



Coordinator Handbook

MOPS International exists to encourage, equip and develop every mother of preschoolers to realize her potential as a woman, mother and leader in the name of Jesus Christ.

“The MOPS Experience”

Our vision is that every mother of preschoolers is so impacted by her MOPS experience that she carries it with her for life, making her a better mom who creates a better world.

As a leader of a local MOPS group, the MOPS experience begins with you. Therefore, we are asking you to be:

- **Relevant**, so that every mom will know that MOPS is for her
- **Relationally Inclusive**, so that every mom will feel welcome and accepted in community
- **Growth-oriented**, so that every mom will be challenged to grow as a woman, mother and leader
- **Passionately Christian**, so that every mom will be drawn one step closer to Jesus and one step further in her influence for God’s kingdom
- **Purposeful**, so that every mom will know she’s part of God’s bigger purpose, picture and plan to make a better world!

Ideas for Living out “The MOPS Experience”

Relevant

- Meet moms where they are. Your group should reflect your community.
- Consider how it would be to walk in someone else’s shoes.

Growth-oriented

- Commit to spiritual development and growth with your leadership team.
- Plan speakers to challenge moms to grow as women, mothers and leaders.

Purposeful

- Encourage moms to accept who God created them to be and to find their purpose.
- Intentionally connect the church with your MOPS group to help moms grow in faith.

Relationally Inclusive

- Help each mom build at least 3 strong relationships within the group.
- Get moms involved in serving and leading. Start with small bite-size commitments and give them opportunities to stretch and grow in those areas.

Passionately Christian

- Create a safe environment for every mom regardless of her faith background.
- Be committed to growing spiritually so that your love of Jesus shines through!
- Find ways to express Christian love in action.

The Purpose of Coordinating MOPS

MOPS leadership is based on the principle of teamwork. It requires more than just one person to organize and implement the MOPS experience of planning, meeting and growing together. Working as a team provides a variety of areas for leadership development and creates a spiritual and emotional support network for the women who are leading MOPS.

However, every team needs a leader, a person who is responsible for pulling the variety of ideas and plans together. A MOPS Coordinator offers input and support to the Steering Team and the entire MOPS group. She works closely with her team, providing clear expectations while encouraging resourcefulness and creativity. The purpose of coordinating is not to control, but to guide.

A Coordinator also offers spiritual leadership under the authority of the Chartering Ministry. Her position allows her to disciple the women on her team, keeping them focused on the MOPS goal of bringing women to Christ and encouraging them in their own spiritual lives.

Because the Coordinator is most often the “up-front person” in a MOPS group, her influence will extend past the Steering Team to the women attending MOPS. Perhaps more than anyone else, she has the opportunity to show and tell women that better moms make a better world.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together . . . but let us encourage one another.

Hebrews 10:24



Coordinator Job Description

Personal Characteristics:

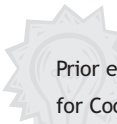
- ☉ Demonstrates a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Because many women in MOPS may not have committed their lives to Christ, she is in an excellent position to encourage others to make this decision.
- ☉ Displays an accurate and thorough understanding of the MOPS International vision, both as it applies to her group and as it reaches moms around the world.
- ☉ Demonstrates an effective leadership style that is influential in nature, rather than authoritative. She can think strategically to identify expectations and guidelines.
- ☉ Displays an ability to identify strengths in others and encourage women to develop their own talents.
- ☉ Delegates well and enjoys having many women involved in projects.
- ☉ Demonstrates warmth, friendliness and a desire to reach out to other mothers through her sensitivity and supportiveness.
- ☉ Reflects sensitivity, realism, flexibility and humor.
- ☉ Communicates effectively, both one-on-one and in front of a group.

Becoming a Woman of Influence
by Carol Kent, NavPress



Position Responsibilities:

- ☉ Encourages other members of Steering in their responsibilities, delegating appropriately and assisting as needed.
- ☉ Sets the tone for the MOPS meetings, often by welcoming moms, sharing announcements and handling other organizational needs.
- ☉ Ensures, along with the MOPS Mentor, that the gospel is presented in at least two MOPS meetings each year.
- ☉ Disciples the Steering Team, encouraging each member to grow in her relationship with Christ.
- ☉ Leads Steering meetings, preparing an agenda that encourages the contribution of every Steering Team member.
- ☉ Identifies training needs for Steering Team members and finds opportunities to meet these needs.
- ☉ Serves as the liaison between MOPS International, the Chartering Ministry and the MOPS group.
- ☉ Reads the *MOPS Handbook*, the *Coordinator's Handbook* and the other Positional Handbooks, and understands the vision of MOPS and her relationship to the MOPS group and the Chartering Ministry.



Prior experience with MOPS is especially helpful for Coordinators because of the variety of areas where they have responsibility, especially in communicating the vision of MOPS to the group and the Chartering Ministry.



