

Way Church Kid's Ministry Manual

Policies and Procedures

Way Church invites you on a journey as we disciple the next generation to know, follow, and love Jesus Christ. We place the highest priority on our children and desire to see the Word of God rooted deeply in their hearts and minds. We believe parents are the primary spiritual trainers and that discipleship starts in the home. Therefore, it is our desire to come alongside parents in their increasingly significant role of raising their child(ren) in the way of Jesus. It is our prayer to form a strategic partnership and for the church to be a safe, fun, enlightening place where kids connect to the body of Christ, grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ, and be transformed by the gospel. For Way Church to have an effective ministry, our program must provide a safe environment. Therefore, policies and procedures are an important part of our children's ministry.

Volunteer Expectations

- Volunteers will be required to submit a background check.
- Volunteers will be required to complete initial training while serving and ongoing training as determined by the family minister on staff.
- Volunteers will be given a lanyard to wear to be easily identified while serving.
- Volunteers should report directly to their assigned location 25 minutes prior to the start of service to help set up rooms, finalize preparations, and to prepare the materials for the curriculum.
- Volunteers are expected to arrive ready to serve families and monitor children.

Secure Check-In and Check-Out Process

- Children must be checked into the system before entering the classrooms.
- All children must check in and receive an ID sticker that corresponds with the parent's sticker. The parent's matching sticker is required to pick up their children at dismissal.

- For new families, the family minister on staff will enter their information into our system, making sure we have emergency contact information. All parents will be asked if a child has any allergies or special concerns. If so, this will be entered into the system and printed on the child's nametag.
- A parent or guardian who is picking up a child must present the security tag that corresponds with the code on the child's tag. Volunteers will ensure the tags match before releasing the child.
- Upon releasing the child, volunteers will collect the child's sticker and place it on their classroom's check-in/check-out sheet. Doing so creates an exchange of custody from volunteers to parents. This step provides a reminder to ensure that volunteers are checking tags.
- If a parent loses a security tag, the volunteer should not release the child. The parent must first complete an I.D. check with a volunteer or the family minister on staff. Only release a child after matching the name on the I.D. with the child's parent(s) name on file.

Child Safety

- No adult may be alone with only one child at any time. There should always be at least a 2:1 ratio of adults to child(ren). An adult should never be with a child 1:1 under any circumstances.
- No sitting on laps for students 8 years of age or older.

Reporting of Suspected Abuse

- If you have reason to suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, please report to the family minister on staff as soon as possible before leaving the church.
- All information you receive that is of medical, privileged, confidential, or non-public nature may not be disclosed to an outside party without proper authorization from the parents.

Bathroom Policy

- We encourage parents to have their children use the bathroom before dropping them off to minimize bathroom trips as much as possible.

- All toilet assistance and bathroom trips will be done in the presence of two adults. No adult is ever left alone with a child.
- Children that aren't completely potty trained need to be wearing a diaper to reduce accidents.
- When assisting in the restroom, the restroom door must be open.

Diaper Changing Policy

- Male or female volunteers are allowed to change diapers.
- Collect child's diaper from diaper bag (extra diapers will be available in the classroom if none are provided).
- Spread wax paper onto the changing station.
- Make sure the child is secure (never leave a child at the changing table unattended).
- Use disposable gloves while changing diapers and disposing of used diapers and wax paper.
- Wash hands after removing disposable gloves from each diaper change.

Sickness Policy

To keep a healthy environment for all children, we ask that children be kept at home if they have any of the following symptoms:

- A fever (currently or within the last 24 hours)
- Uncontrolled cough or sore throat
- Runny nose with any colored discharge
- Questionable rashes, impetigo, ringworm, or mouth sores
- Diarrhea or vomiting currently or within the last 24 hours
- Active chicken pox, measles, or mumps
- Head lice
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Difficulty breathing or wheezing
- Severe itching

- Medications must be administered for at least 24 hours for a previously ill child

Basic First Aid/CPR/AED

- A basic first aid kit will be in each classroom's supply bin. If children injure themselves while under our care causing any sort of bruise, cut, or visible mark, volunteers should fill out an Incident Report Form. This allows the parents to understand where a mark came from and keeps everyone informed.

Discipline and Consequences

- Discipline is never to be administered through any type of physical punishment. A volunteer should never touch a child in anger or in any way to inflict punishment. Inappropriate or disrespectful behavior will be reflected by the child's point chart. All children will be respectful and can earn points to trade in for rewards by attending children's ministry, stating memory verses each week and having good behavior each service.
- If a child is inconsolable, injured, ill, (or any other circumstance), parents will be texted using the number provided at check-in and asked to come and attend to their child.
- If parents know their child might have an issue that morning, we encourage them to sit in the back so they can slip out easily or be found if they do not receive the text.

Nut-Free Zone/Snack Time

- No food containing peanuts or tree nuts will be given in the classrooms.
- Special care must be given to ensure children are safe from food allergens. As a result, outside snacks must be pre-approved by the family minister on staff. This does not include infant bottles. Infants may be given bottles or cups of milk, juice, or water when parents provide these items and instructions.
- A snack is served in all our preschool and elementary classes. Volunteers should always check for an allergy alert, which will be noted on the child's sticker.

Security/Emergency Action Plans

- If a suspicious person enters the facility and poses a threat, please close and lock your classroom door.
- Move a heavy object in front of the door, turn off lights, and move children to an area of the room not visible from windows.
- Stay in that place there until you receive further instructions from the family minister on staff. The adult(s) in charge will make the decision if running, hiding or fighting back is the best decision to keep the children safe. Any decision will be supported by the church so volunteers are not hesitant in making a split-second decision.

Natural Disaster Action Plan

- In the event of a fire, remain calm, count all the children in the room, and lead the children out of the room in an organized and quick fashion. Make an effort to grab the check-in/check-out sheet to take roll after reaching the meeting place.
- Recount the children when you reach your destination.
- Evacuation will be carried out if a fire alarm is triggered or when fire or smoke is seen.
- Parents may wait with their child but may not take them unless they are checking out. As always, match the security numbers or check parent I.D.'s if they have lost their security tag.
- Wait outside until you are instructed to return to the classroom. Recount the children once back in the classroom.
- Fire and Tornado escape plans are posted in each classroom so the volunteers know where to meet with the children.

Age Breakdowns

- Nursery: birth–2 years old
- Preschool: 3–5 years old
- Elementary: 6–10 years old

Expected Volunteer Ratios

(Maximum number of children per volunteer, minimum of two volunteers per room required)

- Nursery: 1 volunteer to 2 children
- Preschool: 1 volunteer to 5 children
- Elementary: 1 volunteer to 10 children