

807 KIDS

JOHN 14:6

INFO PACKET

LCC CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Lakeview Christian Center’s Children’s Ministry

PROCEDURES & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

*This policy sets forth our ministry procedures and child protection policies.
The specifications of this policy apply to all LCC Children’s Ministry activities
occurring whenever childcare is provided.*

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LCC Children's Ministry Profile

LCC KIDS

Our Sunday morning ministry for children
ages 6 months through eleven.

Royal Rangers & Missionettes

A Christ-centered, Bible-based scouting program
for boys (Royal Rangers) and girls (Missionettes)
K through 8th grade.

Alpha Kids

A ten week program, corresponding to the Alpha Course,
providing childcare and instruction on the basics of the Gospel
in a fun and interactive environment.

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MISSION

The mission of our LCC Children's Ministry is to assist parents in their calling to train their children in the knowledge of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). We believe that ministry to the next generation is vital for accomplishing God's commission to the church to make and teach disciples (Matt. 28:19).

We believe that children are a wonderful blessing from the Lord, so it is our desire to create a safe, loving, fun, and orderly environment in which the children entrusted to our care are able to learn about the character of God, discover biblical truth, experience the power of the Gospel, and find out how to be followers of Jesus Christ.

LCC Children's Ministry Volunteer Expectations

We take our responsibility to care for children very seriously. The guidelines that follow in this booklet are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which children can grow in a relationship with Jesus Christ.

The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for LCC volunteers and staff members. Our policies are intended to help to protect children, our volunteers, and the mission of the church.

Here are our basic expectations for those who serve children:

1. Loving the children as Christ loves them.
2. Setting an example of proper Christian conduct in the way we live our lives.
3. Ministering to the children according to the gifts that God has given you.
4. Understanding that the care of children is not a right, but a privilege; and this privilege involves responsibilities to God for ministering to and protecting the children.

Child Protection Policies

1. All volunteers and staff must go through the LCC Children's Ministry Screening Process (described in the next section).
2. Make use of scheduling procedures and caregiver/child ratios that optimize safety.
3. Equip each room with a First-Aid Kit.
4. Educate our volunteers about recognizing child abuse and require them to report any known or suspected abuse to the LCC Children's Ministry Director and/or to appropriate governmental authorities consistent with applicable laws.
5. Adhere to a Healthy Child Policy for admittance to LCC Children's Ministry.
6. LCC offers CPR training to all volunteers. LCC will have at least one volunteer who is trained in CPR available during Children's Ministry. Volunteers who are not trained in CPR are not permitted to administer CPR.

Protecting Children: Before They Arrive

Every applicant who wishes to serve in LCC Children's Ministry is required to go through a screening process.

SCREENING PROCEDURE

1. All volunteers must be in good standing with LCC for at least six months.
2. Youth who are at least fourteen years of age may serve in LCC Children's Ministry (subject to approval and direction of the Director and/or Coordinator of LCC Children's Ministry), but will always be supervised by an approved adult volunteer.
3. All volunteers must complete an Application for LCC Children's Ministry Volunteers.
4. All reference checks and criminal background checks are completed before volunteers begin serving in LCC Children's Ministry.
5. All records of screening procedures, including but not limited to the original application and any background checks, are kept confidential unless disclosure of information contained in the records is necessary to protect children or others who may be in danger of harm, or to obtain legal counsel regarding issues that may be raised by information in the records.
6. All adult volunteers must be interviewed by a pastor or member of the LCC Volunteer Screening Committee.
7. LCC requires all volunteers to go through this Screening Process and to read and agree with the policies in this document.

TRAINING

All adult volunteers are required to receive Sexual Abuse Awareness Training, provided by the church. This training will be renewed every two years. Additional training sessions will be scheduled periodically to update and equip our volunteers. Parents are welcome to attend these sessions.

Protecting Children: As They Arrive & Depart

1. On Sunday morning, the classes for ages 6 months through 3 years old are open at 9:45a and remain open throughout the service. Ages 4-11 attend the Sunday Celebration Service with their parent(s) or guardian(s) until they are dismissed (which usually occurs after Praise and Worship) into their age appropriate classes.
2. Each child in LCC Children's Ministry must be checked-in by a parent at the Child Check-in Station. Child check-in opens at 9:45a. A name tag will be printed for the child to wear, as well as a tag that the parent must have in order to pick up the child from LCC Children's Ministry. Additional tags may be printed to label any bags or belongings that accompany the child. There is a security code that is printed on the tag that the parent receives. Children are to remain in their classes until check-out. Should the child need his/her parents during church service, the child's assigned code will appear on the screen at the front of the auditorium. Parents should immediately report to the Check-In Station should their child's number appear on the display. Whenever an allergy notification is printed on a Child's check-in label the Check-in volunteer must highlight that label so that all LCC Children's Ministry volunteers would know to check the notification.
3. During Sunday morning services, an usher will be posted in the foyer near the entrance to the LCC Children's Ministry areas. He will be available to assist parents and help facilitate the flow of children into and out of the LCC Children's Ministry area.
4. Only approved LCC Children's Ministry volunteers are permitted to go beyond the Check-In Station in the LCC Children's Ministry area. We understand that parents sometimes want to accompany their children into a classroom. However, to ensure the safety of the children, we must insist that parents wait at the Check-In Station when dropping off and picking up their children. Visitors may be accompanied by an LCC Children's Ministry volunteer if they desire to see the Children's Ministry area. Visitors may be asked to wait until a volunteer is available.

