



Hixson Presbyterian Church Children's Ministry Policies and Procedures

The pastors, staff, and session want to make every effort to ensure that this ministry will glorify God in every detail. To do this, we must try to make each child feel comfortable, loved, and secure. This document contains our policies and procedures to ensure that is the case.

HEALTHY CHILDREN POLICIES

Illness, Hygiene, and Injury:

1. We kindly ask the parents to refrain from bringing their child if they have had fever, vomiting, or diarrhea in the past 24 hours without any anti-fever medication such as acetaminophen or Ibuprofen. We ask staff to do the same.
2. A parent will be contacted when a child develops any of the following symptoms while under our care: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, colored runny nose, excessive coughing, excessive crying, unusual rash, unusual tiredness, pink irritated eyes, or if child is simply not acting like usual self. If there is any question or concern about a child's health status, the parent will be referred to the Children's Ministry Director.
3. Allergies can often present symptoms similar to colds, pink eye, and other viruses. We will be sensitive to parents' claims in these cases.
4. All families are required to designate allergies and special medical information. If special precautions need to be taken, such as keeping an epinephrine autoinjector onsite, the Children's Ministry Director will handle it on a case by case basis.
5. Smokers are respectfully asked wear an additional layer of clothing or smock when handling infants/toddlers.
6. Hand washing is the best way to protect both child and caregiver. Staff members will always wash hands upon arrival, after bathroom use, diaper changes, etc. They will also instruct the children in proper hand washing. Hand sanitizer will also be used as needed.
7. If a child is injured, a parent will be contacted by the Children's Ministry Director.
8. Incident reports will be filed on things that are beyond incidental bumps and scrapes. A parent will be contacted by the Children's Ministry Director if this occurs. Examples include, but are not limited to, bumps to the head, cuts that bleed enough to need a bandage, biting, hitting, etc.
9. When an injury is the result of another child (biting/hitting), the name of the child who inflicted the harm will never be revealed by our staff. An incident form will be placed on file and those parents contacted confidentially. We will also evaluate the situation and take extra steps to reduce the risk of it happening again.

Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Procedures: In accordance with the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens standard, all precautions will be observed at this facility in order to prevent contact with blood and other potentially infectious materials.

1. Identify tasks that have the potential of exposure. These include, but are not limited to, treating nose bleeds, First Aid, laundry, changing diapers and soiled underwear, and assisting a child who has vomited.
2. All blood and other potentially infectious materials will be treated as infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source material.
3. Disposable gloves will be available and used.
4. All garments soiled with blood will be bagged and removed from the classroom. Blood and other bodily fluids will be cleaned up immediately or as soon as feasible.

Food Allergies: The entire HPC children's wing is a peanut and tree nut free facility.

1. No peanuts, tree nuts, products that contain peanuts or tree nuts, or products that were processed in a facility that also processes peanuts or tree nuts will be served to the children by HPC.
2. No peanuts, tree nuts, peanut products, or tree nut products are allowed anywhere in the HPC children's classrooms, check-in stations, or playground during any time.
3. Food brought in for special events will be strictly regulated by the Children's Ministry Director. Food will not be served if it cannot be guaranteed peanut and tree nut free. All labels must be saved and referenced.
4. If a child has any food allergy as stated in their file, the Children's Ministry Director will inform all staff and decide on a case by case basis on how to proceed.
5. If a staff or volunteer has eaten any such products prior to arrival, they will be asked to thoroughly wash their hands and face.

Diaper Changing Procedures

1. Staff will always wear disposable gloves. A new set of gloves is required for each diaper changed. A box of gloves is available at each diaper changing station.
2. All diapers should only be changed on a diaper changing station.
3. Before changing a diaper, staff will wash hands and wipe down changing pad.
4. Staff will gather all supplies needed (diaper, gloves, etc.) before placing a child on the changing station.
5. A child will never be left unattended on a diaper changing station at any time.
6. Dirty diapers will be placed ONLY in the "diapers only" covered trash can.
7. Gloves will be removed by rolling inside out, so that any residue remains inside them.

