

Children's Ministry Child Protection Policy

Christ Covenant Church

"Our children are worshippers who have an eternal destiny—either heaven or hell. God can use us as parents to help point them to Jesus. What an enormous privilege, but what weighty responsibility that is. Churches also have a responsibility to steward the gift of children. Several hours a week, parents entrust this very precious gift of children to churches—to watch over, instruct, and protect the kids under their care. Church workers then should consider the time spent with other people's children not as a burden, but as a great privilege and important responsibility." (Deepak Reju)

Protecting Children Before They Arrive

To ensure a safe environment for all children, every applicant who wishes to serve in children's ministry is required to submit a background check and attend childcare training before serving.

Screening Procedure

To ensure safe and quality care, Christ Covenant has established several criteria all caregivers must meet to work with our children:

- All caregivers must be members in good standing of Christ Covenant for at least six months
- All caregivers must be eighteen years of age or older. Youth who are at least eleven years old are welcome to assist (subject to the approval and direction of the Director of Children's Ministry), but they are always in addition to the adult caregivers.
- All caregivers must have completed childcare training.
- All reference checks must be satisfactorily completed. Criminal records checks and other appropriate screening checks may be completed, subject to the discretion of the associate pastor.

Training

All caregivers must attend childcare training before they are allowed to work with children. Additional training sessions will be scheduled for existing caregivers to update them on policies and procedures. Parents with questions about childcare training are welcome to attend these sessions.

Signing a Child in to Children's Ministry

Any parent who would like his child to participate in a children's ministry program will sign the child into the appropriate classroom, nursery, or activity when he arrives, granting permission for the child to participate in the event or program.

Allergy Policy

Classes frequently have snack times, and it is the parents responsibility to inform teachers and volunteers of allergy needs. When parents sign children in, volunteers should direct them to note any allergy needs in the space provided on the sign-in form.

Two Caregiver Rule

At least two qualified, adult caregivers must be present in each classroom at all times. We consider adults to be age eighteen and older. Youth who are at least eleven years old are welcome to assist (subject to the approval and direction of the Director of Children's Ministry), but they are always in addition to and supervised by the two adults. If at any time there is only one adult in the room, the class door must remain open to the hallway.

Restroom Procedure

For all class through fifth grade, any child needing to use the restroom shall go with another child of the same age and sex. If coming from the trailers into the main building, the children must be accompanied by an adult caregiver who will wait outside the closed restroom door until the children are finished. The children must wash their hands with soap and water, and then accompany the adult caregiver back to the classroom.

Appropriate Discipline

All children's ministry volunteers are responsible for providing a loving, respectful, and orderly atmosphere in which children can learn, play, and interact with others. This atmosphere should be maintained by preparing beforehand, proactively directing children towards acceptable activities, verbally encouraging positive behavior, and, when necessary, correcting or redirecting inappropriate behavior.

Acceptable means of redirecting inappropriate behavior include correcting the child verbally, withholding a certain privilege or activity for a brief time, or separating the child from the group for a brief time (particularly if his behavior is endangering or upsetting other children).

Children's ministry volunteers and staff members should never yell, spank, or hit a child. If behavior is uncontrollable or the child does not respond to the discipline measures above, ask the Director of Children's Ministry to call the parents.

Mandatory Reporting

According to North Carolina law, "Any person or institution who has cause to suspect that any juvenile is abused, neglected, or dependent...or has died as the result of maltreatment, shall report the case of that juvenile to the director of the department of social services in the county where the juvenile resides or is found. The report may be made orally, by telephone, or in writing" (G. S. 7B-310).

All children's ministry volunteers who have any such suspicion should immediately report their concern to the associate pastor who oversees children's ministry.

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