Introduction to Student Living for Bishops

Bishops should be familiar with the Student Living Guidebook, particularly the following:

- Guiding Principles: Love, Shared Responsibility and Mutual Respect (pp. 1-4)
- “Becoming” through Student Living and the Parable of the Good Samaritan (pp. 5-7)
- Ward Implementation and Roles and Responsibilities (pp. 8-12)
  - Extending calls to Home Evening Coordinators and Group Leaders with a clear explanation of their specific responsibilities is paramount to their initial and long-term success.
  - Home Evening Coordinators train Group Leaders on a regular basis to prepare them to effectively facilitate Student Living lessons within their respective Home Evening groups.
  - Ward Council may determine which Student Living lessons should be taught in Home Evening throughout the course of the semester. These lessons could be aligned with the goals/spiritual emphases of the ward or stake.
  - Through Ward Council, Bishops may request reports of Home Evening attendance, the quality of the Student Living discussions, and the quality and frequency of the training to Coordinators and Group Leaders.

Bishops may find that all leadership positions within their respective wards may benefit from a practical study and application of the following principles:

Matthew 18 Principle
If thy brother trespass against thee  (1) go and tell it to him between thee and him alone; (2) if he will not hear thee, take with thee two or three more; (3) if he neglect to hear them, take it to the church (See Matt. 18:15-17).

Encourage students to take their concerns back to the source of conflict to work things out. This will not only help students learn important life skills for marriage, family, and work environments but will also spare the bishop time to work with more serious matters. If the problem persists, the bishop, EQ or RS president may help mediate.

Roommates Get Involved
“Don’t leave the wounded on the battlefield….if you reach out in a spirit of love and humility, you can help the spiritually wounded find the Savior.” (“Power of the Holy Temple,” Kim B. Clark, SLM p. 27).

Encourage students to get involved in the lives of their roommates and neighbors. If they know someone is struggling with discouragement, sin, or self-harm, they can speak up and refer for help when needed.

The Code of Silence
“The strategies of the enemy to deceive, attack, and distract are made even more effective if he can divide us from one another. Division comes in many forms – contention, disunity, gossip, back biting. But perhaps the most insidious is silence” (Power of the Holy Temple, Kim B. Clark, SLM p. 27).

Teach students not to turn a blind eye to attitudes and behaviors that are inconsistent with Personal Honor and the Honor Code.

“People of integrity will neither foster, nourish, embrace nor share a lie” (“Becoming Through Student Living”, Marvin J. Ashton, SLM p. 6).

Genuinely Concerned Neighbors
“We do not want an environment on this campus characterized by self-appointed, judgmental, and self-righteous spiritual vigilantes. We do want an environment on this campus where appropriately and genuinely concerned “neighbors” in the true scriptural sense of the word neighbor, would remind, help, and encourage us to consistently think, speak, and act in a way that invites the Spirit of the Holy Ghost among us” (In the Path of their Duty, David A. Bednar, SLM p. 22).

Building Zion
“We are trying to help students create little Zions in their apartment and Zion on the campus so that this will be a place where we will be of one mind and one heart where we will live in righteousness together and there will be no poor among us—no poor in spirit, no poor in love or support or of the resources they need to accomplish the Lord’s purposes” (President Clark, “Student Living.” BYU-Idaho Approved Housing Conference, Sept. 2, 2009; see Moses 7: 18).
Preparation for Marriage and Family
Lessons 6-12 focus on preparation for marriage and family and were designed at the request of President Clark in response to growing concerns over marital fidelity, abuse, divorce, as well as casualness in living the gospel. Single students may not be overly excited to discuss some of these topics, but the apartment represents an ideal environment for establishing patterns of conflict resolution, healthy relationships with others and living the gospel that will carry forward into the marriage relationship, future employment and service in the community and the church.

Ideas for Consideration/Application

- Call your Home Evening Coordinators early in the semester and quickly organize Home Evening groups.
- Coordinators are responsible for teaching and training Group Leaders on a monthly basis – both groups need to be functioning as early as possible – The first three weeks is ideal for meaningful patterns to be established in Home Evening.
- Invite Home Evening Coordinators to discuss in Ward Council which and how many of the 12 lessons will be taught in a given semester and make a plan at the beginning of the semester for when those will occur.
- Encourage Home Evening Coordinators to observe the teaching of Home Evening groups to be sure ward goals are being met and to give feedback to the Group Leaders. This can be a natural extension of their teaching and training sessions.
- Consider how the ward will assess the implementation, learning, and practice of Student Living principles in the lives of ward members.
- Annually, the Housing & Student Living Office conducts a Student Living survey. Survey results are organized by stake to measure students’ familiarity with and application of Student Living principles, observance of Personal Honor, and the quality of roommate relationships.
- Consider opportunities for Student Living principles to be taught. Although a model has been developed to teach these principles, you may find it appropriate for Student Living to be discussed in Sacrament meetings, EQ/RS lessons by the presidencies, auxiliary trainings, firesides, etc.

Additional Guidebooks Available
Each stake receives 50 guidebooks for Home Evening Coordinators which are managed by the High Councilor. Some stakes and wards have chosen to purchase additional Student Living guidebooks for each apartment. These guidebooks are available for a discounted rate through the Housing & Student Living Office at $3.50 each. In order for this to be effective, we recommend the following:

- To avoid inefficiency or waste, develop a purpose and plan for regular use of the guidebook. A PDF version of the guidebook is available online to print selections that the ward plans to use.
- Distribute and collect the guidebooks at the beginning and end of each semester so that they do not get thrown into the garbage by management or cleaning crews between semesters or donated to Deseret Industries.
- To accomplish the points above, you may consider inviting your Coordinators to visit each apartment to (1) introduce the guidebook; (2) get to know the members of the apartment; (3) share Home Evening group assignments; (4) bear testimony of the principles in the guidebook; and (5) extend an invitation and promise blessings.

Please contact Kriss Pond at 496-9229 or pondk@byui.edu if you have further questions.