosophy in their daily lives. These goals will be met in a fun, hands-on manner so the children will enjoy themselves while learning valuable spiritual knowledge. We want them to be proud of their Vedic heritage while providing peer support through associating with others of similar beliefs and practices.

Show the parents the booklets that the children will be receiving as part of their studies. You may also wish to show them an overview of the entire program (included in this introductory package) so they can see the topics taught in our curriculum.

Sunday School Schedule

Explain the overall scheduling of the Sunday School --

- ◇ The school year is divided into five two-month sessions, each session covering a new topic.
- ◇ Each session includes one week for a field trip, party or fun day.
- ◇ There are ___ age groups

- ◇ Class times are each Sunday from ___ to ___. Children must be on time.
- ◇ Where classes will meet

Registration Information

Explain the tuition fees (however you decide to do it -- per year or the option of paying per two-month session). The fees help cover the cost of the program -- copying, student booklets, art materials, etc.

Explain that registration is open *before* a session starts. Once a session has begun, parents can register for the *next* session, not the current one

Suggested Rules and Regulations

- ◇ Only registered children may attend
- ◇ Children must be on time for class.
- ◇ Parents will do their best to see that children complete homework assignments and bring materials to class.
- ◇ The registration fee must be paid before the child can attend class

These rules may sound rigid but are necessary to ***train the parents!*** If you are not strict, you will end up with children dropping in 30 minutes late, or chasing down people to have them pay their tuition, etc. Set your rules and stick by them. Post them outside the classroom on a bulletin board so no one can say they didn't know.

Volunteers

Now is a great time to ask for help. You may need someone to help with registration, classroom preparation, a bake sale for fundraising, calling congregational members with children to inform them of Sunday School, etc.

Parents can also be guest speakers in certain sessions. For example, you may invite a parent to speak about his pilgrimage to Mayapur during the session about Lord Chaitanya, or ask a senior disciple of Srila Prabhupada to speak about his or her personal association with His Divine Grace. You may have volunteers who would like to teach a class on a particular art or skill.

It might be a good idea to wait until you have a successful session before you ask for direct financial support. Let them see some results before asking for money. For now you can have an itemized list of needed classroom supplies and their costs listed and ask if anyone would like to help purchase some of the supplies.

Suggestions:

Ask the parents if they have any suggestions or anything they would like to add to the meeting. They may have some ideas of topics they would like to see covered or skills taught. Listen to their ideas and implement the good ones, if possible. This is a time to get to know each other and establish good communication and cooperation.

End the meeting by thanking them for their interest and take time to individually speak with each parent. Have the registration forms available for those who would like to enroll their children. Give handouts to everyone with pertinent information and a contact phone number.

Advertising and Publicity

A Sunday School program is a very potent preaching project. It extends far beyond the children in the classroom. To fully utilize this preaching tool, the Sunday School program should be a very visible and vibrant part of the community.

Here are some ways to maintain enthusiasm and support for your local program:

- Have a *separate* bulletin board for the Sunday School in a prominent location. It can be used to display achievement awards, schoolwork, student photos, or students' artwork. It should also display registration information. Change the display regularly.
- Choose a "student of the month" who is featured on the bulletin board, at the Sunday Feast or in the temple newsletter.
- Make regular announcements about Sunday School, especially for registration dates.
- Have regular awards ceremonies in the temple room in which children participate by chanting verses, etc.
- Institute an "extra verse club" in which students get extra credit for learning slokas. Members of this club have their names posted on a chart on the Sunday School bulletin board with the verses they have mastered.

Fund Raising Ideas

In addition to your tuition fee, you will probably find it necessary to raise some supplementary funds to cover the cost of art materials, classroom supplies, sport and game equipment for the field trips, etc. A little money will go a long way if you make careful decisions on what to purchase.

Bake Sales

Bake sales are a good way to raise smaller amounts of money. On large festival days, such as Janmastami, Govardhan Puja, Rama Navami, and Diwali, they can be quite profitable. Try to get the different parents to contribute items to sell so you won't be stuck with all the work. Someone can make cupcakes, cookies, donuts, and bread -- whatever you think will sell. Pizza is a good moneymaker but a lot of work. The older children love to help with bake sales, so be sure to engage them in setting up and running the booth. They can be of great assistance and it gets them more involved in their own Sunday School program.

Performances

Any sort of public performance you do for the congregation can also be an opportunity to raise funds. When the children perform a play, everyone enjoys it. Make a simple announcement after the play, saying that the children will be collecting donations for the Sunday School to support the program and fund more dramas. Then the children can *politely* and *discreetly* collect donations. Make sure the children are coached how to do this nicely or the public will not appreciate it. Perhaps they can simply stand near the temple exit with a donation box.

Announcements

We suggest you regularly make announcements during festival times and Sunday Feasts informing members and giving reports about the Sunday School. You want to raise the awareness of the program and make it known that it is a vital part of the Sunday Feast. When members are already familiar with Sunday School you can easily make a public request for certain classroom materials, teacher's supplies, office equipment or donations. It's nice to follow up significant donations with thank-you cards or a personal phone call.