Assistant Coordinator

The Assistant Coordinator is an optional position. She works closely with the Coordinator to provide a balance of ideas. The exact responsibilities of the Assistant Coordinator will depend on the needs of a particular MOPS group and the leadership styles of both the Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator. Under the direction of the Coordinator, the Assistant Coordinator can pay specific attention to areas of need in the leadership of a MOPS group. The creation of such a position allows for in-training preparation for later service as Coordinator, although this will not always be expected.

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Leadership requires influence, vision, self-discipline, integrity, focus, two-way communication and clear values; management deals more with achievement, goals, delegation, control, change, decisions and compromise.

Bob Kelly, *Three Dimensions of Leadership*

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Leading and Managing

You probably have experienced management styles of various supervisors, or maybe you have management experience of your own in the workplace. Each of you is a manager in your own home. Taking care of preschoolers and managing a household is a huge responsibility.

As a MOPS Coordinator, though, you are called to not only *manage*, but also to *lead* your MOPS group. There is a distinct difference between “leading” and “managing.” According to the dictionary, leading means “showing the way by going in advance, or guiding or directing a course.” Managing means “directing or controlling the use of something, or exerting control over something.”

As a MOPS Coordinator, you are responsible for leading, or helping others along a path that you are also traveling. You are also responsible for gently managing the process and direction of your group, holding others accountable and strategically guiding the overall MOPS program.

How to Lead and Still Have a Life

by H. Dale Burke, Harvest

House Publishers



How can you do both of these successfully in an environment of teamwork?

- ④ **Clearly explain the vision.** Look beyond the challenges of today's meeting to see the bigger picture of your group, reaching women and their families for Jesus Christ, and the broader mission of MOPS International. Help others to do the same.
- ④ **Make each person feel valuable.** Recognize and affirm the strengths and gifts of each woman in MOPS, especially those on the Steering Team, and encourage them often. Let each woman know that she is making an essential contribution to the team and provide opportunities for her to use her gifts.
- ④ **Set up for success.** In addition to recognizing the strengths and gifts of your group, spend some time identifying the areas that may be weak. Proactively think about how these “holes” can be filled by shifting responsibilities, resources or plans. Provide training and help whenever possible.
- ④ **Don't accept the status quo.** Remain open to new ideas or God's calling to new places in leadership, accepting that your MOPS group will not and should not stay exactly the same.

Work with team members' strengths and weaknesses. If a team leader does not seem able to make or stick to a budget, provide extra procedures to help her or schedule a training workshop about budgeting. At the same time, remind her that she was chosen for her position because of her abilities and passion for MOPS.



Know Yourself as a Leader

Certain attitudes or styles will hurt your success as a leader. The following stereotypes of leadership are mistakes that many people make. Take the time to honestly evaluate yourself and your relationship with team members to see if you are falling into one of these traps:

- ⊗ **Dictator:** Making all the decisions yourself, immobilizing Steering and setting the standard according to your own perception rather than group consensus.
- ⊗ **Authoritarian:** Allowing input, but criticizing others and lacking confidence in their abilities; action-oriented, highly competitive and finding difficulty in commending or encouraging others.
- ⊗ **Doer:** Doing all “significant” things, resulting in your burnout and/or a hero-martyr complex; squelching others’ creativity and motivation.
- ⊗ **Laissez-faire:** Having a laid-back attitude with a distinct lack of direction or focus.

Leading From Your Strengths by
John Trent, B&H Publishing
Group



Up-Front Duties

The Coordinator usually acts as the “emcee” of MOPS meetings, providing a consistent face and structure to MOPS, welcoming women, sharing announcements, setting the tone and keeping things on schedule.

Here are some ideas for making the most of this role:

- 🕒 **Celebrate.** Step right up and enjoy your role. Don't be afraid to look silly—wear a costume, sing a song and generate laughter. Enjoy the lighthearted mood that you set.
- 🕒 **Give Presents.** On special occasions, give out awards or door prizes, which can be donated by local merchants. You will share the message that every mom is special and deserves to be recognized.
- 🕒 **Keep announcements brief and interesting.** Let moms know what is going on in the group and remind them of policies, but find creative ways to do it. Use visual aids, scatter announcements throughout your schedule, and refer moms to the newsletter to read more details.
- 🕒 **Include fun.** Spice up a MOPS meeting with a skit, an icebreaker or an impromptu interview with a MOPS mom. Starting the meeting on a light note helps women relax and get comfortable with one another.
- 🕒 **Be yourself.** You will be called upon to be many things to many people, but be sure to also bring to MOPS what you do best. You are unique and special, and if you can comfortably demonstrate this, you will help others feel the same.