Potty Use / Potty Training Procedures

1. Our staff will never insist that a child use the potty until the parent has made a request. This should occur following a period of potty training at home.
2. Our staff will be sensitive when assisting children with use of potty, honoring the child's request for privacy or for help.
3. Our staff will wear gloves when a child needs lots of assistance.
4. Our staff will instruct children in proper bathroom hygiene such as wiping, flushing, and washing of hands.
5. A staff member will never be out of eye or ear shot of another adult when assisting a child in the potty. For example, they will never go alone into the bathroom with a child and close both the bathroom door and stall door.

Head Lice Policy

1. If head lice is discovered while the child is attending the Day School, a parent will be contacted and asked to pick up the child. The child may return to school once all lice and nits have been removed. In cases of children with long hair, we ask that hair be worn in a bun or braids for one week following treatment.
2. Parents of other children in that class will be notified that head lice was discovered, and will be advised to check their child thoroughly.

SECURE CHILDREN POLICIES

Drop off/Pick-up Procedures

1. Using one of two centralized stations, parents will check-in their child(ren) for ministry events.
2. If a returning family, their information will already be in the system and they will simply mark their children present. Adhesive nametags will print out for the children to wear. Parents will have a pick-up stub/sticker to keep with them to present at pick-up.
3. Upon reaching the classroom, the parent and child will be greeted and diaper bags, etc taken. No additional check-in will happen at the room.
4. If a new family, a parent will fill out a card with basic information to be taken to the classroom and given to the teacher. A handwritten sticker nametag will be placed on the child, while the parents retains the stub for secure pickup.
5. NOONE without a pick-up stub may leave with a child. If a stub is lost, ask them to see the children's welcome desk to obtain a new one. Staff at the welcome desk will work it out with them and present them with a new stub as long as they are an approved person to pick up.
6. Siblings must be 16 years of age to pick up and must have a stub with them.

Supervision and Care

1. A classroom of children will never be left unattended.
2. Accountability and adherence to the ratios outlined in the Child Protection Policy will always be upheld.
3. If a child cries for an unreasonable amount of time, the Children's Ministry Director will contact a parent.
4. Children will be instructed to play appropriately with toys and to use resources wisely.
5. Damages, broken, or dangerous toys and equipment will be removed from the classroom.

Photo/Video Policy

Only designated staff are allowed to take photos and videos of the children and only for reasons outlined in the signed parent agreement. Individual staff members are not allowed to take photos/video of the children nor are they allowed to post them online (website, social media). In addition, staff members are not permitted to make comment or elude to any child and/or their behavior on or off social media.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

The mission of HPC in situations where discipline is necessary is best accomplished when there is a clear understanding of the importance of the home/church partnership as well as the creation/sin/forgiveness/redemption mindset. Our goal is to help children learn and grow from their mistakes, understand that we are all sinners, and with God's help, we can work towards making the right choices.

As we seek to love God, love each other and love the world, we must consider how our actions affect others and the community. When discipline is necessary, we will work with the child and their family to help grow and learn from the inappropriate behavior, as well as others who were affected by their choices.

CODE OF CONDUCT: At the beginning of a new season, children will be taught the Code of Conduct. All children will have the Code of Conduct reinforced throughout the year by their teacher in an age-appropriate manner.

Love and Obey God

- I will speak of God in respectful ways.
- I will respect myself because God created me in His Image.
- I will be respectful in the words I use and how I use my body.
- I will obey adults who are leading and teaching me.

Love Others

- I will be respectful of others and I will not hurt others
- I will interact with others using kind words and not resort to name calling, swearing or inappropriate language toward each other.
- I will respect other's things and use it only with permission.
- I will include others in work and play.
- I will respect everyone by remembering "no touching except for helping."
- I will learn to apologize and ask for forgiveness when I mess up and seek God's help to learn from my mistakes.