Protecting Children: While They are in Our Care

TWO-CAREGIVER RULE

Two qualified adult volunteers must be present in each classroom at all times. Men, regardless of whether they are qualified volunteers, may not be present in a classroom with a student unless a qualified adult female volunteer is also present.

LCC Children's Ministry staff and volunteers are prohibited from being alone with an individual child in any room or building.

CHILD-TO-VOLUNTEER RATIOS

LCC is committed to providing adequate supervision in all Children's Ministry programs. In addition to always having two caregivers present, the following ratios will be maintained during children's classes and services:

Children ages 6 to 23 months

Two volunteers for every eight children

Children ages 2 to 3 years

Two volunteers for every twelve children

Children 4 to 5 years

Two volunteers for every eighteen children

Children 6 years old and up

Two volunteers for every twenty children.

DIAPER CHANGING & REST ROOM PROCEDURES

Parents are asked to take their children to the restroom prior to their class and/or the church service.

- **Diaper Changing**

Only female nursery worker's will change diapers, and this should be done in plain sight of other nursery workers. Children will never be left unattended on changing tables. Soiled diapers will be changed immediately. Children should be re-diapered and re-clothed immediately upon the completion of changing the diaper. Children should be changed on changing stations only.

The volunteer changing the diaper is required to wash her hands and wipe the changing table with disinfectant after each diaper change. As a service to parents, each child's diaper should be changed at least once before the church service is over.

- **Rest Room Procedure**

For children ages two and three years old, a female volunteer will take the child to the restroom located adjacent to the classroom. The volunteer will wait outside of the closed restroom door unless the child needs assistance. If the child needs assistance, the volunteer should seek out another worker to accompany her. Children and volunteers are required to wash their hands with soap and water before returning to the classroom.

Children ages 4-8 will use the restroom located adjacent to their classrooms during the scheduled restroom breaks. Ages 9-11 will be accompanied by a female volunteer to the restroom down the hall, always taking a trip with more than one child. The volunteer will leave the exterior bathroom door open and not accompany the children inside of the stalls.

Male volunteers are not permitted to accompany children inside a bathroom at any time.

APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINE

All LCC Children’s Ministry volunteers are responsible for providing a loving, respectful, and orderly atmosphere in which children can learn, play, and interact with others. Volunteers will be prepared before the start of each class or service, proactively direct children towards acceptable activities, verbally encourage positive behavior, and, when necessary, correct or redirect inappropriate behavior.

Volunteers deal with inappropriate behavior according to the guidelines set forth in the section entitled “Children’s Behavior in Church Meetings.” Children’s Ministry volunteers are not permitted to yell at, spank, or hit a child. No form of physical discipline is acceptable for this setting. If a child’s behavior is uncontrollable, the volunteers will alert the child’s parents (using the call system). Volunteers may request assistance from an usher if necessary to prevent harm to the child or others.

If children engage in aggressive behavior that is intended to harm others, including but not limited to fighting, biting, and/or yelling, volunteers witnessing the behavior are required to immediately notify the parents of each child involved in or affected by the behavior. The aggressor in the incidents will be removed from the class for the remainder of the time. If an aggressor has multiple incidents over a series of weeks, the parent will be required to sit in the class with the child until the aggressive behavior is satisfactorily dealt with. Volunteers are required to fill out an incident report describing the situation and turn it in to the LCC Children’s Ministry Coordinator.

MEDICINE AND FIRST AID

Volunteers are not permitted to administer any medication to any child. If a child needs medication, the child’s parent will be called, and the parent may administer the medication as he/she deems appropriate. All classrooms are equipped with basic first aid kits. Volunteers are familiar with their contents. If a child appears to require any medical attention, the volunteers will call the child’s parents. Volunteers are not permitted to administer medication. If necessary, the volunteers will call 911 for emergency medical care.