Children's Day

Once or twice a year, entertainment at the Sunday Feast can be provided by the Sunday School students. Advertise in advance. Instead of the regular Sunday Feast lecture, the children can give a performance. Perhaps one class can perform a short play, another class can recite a verse, another class can sing a song, perform a puppet show, etc. You may want to start with a kirtan performed by students from all classes. (It is best to rehearse this first.) Also, on "Children's Day," an Open House of the classrooms can be held, or have a display of the student's artwork, poetry, homework, and writings set up.

The children can operate a bake sale table, an information table (with Sunday School handouts and registration available) and a donation table. The children may also serve out the Sunday Feast. If you have a good kirtan leader, he or she could lead the Sunday kirtan. Have the children do as much as possible, working out in advance who will do what.

Crafts

At one of our Sunday Schools, the children made bookmarks as a session project. They were nice enough to sell and they found that by selling them at regular intervals they could raise enough money to pay for their field trips. At another, students used fabric paint and decorated bead bags. They were sold at the temple store and the proceeds used for art supplies. Similarly, various craft items can be made and sold at the Sunday Feasts.

Carnivals

If you are even more ambitious, you could sponsor a Krishna Carnival. This would be a big event done just for the children. Tickets for game booths, food booths, etc. are sold and children have chances to win prizes at the different game booths. This has been done successfully in a few temples. Just remember, it must be well organized to be successful.

Wish Lists

Occasionally, you can send "wish lists" home with the children, listing various items that the Sunday School needs. Parents can donate items or help the school purchase what's needed.

These ideas all require extra effort, but remember -- involve the parents as much as possible. The more the parents participate, the more they will appreciate your work and feel an integral part of the program. It requires one person to organize and oversee such events, so delegate as much of the responsibilities as you can.

Follow the checklist below to get your Sunday School off to an organized start.

“Ready to go” Checklist

Six weeks to go! You should be:

- * *Deciding on your weekly class schedule (how many age groups, class hours, etc.)*
- * *Making weekly announcements at the Sunday Feasts*
- * *Placing posters and take-home flyers near the temple entrance*
- * *Placing an article about Sunday School with the necessary information in your temple newsletter*
- * *Arranging with temple authorities for needed classroom space*
- * *Have a teacher for each age group lined up*

Five weeks to go! You should be:

- * *Continuing your Sunday Feast announcements*
- * *Announcing dates for registration*
- * *Putting posters and handouts near the temple entrance with details of age groups, class times and dates*
- * *Printing registration forms with tuition information*
- * *Making a list of necessary classroom items*
- * *Setting a date for a parent-teacher meeting and making agenda*

You should already have:

- *classroom space reserved*
- *teachers for each age group*
- *age groups decided*
- *class times decided*

Four weeks to go! You should be:

- * *Continuing your Sunday Feast announcements -- now announcing dates for registration*
- * *Getting material ready to set up a registration table at the feast beginning next Sunday (signs, registration forms, information handouts)*
- * *Announcing and calling interested members with children for a parent-teacher meeting*
- * *Making copies of the teacher’s guides and giving them to each teacher*
- * *Reviewing the first session’s curriculum*

You should already have:

- classroom space reserved
- teachers for each age group
- age groups decided
- class times decided
- registration forms printed
- classroom supply list
- parent-teacher meeting date set

Three weeks to go! You should be:

- * *Reviewing the session's teacher's guide and ordering any special books, tapes or special project materials required for classes*
- * *Continuing your Sunday Feast announcements -- now announcing that registration is being accepted*
- * *Setting up a table and taking registration each Sunday until the opening day*
- * *Announcing and calling interested members with children for a parent-teacher meeting*
- * *Purchasing classroom supplies and getting the classroom ready*

You should already have:

- classroom space reserved
- teachers for each age group
- age groups and class times decided
- registration information available
- parent-teacher meeting date set and agenda outlined
- curriculum reviewed

Two weeks to go! You should be:

- * *Setting up a registration table during the Sunday Feasts*
- * *Continuing announcements about registration and parent - teacher meeting (make sure you give the deadline for registration)*
- * *Preparing agenda for parent - teacher meeting, which you should during the week or next Sunday*
- * *Getting the classrooms in order?*
- * *Printing up attendance sheets for the different age groups*

You should already have:

- parent-teacher meeting date set and agenda outlined
- curriculum reviewed and special materials ordered
- classroom supplies purchased

One week to go! You should be:

- * *Setting up a registration table during the Sunday Feasts*
- * *Continuing announcements about registration (make sure you give the deadline for registration)*
- * *Copying the student booklets for all registered children (you may want to copy a few extra for late registrants)*
- * *Filling out attendance forms with registered children's names*
- * *Reviewing the first lesson and getting all materials ready for that lesson*
- * *Getting any final preparations ready for the classroom*
- * *Making sure other teachers are prepared for their classes*

Good luck on your first day and don't forget the most important thing -- HAVE FUN!!!

On the following pages you will find a sample registration form, parent mail-out or newsletter article, attendance sheet and Achievement Award Chart. These handy forms can be used as is or adjusted to suit the needs of your local program.