Be a Caretaker

- I will take care of church property. This includes furniture, books, equipment, sporting equipment and the building.
- I will tell an adult about any damage done.
- I will help keep the church clean inside and out.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Consequences Used

- Consequences should match the problem behavior (i.e. if a child uses scissors to cut paper and throws it all over the floor, their consequence would be to pick up their mess and then try the scissor activity again using the appropriate behavior modeled by the teacher).
- Positive reinforcement for when rules are followed.
- Calm Down Area will allow a child to decompress, evaluate their choices, and calm down before they return to their work or play.
- HPC personnel will not use corporal punishment at any time. It is unacceptable for any staff or volunteer to use any form of physical discipline.

Repeated Minor Offenses:

- After three related offenses which a teacher has attempted to handle, misbehavior will be reported to the Children's Ministry Director as well as the parents.
- The Children's Ministry Director will work with the teacher and parent on behavior strategies.

Major Offenses:

Major offenses should be IMMEDIATELY reported to the Children's Ministry Director, who will immediately get the parent. These include but are not limited to:

- Physical aggression toward self or others (hitting, biting, etc)
- Throwing objects, overturning furniture or other tantrum behavior that could result in physical harm
- Direct defiance/non-compliance toward any adult
- Destruction and/or vandalism of church or personal property
- Possession and/or distribution of illegal items and substances
- Use of profanity
- Use of an object as a weapon (including items meant for craft/play purposes which could be used as a weapon)
- Attempts to leave church property

STAFF POLICIES

Cell Phone Policy

The main link in the emergency communication plan are cell phones. For this reason, staff will keep their phones on them, on vibrate. There is absolutely no reason for a staff person to be using their phone unless it is an emergency. Emergencies do not happen every day so it should not be a regular occurrence while supervising children.

Required training

A thorough training on the following will take place annually or upon hiring: Policies and Procedures, Emergency Procedures and Crisis Management Plan, Child Protection Plan, Curriculum, current trends and issues, meeting special needs, and other current trends and issues as needed.

Care of Space and Equipment

1. Classrooms will be well-stocked with essential items (Lysol, hand sanitizer, wipes, gloves, etc.)
2. Toys and equipment will be stored in a safe and organized manner
3. Toys, equipment, light switches, surfaces etc. will be sprayed or wiped with disinfectant after each event
4. Any item that finds its way into a child's mouth will be placed in the "Yuck Bucket" to be disinfected at the end of the day.
5. Broken or damaged toys and equipment will be removed until repaired or replaced.

Personal Guidelines-Nursery Staff

1. Staff will arrive on time, be prepared and stocked for the day.
2. Staff will dress appropriately to allow freedom to interact with children. Staff can choose to wear the Hixson Pres Kids T-Shirt or a smock each week. When working with older preschoolers, a nametag is required. Please give special attention to necklines and waistlines as they can shift while bending down, picking up children, etc. Shoes or special coverings for footwear (infant/toddler room) are required.
3. Staff conduct and conversation should always honor God.
4. If staff members need to be absent contact with the Children's Ministry Director needs to happen in a timely and reasonable manner.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

1. Fire

Communication system: Fire alarm, cell phones

Leader responsibilities: Call 911, ensure the evacuation plan is being followed, and communicate with parents as needed.

Teacher/Volunteer responsibilities: Guide participants to the designated meeting area, account for all participants, keep them as calm as possible, prohibit any outside communication concerning the event.

Designated areas are as follows: Pavilion, far end of the parking lot, or far away with a fire break if possible

2. Tornado

Communication system: Cell phones

Leader responsibilities: Direct participants to the nearest secure place when possible. Ensure the plan is being followed, and communicate with parents as needed.

Teacher/Volunteer responsibilities: Guide participants to the nearest shelter area. account for all participants, keep them as calm as possible, and prohibit any outside communication concerning the event.

Shelter areas include interior hallways and bathrooms.

3. Severe Thunderstorm

Communication system: Cell phones

Leader responsibilities: Stay informed via phone, tv, etc of changing weather conditions, determine and inform teachers/leaders of safe activities to pursue, and communicate with parents as needed.

Teacher/Volunteer responsibilities: Close doors and windows. Keep participants indoors, away from windows and doors, and accounted for. Stay aware of communication on changing weather conditions. Prohibit any outside communication concerning the event.