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Moms in our MOPS groups were consistently coming to meetings late. We learned that keeping the beginning of the meeting fun and energetic, and providing incentives like door prizes and games, was an effective way to get the women to arrive and get settled on time.

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Public Speaking Tips

While you may not teach a lesson during MOPS or speak at length, your role as Coordinator probably will require you to speak both in front of your MOPS group and to your Chartering Ministry or leadership.

Speaking in front of others is a great privilege, but it can also cause anxiety. Here are some general guidelines to keep in mind as you prepare to speak to your MOPS group.

- 🕒 **Project confidence** — You may feel more nervous than you appear to others. Never apologize or begin your talk by telling the group you “aren’t very good at this.”
- 🕒 **Use vocal energy** — Increase your volume and speak conversationally, not too fast. Practice speaking in front of a mirror to improve sound quality.
- 🕒 **Relax your movement** — Relax your body to help you concentrate. Use gestures to enhance your content. Minimize body language distractions. Use a podium or music stand to rest your hands on if necessary; don’t cross your arms or shove your hands in your pockets. Consciously balance your weight on both feet to avoid rocking or bouncing.
- 🕒 **Hold your audience** — Consider your audience when you think about what you want to say and how you will say it. What do they need to remember? What do they care about? How does this apply to their lives?

More public speaking tips are available in the *MOPS Mentor Handbook*, pages 10-16.



Motivating Your Steering Team

The secret to having a vibrant, successful MOPS group is having committed, motivated members in every key position. How do MOPS Coordinators motivate Steering leaders and volunteers so that everyone does her job and no one person is overtaxed? How do you achieve a creative, productive, harmonious, nurturing team?

- ☉ **Pray for each other.** There are many ways to help Steering leaders pray for one another. Pray during meetings for each woman by name, assign prayer partners at the beginning of the year and occasionally send notes to each Steering leader, letting her know that you are praying for her.
- ☉ **Ask questions.** Starting each meeting with a personal question for each Steering member can reveal quite a bit about the women with whom you are serving. Ask a different Steering leader to share her testimony at the beginning of each meeting. Gain insights into their lives. An apparent lack of motivation might be the result of a personal problem, and your Steering Team can help through support and prayer.

Thank team leaders publicly as well as privately. Take the time in a MOPS meeting to introduce each Steering Team Leader and explain her role and how she helps the MOPS group function. Present each leader with a small gift at the end of the year.



- ☉ **Model commitment.** If you, as the Coordinator, show up for meetings on time and are well prepared and organized, your members will be more likely to follow suit. If you promise help in some area, make sure you deliver it!
- ☉ **Plan ahead.** Try to plan most of your MOPS group meetings before the year begins so that you can spend time in Steering meetings nurturing each other.

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and one mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:5-6



- ④ **Appreciate their expertise.** Things go smoothly when Coordinators listen to Steering Team leaders with an open mind and appreciate their understanding of specific areas. Delegation is important, even if it means that things are not done exactly as you would have done them. Your team will grow as they work through challenges together.
- ④ **Organize.** Avoid time-consuming distractions or detours during meetings. Focus on matters that concern your MOPS group as a whole. If you organize well, each Steering Team leader or volunteer will feel that she is a necessary part of the meeting.
- ④ **Have some fun!** It's important to get together outside of Steering meetings. Spend some time just having fun. Plan special activities for Steering Team leaders and their families. Get together and get involved in one another's lives beyond MOPS business.
- ④ **Take risks together.** As a team, work on a project that is outside your "comfort zone." Volunteer at a homeless shelter, plan a silly skit for a MOPS meeting or participate in a relay marathon. Working together on a challenge will bring your team closer together.
- ④ **Thank them.** Let them know by word and action that each team member is appreciated and essential to MOPS. If you hear a compliment about a leader or notice that they have done something especially well, tell them about it, and encourage each team member to do the same.
- ④ **Excite them.** MOPS is reaching thousands of women around the world. It is a privilege and a special calling to work in this ministry. By reminding Steering and other volunteers of the "big picture" of why you do MOPS—the strengthening of the body of Christ and the tremendous opportunity to introduce new mothers to the Lord—they are motivated to do the everyday tasks.

Steering Retreats

Each year MOPS International produces a theme DVD perfect for Steering retreats. Renew your charter in April to receive your theme DVD in May.



One great way to build unity on a Steering Team and set goals and plans for a MOPS year is to organize an annual retreat. Find a quiet, inexpensive (or free) place to get away overnight or for a weekend, depending on your area, finances and creativity. Set aside enough uninterrupted time for your team to bond and get to know each other.

Wherever you go, keep in mind these five pillars to a successful Steering Team retreat:

Spiritual Emphasis. Your new Steering Team cannot come together without a solid spiritual foundation. Take this opportunity away from family and other responsibilities to deepen your relationship with God. Choose an appropriate Bible verse or passage for the retreat and ask the women to meditate on it. This could be the theme verse for your upcoming MOPS year, or a verse specifically chosen for the Steering Team. Prepare devotionals around the verse and spend time together in prayer.