HARE KRISHNA SUNDAY SCHOOL
International Society for Krishna Consciousness
Founder-acharya: His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Annual Registration Form

(Fill out one form per child)

Child's Name _____

Age _____ Birthday _____

Father's Name _____

Mother's Name _____

Address _____

_____ Zip code _____

Telephone Number _____ (Home)

_____ (Work)

Does your child have any hobbies or special interests?

Does your child have any special medical needs we should be aware of?

Registration fee (\$65 per year or \$15 per two-month session):

\$50 (Entire Year)

\$15 (Session One)

\$15 (Session Two)

\$15 (Session Three)

\$15 (Session Four)

\$15 (Session Five)

Dear Parents,

Would you like to have your children learn the Vedic culture in a fun-filled, hands-on atmosphere? If yes, then bring them to the Hare Krishna Sunday School. The Hare Krishna Temple of Alachua is now offering Sunday classes for children ages 3 through 14. Lessons are based on the Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads, Srimad Bhagavatam and other Vedic literatures. The Sunday School program is designed to give the children a rich experience of our great culture and inculcate in them a respect and pride for our Vedic heritage.

When do classes begin?

Sunday, September 14

What time?

Classes will be held from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Where?

In the gurukula building.

What classes are taught?

Children will learn a variety of spiritual topics, including “Devotional Practices,” “What Makes Someone Bhagavan?” “The Material World and the Spiritual Sky,” “Who Am I?” “Bhagavad Gita,” “Vaishnava Behavior,” and “Animals in the Vedas,” to name a few.

How do we sign up?

Fill out the enclosed registration form and mail it in or register on Sundays from August 15 to September 7 at the Sunday School table outside the temple.

Registration Information

- One Sunday School session lasts 2 months. There are 5 sessions per year.
- Registration fees are \$15 per child per session, \$10 for the second+ child.
- No new registration is allowed in the middle of a session. Parents can enroll their children for the following session.
- Registration forms and fees MUST be received by September 7 for enrollment in the first session. If registering by mail, please include payment with the registration form.

We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity for your children. Many of our other ISKCON temples have had great success with their Sunday School program, finding that the classes strengthen and reinforce Vedic upbringing. The students develop positive, spiritual friendships with other children and learn how to make Krishna Consciousness part of their everyday life. For more information about registration or classes, please contact Tapasvini devi dasi at 462-3404. We will be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

Using the Achievement Award Chart

The Achievement Award Chart (on the following page) is a visual way to record progress for each student in the classroom. It serves as an incentive for attendance and accomplishment. The included chart is designed for a five-session year. If you only have four sessions per year simply white out one of the “ribbons” before you make copies. You can also design your own award chart on a computer.

To use: Copy one chart per child onto colored card stock paper. Children can bring a photo of themselves from home to place on the chart. Their names should be written underneath.

Set the guidelines you will require for presenting awards. For example, you may require students to attend 6 out of the 8 lessons in that session and to pass the final quiz for the session in order to achieve an award. If a student has fulfilled these requirements at the end of a session, he can color in one of the ribbons on his chart. (A sticker or ribbon can be placed on the ribbon picture if you prefer.)

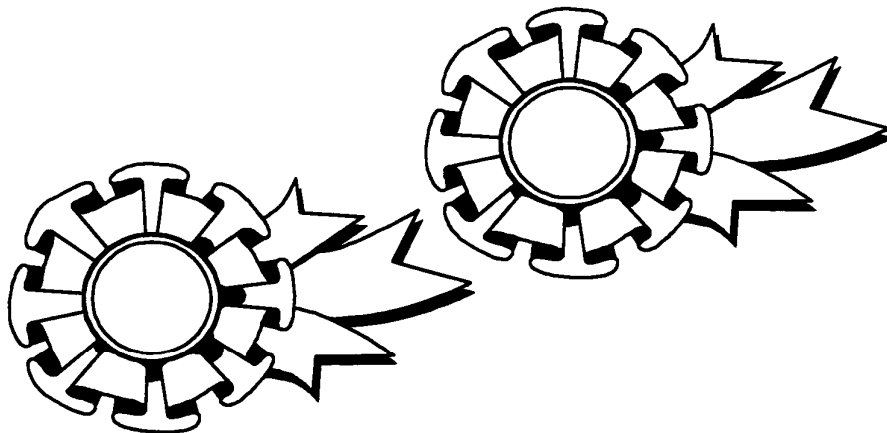
The charts can be issued to qualifying students at the end of the first session. You can have them displayed in the beginning of the session if you think that will increase the students’ motivation. There are places for five awards. This is designed for a five-session school year. If a student fills his award chart, a special reward or trophy can be given. If a student does not fill his chart completely, it can be continued next year. All is not lost at the end of the year!

The charts should be displayed in the classroom or a hallway -- somewhere the children can see them but where they cannot be destroyed. They should not be taken home.

Extra-credit projects can be added that will be rewarded with extra stickers. Stickers can be placed anywhere on the charts. This will motivate the children to do independent devotional work. Make the projects challenging and fun and students will respond wonderfully.

See Page 5 of the administrative guide for tips on holding an awards ceremony.

ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



place
picture
here

