

CHRIST THE REDEEMER CHURCH CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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The Gospel of Mark records that when people brought little children to Jesus, he took them in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them. It is our desire to bring children to Jesus, too. Because we recognize that we are a reflection of God's love to those in our care, we take seriously our responsibility to them. The following guidelines are set forth to provide a safe and nurturing environment in which we can bring our children and youth to the Savior.

We view ourselves as partners with parents, seeking to provide safe, quality care and instruction in all our ministries. All of our guidelines are designed to protect and promote growth in God for each person involved. Everyone who teaches, helps or cares for others under the sponsorship of Christ The Redeemer, whether paid or volunteer, must follow these policies and procedures. Be aware that the document that follows represents minimum requirements. Individual programs may impose additional guidelines as appropriate to their ministry setting.

I. STAFFING GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

A. Screening Process

All volunteers working with children and youth (ages 0-18 years) on a regular basis should be regular attenders who have been attending Christ The Redeemer for at least six months (some exceptions granted on an individual basis by Pastor), have completed a Volunteer Profile Form and been approved by pastors or designated approval group. In addition, volunteers will go through a screening process, which shall include:

- Interview
- Reference Check
- Conviction/Criminal History Check
- Notification of Approval

B. Child Supervision

1. Children and youth should be under adult supervision during the scheduled ministry program time. Parents should be made aware of the time period during which the church is responsible for their children.
2. Two-deep leadership is essential. Teachers should serve in teams so that at least two workers are in the room at all times.
 - a. At least one adult (18+ years old) who has gone through the screening process should be in each room at all times.

C. Proper Display of Affection

Touch is essential in nurturing lives. Physical contact with children should be age and developmentally appropriate. Be aware of and sensitive to differences in

children's development, family backgrounds, individual personalities and special needs. The following guidelines will help promote pure, genuine and positive displays of God's love:

1. Hugs & Kisses: Younger children are especially affectionate. Use discretion in initiating full contact, body-to-body hugs. Kissing on the lips is inappropriate. One arm side hugs or hand-to-arm hugs are appropriate, especially for the older children/ students.

2. Lap Sitting: Appropriate sitting on laps may occur with younger children. Discourage lap sitting with older children. Rather, encourage them to sit next to you.

3. Casual Touch: Gentle contact during activities may be on children's heads, shoulders, arms and hands. Rough-housing and physical discipline should never be used.

D. Special Events/Overnights

1. Field Trips and Special Events

a. Church-sponsored off-campus activities must be pre-approved by the appropriate pastor. Parents will be notified at least one week prior to the outing.

b. Proper written consent and medical release forms are required for each child participating in off-campus activities (See Appendix E). These forms are available in the church office.

c. When transportation is involved in an activity, all drivers must have a valid driver's license and current automobile insurance. The number of persons per car should not exceed the number of seat belts.

2. Overnight Policy

a. All overnight activities must be pre-approved by the appropriate pastor.

b. No overnight activities for children younger than grade 3 will be allowed (except for parent/ child outings).

c. 1. Two-deep leadership is required.

2. One of the leaders should be an adult who has gone through the screening process. Each leader will be assigned a group of children that they will be responsible for during the duration of the overnight event.

II. DISCIPLINE POLICY

The Christian Education program desires to encourage, stimulate and foster the Christian growth of all participants. Because of this, students will not be allowed to disrupt the classroom and/or hinder the growth and learning of others. The purpose of discipline is not punishment for wrongdoing, but assistance in doing what is right. All interaction regarding discipline needs to carefully consider a child's dignity and fragile life. Physical punishment or intimidation will not be used.

III. SPECIAL CONCERNS IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY (Birth-6th Grade)

A. Nursery

— Rooms for children under age four use gates or Dutch doors to help keep children contained.

— Nursery changing tables are in full view.

* For additional information see Nursery policy

B. Drop-Off Policy

Children should never be dropped off in a classroom without at least two leaders present, one of which has gone through the screening process. Generally, supervision will be provided 10 minutes before a program starts.

C. Registration Policy

1. Programs for preschool-aged children provide a weekly sign-in sheet. Parents are required to complete the information requested.

2. Parents shall fill out a registration card for any child who attends any of the regular church programs (see Appendix D). These forms are available outside each classroom/nursery and the teacher will forward to the Department Coordinator.