Bonding. Team members need to have time to bond as people, too. Make sure you have plenty of time for fun activities or talking. Give yourselves time to laugh! Plan a scavenger hunt or make a meal together. Encourage team members to talk about themselves, not just their positions.

Some MOPS groups plan an overnight retreat in a hotel suite, where they can share the cost and enjoy a pool and room service. Others go to retreat centers. One creative MOPS group met in the Coordinator's home while her husband took their children away for a weekend with their grandparents.



Training. Take advantage of the time away to further develop your leadership skills. Bring a book, article or DVD from MOPS International that addresses a training need that your group is experiencing.

Be open to accepting brainstorming from everyone, regardless of position. Your Finance Team Leader may have a great hospitality idea.



Goal-Setting. As you look at the upcoming MOPS year, spend some time setting goals. What do you want to accomplish? A group might set a goal of reaching out to more non-Christian women. This means they will put their efforts into publicity and community outreach. Another group might want to encourage deeper relationships among the women in their group; they would pay special attention to training Discussion Group Leaders and planning special activities and outreach projects.

Idea-Sharing. Finally, a Steering retreat gives leaders the opportunity to plan and brainstorm together for the MOPS year. Brainstorm on how your Steering Team can implement the MOPS International annual theme. Plan speaking topics and Creative Activities.

5 Leadership Essentials for Women by Linda Clark,
Woman's Missionary Union



Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.

Romans 12:10



Building a Steering Team That Will Last

Being in MOPS leadership changes the way that you view MOPS. You develop leadership skills, form lasting relationships and grow in your walk with God as you minister to other moms. Yet a place on MOPS Steering is not permanent. Sooner or later, every term ends, and new team members must be found.

Recruiting new leaders is critical to the survival of your MOPS group, and creating a Steering Team that women will want to join is part of your responsibility as a Coordinator. How do you demonstrate to a group of tired, frantically busy moms the wonderful blessings that come with serving on the Steering Team, or even of serving on a specific committee?

The key is to not wait until someone has already left her position. Developing a smoothly running, Christ-centered Steering Team is one of the preparations for recruiting new leaders, as well as organizing the most effective MOPS program.

Here are things you can do any time to prepare for a transition of MOPS leadership. With prayer and preparation, your Steering Team can model true biblical teamwork that draws women to it.

More information on recruiting a Steering Team is available on page 35 of the *MOPS Handbook*.





@ Create a Spiritually Focused Steering Team

Through Bible studies, focused times of prayer and your spiritual guidance, help your team grow together spiritually as well as emotionally. Keep their focus on God and fulfilling his purposes for your group.

@ Ask Questions

Ask questions with your team. What is our Steering Team's purpose in MOPS? What is my personal function within that purpose? If you can't answer these questions, you might have trouble inviting another woman to join you in achieving them.

@ Develop a Mission Statement

Be sure your team knows and understands the MOPS International Mission Statement. You will find it on the inside cover of all MOPS handbooks. Use it as the basis for your group's mission statement.

A well-written mission statement will answer the question "why do we exist?" As you recruit leaders and work with the ones you have, re-examine your purpose as a ministry to young mothers. To effectively lead your MOPS group, you should have a vision for what God wants your group to be. Each member should agree to that vision and commit to accomplishing it.

Be sure you can explain your mission statement and what it means. Then, when you approach a mom about joining MOPS leadership, don't just ask her to take on a responsibility; ask her to become a part of the mission. Give her a sense of the bigger picture to which she will contribute.

Plans fail for lack of counsel, but
with many advisers they succeed.

Proverbs 15:22



🕒 Define Each Position

Help each team member identify the responsibilities of her position and prepare a written description that can be used when that position needs to be filled. Be creative and think broadly as you look at your group's needs, considering how responsibilities can be divided into simple and manageable pieces. Create positions that don't seem overwhelming and delegate evenly among team members. Maybe you need several women to take certain responsibilities within a team and one to coordinate them.

🕒 Present a Positive Steering Team

Communicate with your group what your Steering Team does, sharing the enthusiasm that comes with a positive team. Demonstrate the blessings of working together, serving moms and their children. Tell them what God has done, and let them see you enjoy what you're doing!

🕒 Provide for Ongoing Training

MOPS International provides training through leadership curriculums, Theme DVDs, events, *Connections* magazine, and web resources. See page 38 of the *MOPS Handbook* for more information.

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Our Steering Team is not just a committee. We're friends, sisters in Christ and missionaries committed to the same goal—reaching as many women as possible for Christ through MOPS.

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Better Moms Make A Better World



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