SNACKS

Snacks (typically Goldfish or Cheez-Its) and Drinks (Apple Juice & Water) are served to all children ages two and up in their class rooms. Upon check-in, a parent or guardian must notify the Check-In Station if his/her child should not receive a snack or if the child has any food allergies.

Children ages six months to twenty-three months will be offered Cheerios. Any drink, such as milk, juice, or water must be provided by the parent in a bottle or sippy cup labeled with the child's name. Nursery volunteers are not permitted to mix formula or heat bottles. Volunteers are not permitted to spoon feed infants either, as this generally takes too much attention away from the other children.

APPROPRIATE STAFF & VOLUNTEER BEHAVIOR

Appropriate Physical Contact. Brief hugs, pats on the back, and other forms of appropriate physical affirmation between volunteers and children are generally acceptable in church settings. Physical contact should only take place in public view and should be for the benefit of the child, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden and should be immediately reported to a supervisor.

One-to-One Interaction with Children. Staff members and volunteers should never conduct one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interaction with children while participating in the LCC Children's Ministry programs. Another adult who has completed the LCC screening process should always be present.

Verbal Interactions. Verbal interactions between volunteers and children should be positive and uplifting. Staff and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children.

Intoxicants & Tobacco Use. While supervising children, staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the use of alcohol, tobacco,

any illegal drugs, or any substance that would impair their ability to responsibly care for children.

Nudity. Staff members and volunteers should never expose their private areas in the presence of children in their care. In the event that there is a situation that may call for the changing of clothes or showering (e.g., during a pool party or overnight retreat), staff or volunteers will submit a plan to the Children’s Ministry Director concerning arrangements.

Sexually Oriented Materials. Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials on church property or in the presence of children.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Along with sharing the Gospel and demonstrating the love of Christ we are committed to creating a safe environment for our children. This includes creating plans and procedures for emergency situations. Our prayer is that we never have to implement these procedures but we need to have a plan if these situations occur.

FIRE

The LCC Children’s area is its own fire zone; this means that if a fire occurs in the church outside the Children’s Ministry area there are 60 minutes to evacuate before the fire reaches our hallway/classrooms. We have many safety features in our area. The doors at the front of the hallway close to prevent the fire from entering the area, the sprinkler systems engage, we have our own exit, and the windows in the room are able to be broken.

If a fire does occur the following procedures will be followed by all volunteers:

1. *Remain calm.* We have time to get everyone safely out. Panic will cause confusion, fear, and will slow the process down.
2. *Line up.* Have all the children line up (younger children will use line-up ropes located in a storage cabinet in nursery) and do a quick head count. Teachers grab the emergency clip board with role sheet to make sure all children are accounted for once evacuated. Leave everything where it is. (Helpers check the bathrooms).

*Nursery workers will place all the babies in the cribs and roll them out the nearest exits.

3. *Walk through the nearest exit.* If fire is somewhere else in the building, we will file out the back doors. If fire is in the Children's Ministry area we will file out through the front of the hallway and out the glass doors in the foyer.

4. *Meet up and wait in the OMV parking lot.* All classes will walk over to the OMV building and sit in their class lines.

5. *Check Role.* Make sure all the children in your class are sitting in line.

6. *Wait for safe dismissal.* When we get word that we can dismiss, parents will have to sign out their children on the master role sheet.

The Check-in Team will assist in evacuation. One volunteer will go to the exit to hold the door and help people leave, and another will assist the nursery with the babies.

INTRUDER

If there is a situation where someone threatening arrives at the church with a gun, bomb, knife, etc., these are the procedures we will follow to help insure the safety of our children. We have radios in the area and cell phones, which allow for us to keep in contact with others throughout the building. If notified about an intruder, there are steps in place to help keep everyone safe:

1. *Lock the front doors to the hallway.* The doors lock from the outside so no one will be able to enter through those doors. The Children's Church Coordinator or member of the Check-in team will be responsible for this.

2. *Remain calm.* We have time to get everyone safely out. Panic will cause confusion, fear, and will slow the process down. Check-in teams will assess the situation to identify details.

IF INTRUDER HAS A BOMB:

3. *Line up.* A member from the Check-in team will notify the teachers about the situation. Teachers will have all the children line up and do a quick head count. Teachers will grab the role sheet to make sure all children are accounted for once evacuated. Leave everything where it is.

*nursery workers will place all the babies in the cribs and roll them out the nearest exits. (Helpers check bathrooms)

4. *Walk out the nearest exit and follow the fire procedures above.*

IF INTRUDER HAS A GUN, KNIFE, ETC.:

3. *Move to interior classes.* Teachers in the exterior classes will line up the children and move them across the hall to the interior classrooms.
4. *Wait until safe.*

WEATHER

If severe weather occurs during service, we will move all children from the outside classrooms (nursery, 3yr. olds, and 4 yr. olds.) across the halls to the interior classrooms. Children will line up along the inside wall and sit with their hands over their heads. Teachers will be responsible for keeping things calm and keeping children occupied until weather passes. Teachers can read books, sing songs, pray, etc. Check-in team will disperse among the classrooms to help teachers.