3. Children should be registered and attend the class at their age, grade or development level.

D. Security System (Infants and Preschoolers)

1. All preschoolers will be issued either a security number or some sort of claim tag. The claim tag is used to release children back to their parents. The security number is used to call a parent from the sanctuary if necessary.
2. A child will be released only to the person with the child's security tag.
3. If the security tag is lost, verification of a person's identity will be needed before the child can be released. A supervisor, director, or Pastor will be responsible to verify an identity.
4. Parents are advised not to enter the nursery / classroom when picking up their child unless requested to do so.
5. All volunteers should wear an identifying nametag.

E. Child Release (Kindergarten-Third Grade)

In our kindergarten through third grade programs, we require that (custodial) parents or (immediate family) pick up their children at their classroom following any CTR program, unless the parent has authorized independent release of the child (see Appendix E).

G. Diaper Changing Policy

For information, see the Nursery Handbook (Appendix B).

H. Bathroom Policy

1. Preschoolers

If a classroom for preschoolers does not have a bathroom, an adult should escort a child / children to the hallway bathroom. The supervising adult should remain outside the bathroom door and then escort the child / children back to the classroom. If a child is taking longer than seems necessary, the supervising adult should open the bathroom door and call the child's name. If a child requires assistance, the supervising adult should prop open the bathroom door (using the garbage can) and leave the stall door open as the child is assisted.

Remember, a teacher should never be alone with a child in a bathroom with the door closed or go into a bathroom stall with a child and shut the door.

2. Grade Schoolers

Any time a child is out of the classroom for any reason, he or she should be escorted or supervised by a teacher at all times. Teachers are required to keep track of any student in their care. Follow the guidelines outlined above for hallway bathroom use.

Parents are strongly encouraged to take their children to the bathroom prior to class.

IV. SPECIAL CONCERNS IN YOUTH MINISTRY (Junior High-Senior High)

A. Backrubs: Although backrubs may seem harmless, it is best to refrain from the practice so it is not misconstrued.

B. Dating: At no time shall anyone working with youth pursue a dating relationship with a student. Staff should always be sensitive to students with 'crushes.

C. Driving When a staff member (volunteer or paid) is driving students home, he/she should never be alone with a student of the opposite sex. Additionally, the driver must have a valid driver's license and current automobile insurance. The number of persons per car should not exceed the number of seat belts.

D. Lunches: One-on-one lunch appointments should be in public places with the parent's prior approval.

E. Open Door Policy: Leaders should refrain from meeting with youth one-on-one in a private, non-visible place. For everyone's protection, the door should be kept at least partially open if the room does not have a window and sight line into it.

V. OUR READY RESPONSE TO ABUSE WHICH OCCURS IN THE MINISTRY SETTING OF CHRIST THE REDEEMER AND TO ABUSE THAT OCCURS ELSEWHERE BUT OF WHICH WE ARE MADE AWARE

A. Suspicion of Abuse

Anyone working with children/youth (ages 0-18) in the ministries of Christ The Redeemer shall immediately report to a Pastor (Senior Pastor, Youth Pastor or Pastoral assistant –i.e. Robin Bowman) any suspicions of child abuse or neglect which may indicate a need for further investigation. It is not the responsibility of the reporting person nor the Pastor to substantiate any allegations or suspicions. Possible indications of abuse or neglect can include:

— pattern of injuries not typical for everyday childhood accidents (i.e., marks or bruises

on the back, buttocks or abdomen, symmetrical or patterned bites or bruises, skin

markings or welts in the shape of a hand, belt or rope)

— very poor hygiene or obvious lack of medical care

— sexual knowledge or speech not appropriate for the child's age

- overtly sexual behavior or demonstrations
- extreme reluctance to go to a particular place or be with a particular person
- withdrawal and depression
- allusion to incidents in writing or through prayer request

B. Confidentiality

At all times keep the information confidential. Do not pass the information on to anyone besides those who would need to know.

C. Communication with the Child/Student

Rather than a teacher observing signs of possible abuse, a child may approach a trusted adult with testimony of abuse. In such a case, be sure to take the child's word seriously. Listen attentively and calmly, reassuring the child that he/she is not at fault and was right in telling you about the problem. Do not promise the child you will not tell anyone.