4. Earthquake

Communication system: no warning

Leader responsibilities: Try to direct participants to a safe position and communicate with parents as needed.

Teacher/Volunteer responsibilities: Try to direct participants to a safe position and prohibit any outside communication concerning the event.

5. Evacuation

Communication system: Cell phones

Leader responsibilities: Contact appropriate emergency services. Inform teachers/leaders that it will take place and ensure they know the safest route and designated meeting area. Communicate with parents as needed.

Teacher/Volunteer responsibilities: Guide participants to the designated meeting area using the safest route, account for all participants, keep them as calm as possible, prohibit any outside communication concerning the event.

6. Active shooter in the area

Communication system: Cell phones

Leader responsibilities: Stay informed and be subscribed to an outlet of local information of this nature. Inform teachers/leaders in a discreet manner and institute lockdown procedure when necessary. The Children's Ministry Director will communicate with parents as needed.

Teacher/Volunteer responsibilities: Guide participants to the proper place for lockdown, account for all participants, keep them as calm as possible, prohibit any outside communication concerning the event.

7. Active shooter in the building

Communication system: Cell phones

Leader responsibilities: Direct participants to flee out of the building and to the designated meeting place. Assist small children and whenever able, call 911. Communicate with parents as soon as possible.

Teacher/Volunteer responsibilities: Direct participants to flee out of the building and to the designated meeting place. Account for all participants, keep them as calm as possible, and prohibit any outside communication concerning the event.

8. Lockdown procedure

Communication system: Cell phones

Leader responsibilities: Ensure all outside doors are closed and locked, turn off lights in main hallways, etc. Stay informed of the situation and make the call on how to proceed as things change.

Teacher/Volunteer responsibilities: Move programming/activities to an interior classroom. Lock interior doors, close windows/blinds, doors, continue with programming as much as possible and as safe to do. Keep participants as calm as possible and prohibit any outside communication concerning the event.

9. Missing person procedures

(On church property) Teacher/Volunteer searches the immediate area for a reasonable amount of time asking other teachers/participants for information. Notify the leader and they will help search for another reasonable amount of time. The leader will make the call when necessary to have all teachers/volunteers gather their participants in one location and conduct a head count. A systematic search using other church staff and leaders will be done of the surrounding areas for a reasonable amount of time. The leader will contact the appropriate local authorities if deemed necessary as well as contact the parents. Teachers/Volunteers will keep other participants calm and prohibit any outside communication concerning the event.

(Off church property) As the nature of the activity allows, the on-church property procedures will be followed. If the nature of the activity does not lend itself to a search party being formed (ie a rafting trip), the leaders of that activity will be informed and their procedures followed. The leader will contact appropriate church staff and parents if needed. Teachers/Volunteers will keep other participants calm and prohibit any outside communication concerning the event.

Emergency Response Plan

In the event of a serious injury, natural disaster, fatal incident, the procedures will be as follows as much as possible and reasonable:

1. Leader will call 911 and ensure proper emergency services are responding.
2. Teachers/Volunteers will attempt to get participants to a safe location, accounted for, and calm. They will keep the participants as calm as possible and prohibit any outside communication about the event. Those trained in CPR/First Aid will triage and meet needs as best as they can and can stay safe doing so until emergency services arrive.
3. Leader will contact parents and appropriate church staff.
4. If participant(s) are in need to being transported to an emergency health facility and parents are not on site, the leader will determine who accompanies them with medical release in hand.
5. The leader will ensure that only one appointed person will handle all correspondence with the media and anyone else seeking information.
6. The leader will cooperate fully with authorities to determine cause and preventability when applicable.
7. Following the event and when applicable, go through these steps to address the incident:
 - a. Collect and review information using an incident report form filled out by all witnesses
 - b. Appropriate church leadership will use findings to address areas of concern, such as policy and procedure, and initiate changes as deemed necessary.
 - c. If involved with an activity off campus and if negligence on the part of a recreational facility is suspected, discuss at length with the appropriate church leadership and church's legal counsel.