D. Report Form

Immediately contact one of the Pastors. Together fill out a Suspicion of Child Abuse Report Form (see Appendix G).

E. Summary of Steps

1. Gently affirm the child.
2. Report to the appropriate director of ministry.
3. Immediately fill out report form with the director of ministry.

F. Assessing the Report

The Pastor will make every effort to make an assessment within 24 hours of the report. A review committee may also assist in assessing the report.

If after the review it is determined that the investigation should continue, the Vestry will be immediately informed. The Vestry, the Pastors and the review committee will determine how best to proceed.

VII. CONTINUING THE INVESTIGATION - RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS

A. Initial Response (The following steps should be handled by the Pastoral Staff and/or the Vestry).

1. Document all your efforts at handling the incident.
2. Report the incident to the church's insurance company and lawyer.
3. Notify the parents.
4. Report the incident to the proper authorities.
5. Notify the accused after the safety of the child is secured.
6. Appoint a spokesperson.
7. Prepare a public statement to answer the media and to convey the news to the congregation.

B. Responding to Alleged Victim

1. Do not minimize or deny the allegation or assess blame.
2. Assure victim that the church is taking allegations seriously.
3. Make sure the care and safety of the victim is the first priority.
4. Provide ongoing support and assurance of acceptance to victim and the victim's family.
5. Help the family find professional counseling if wanted.
6. Commit to helping the victim and the family toward full restoration.

C. Responding to Alleged Perpetrator

1. Treat the accused with dignity and support.

2. Remove the leader immediately from his/her position until the investigation is finished.

3. Put in place a process of healing and restoration.

4. Future restoration to church fellowship should be handled with great care, taking the feelings of the victim and the victim's family into consideration.

5. If the accused confessor is convicted, concern and support should be given, with the goal of forgiveness and restoration. However, no convicted child abuser should ever be placed in a position to work with children or youth. Other appropriate places of service should be encouraged.

Protection Policy Sources:

Better Safe Than Sued by Jack Crabtree. Loveland, CO: Group, 1998.

The Focus on the Family Complete Book of Baby and Child Care by The Focus on the Family Physicians Resource Council. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1997.

It Should Never Happen Here by Ernest J. Zarra III. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1997.

Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church by Richard Hammar, Steven Klipowicz, and James Cobble. Matthews, NC: Christian Ministry Resources, 1993.

When Child Abuse Comes to Church by Bill Anderson. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1992. Facing the Issue of Child Sexual Abuse in the Church by Christian Service Brigade.

Christ the Redeemer

Nursery Guidelines

Thank you for volunteering for the nursery; your help is very much appreciated.

Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with the following. Many of these address problems we don't have at the moment, but are issues that could arise for us in the future. Changes and additions will be made as necessary. One of the keys to keeping the nursery running smoothly will be good communication between all of us who volunteer our time. If you had a problem you didn't know how to handle or found a system that seems to work well for something please share it with the rest of us and please don't hesitate to contact Shiona or Tricia with any concerns!

Nursery Aims

1. To provide a clean, safe and attractive place with loving care for the littlest members and visitors of our church. Parents are better able to focus on their learning and growth if they feel their children are safe and being well looked after. We should do everything we can to make the nursery a place where children want to be.
2. To teach children that God made them and God loves them. We are working toward providing more than just "babysitting" for the older members of our age group by providing "Sunday school" classes for 2-3's (Squirrels) and 4-5's (Beavers).

Responsibilities

ALL nursery team

- Arrive 15 — 20 minutes before the service begins. Please make sure the members responsible for set-up have brought all of the supplies round to the nursery.
- When you arrive, please be sure your hands are clean, put on a name tag.
- An incident booklet is provided to help you record anything you think parents or coordinators should know. This may be anything from a diaper change to a biting incident.
- It is our responsibility to have the toys and supplies packed away, but the cart will be taken round to the storage room for you.

- If you can't make your turn it is your responsibility to arrange for someone else to swap with you but please let Shiona know as well.

Team leader

- Greet parents and check each child in to the nursery.
- Once nursery is underway, check that the number of children matches the register card.
- Ensure staffing levels are adequate (1 team member to 2 children ages 0-1, 1 team member to 5 children ages 2-5).
- At 10.30 register the kindergarten kids that arrive and check out any going into the service. Ensure the children and the register match up.
- Once the service is over do not allow any child to leave until their parent/guardian with the correct number tag arrives to take care of their child. Give out crafts etc to parents.
- Ensure the rest of your team has tidied up and brought everything out to the cart.

Check-In Procedure

1. Greet parents, ask the parents to place nametag on child and wear matching wristband. Please double check numbers with parent.
2. For visitors and newcomers please have parents fill out a registration card and make a new badge or use a sticky badge. Use a spare number tag from the badge box or if making a new badge, allocate a new number and tag.

Check-Out Procedure

1. Anyone coming to collect a child MUST have the claim tag with the child's number. Unless the tag has been lost without a trace and you are absolutely certain that the person is a parent or relative, the child must not be released until a coordinator has been notified and is present. This is important for the children's safety, and helps "crowd control" at the door of the nursery.
2. Please check off children as they are picked up on the register card.
3. Please do not leave until all the children have been picked up. If a parent who is not a visitor is extremely delayed, please send someone to retrieve them. It is important for parents to be timely so that you at least have a chance to be in fellowship after the service. If it becomes an ongoing problem, please notify a coordinator.

Teachers

- If you are teaching that week, it is **your responsibility** to hand on the book to the next person on the list.
- During snack time the Squirrel teacher should set up for the lesson.
- After both lessons the craft work should be placed on the front desk.

Health and Hygiene

- Please be obsessive about keeping your hands clean. Hand sanitizer is in the supplies box, as are wipes, and the bathroom is convenient for messy jobs.
- Please label pacifiers, bottles and cups with masking tape and make every effort to prevent sharing of these items.
- If a child is admitted whose health raises concerns for you, please notify a coordinator.
- Any toys that have been chewed on should be placed in the sink when they are discarded by the child. At the end of the hour these toys should be washed or wiped down with the disinfectant wipes available, then returned to a clean toy bin.
- There is a first aid kit in the supply box for use when necessary. You are also within shouting distance of the service, where there are usually several people who are medically trained. Please don't hesitate to yell if you really need to!
- Diaper changing: Please change babies in cloth diapers at least once during the hour, the others should be changed as needed. Remember to wash your hands and disinfect the changing pad between children.

Aggressive Behavior

Redirection and “time outs” are probably the most appropriate way to handle aggression in a nursery setting. Any cause for concern should be brought to the attention of a coordinator, who will follow up with parents involved.

Older Children as Helpers

Your own older children are welcome to help on your assigned day with your permission and guidance. However, other older children should only be allowed to assist if their parents are willing to help as well and be present for supervision.

Safety

- Please be sure you are identified with a nametag when you work in the nursery.
- Be sure to double check ID numbers and do not release children to anyone without a claim tag.
- Safety concerns specific to our current location include the furniture and equipment already in the room. Please close the door of the bathrooms and use the safety gate provided.
- If the children are using another room for a lesson, use the skipping rope for all the children and yourself to hold on to.
- Fire Evacuation: In the event of a fire the register should be picked up and taken outside with all the children and the register rechecked there, again children only given up to their parents / carers.
The fire escape route is down the stairs on the opposite side of the corridor to the nursery room. There are ones to the right and to the left depending on where the fire is. Note where the exits are next time you're there. The assembly point is the grassy area at the side of the front of the building. Parents may also come to their children in an emergency. When parents arrive, please tell them they are welcome to help but to please stay with the nursery staff with their child so that we are able to account for all the children once in a safe place.
- Nursery is a peanut free zone – do not bring anything with peanuts into the nursery (groundnut oil is the same as peanut oil). We have one child with a known peanut allergy.

Snacks

Shiona will provide these, put a selection from the snack box out onto two or three paper plates. Juice in the small cups or cups with lids provided.

Song time

Sing 'grace' before snack time

“Thankyou for the world so sweet
 Thankyou for the food we eat
 Thankyou for the birds that sing-a-ling-a-ling
 Thankyou God for everything
 Amen”

At song time keep going through the list, kids have a short attention span. All leaders to join in and encourage children to do the same. Vary standing, sitting, actions, instruments etc. between songs.