MEDICAL

Minor Issues: Each classroom is equipped with first aid kits for minor injuries. We will notify parents if something occurs during Children's Ministry and teachers will assist with injury until parent arrives.

Severe Issues: Should something more serious occur with a child during service there are a few procedures we will follow:

1. *Notify Leaders.* Teachers will notify Coordinator/Check-in team. Then they will tell the Administrator and the Medical team.
2. *Remove Child.* If possible, move the child to the hallway away from other children, which will also provide an area for teams to attend to the child.
3. *Call 911.*
4. *Put in Medical Code.* There are several nurses and doctors that attend LCC who have volunteered to be on the medical emergency team. The check-in team will enter the code MEDRX and members of the team will respond. The team will help to handle the situation or work until emergency response team arrives.
5. *Contact Parents.* The Security code of the child will be put on screen so that parents can respond as well.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

Child abuse is against the law and is a violation of human conscience and dignity. Lakeview Christian Center is committed to protecting children entrusted to our care from all forms of child abuse. We have **zero tolerance for abuse** in ministry programs and activities. Part of providing protection is reporting suspected child abuse to the appropriate law enforcement agencies. Lakeview Christian Center will report all instances of suspected child abuse and/or neglect that are detected by LCC Children's Ministry volunteers and/or the pastoral staff. Please note that even when there is a reasonable suspicion of child abuse, a report will be made.

DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE

The Louisiana Children's Code provides the following definitions of abuse and neglect:

"Abuse" means any of the following acts which seriously endanger the physical, mental, or emotional health and safety of the child:

- *The infliction, attempted infliction, or as a result of inadequate supervision, the allowance of the infliction or attempted infliction of physical or mental injury upon the child by a parent or any other person.*
- *The exploitation or overwork of a child by a parent or any other person.*
- *The involvement of the child in any sexual act with a parent or any other person, or the aiding or toleration by the parent or the caretaker of the child's sexual involvement with any other person or of the child's involvement in pornographic displays, or any other involvement of a child in sexual activity constituting a crime under the laws of this state.*

"Neglect" means the unreasonable refusal or failure of a parent or caretaker to supply the child with necessary food, clothing, shelter, care,

treatment, or counseling for injury, illness, or condition of the child, as a result of which the child's physical, mental, or emotional health and safety is substantially threatened or impaired.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING POLICY

All Children's Ministry applicants are required to familiarize themselves with our reporting procedures and agree to practice them before they serve in this ministry. In the event that staff or volunteers observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e., policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor-role modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) or "grooming" behavior (as described the in Sexual Abuse Awareness Training), it is their responsibility to immediately report their observations to the Children's Ministry Coordinator or Director.

When reporting suspected child abuse or neglect, the volunteers are asked to provide the following information to the extent it is known:

1. The names and addresses of the child and the parents or other persons responsible for the care of the child, if known.
2. Where the suspected abuse occurred.
3. The age and gender of the subjects of the report.
4. The nature and extent of the suspected child abuse.
5. The name and relationship of the person or persons responsible causing the suspected abuse.
6. The name of the person making the report and where the person can be contacted.
7. Any actions taken by the reporting person.

ENFORCEMENT OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

LCC staff members and volunteers who supervise others are charged with the diligent enforcement of all LCC Children's Ministry policies, especially the Child Protection Policy.

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATING POLICIES

We are so grateful for our Children’s Ministry volunteers, who serve faithfully to care for and instruct children. This setting is not always easy, and there are occasions where quick decisions or unhelpful responses are made that do not follow our classroom procedures. In these events, the volunteer will be redirected and encouraged toward practices that support our values and mission.

However, we take our Child Protection Policy very seriously. If an LCC Children’s Ministry Volunteer fails to follow an aspect of the Child Protection Policy, but after sufficient information has been gathered it is determined that no harmful behavior has occurred, the volunteer will be corrected and the policy violation will be recorded. If a second policy violation occurs, the volunteer will be dismissed from serving.

For situations where there is reasonable suspicion that abuse has occurred, the volunteer will be dismissed from serving and the appropriate law enforcement agencies will be notified. Any person accused of committing an act that is harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participating in Children’s Ministry during the course of investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective agencies.

LCC Children's Ministry

Healthy Child Policy

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY

LCC is dedicated to preventing the spread of disease among the children. In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases among the children, the following policies are in place, and parents should be familiar with them.

1. Children with infectious diseases should be kept home until they are no longer contagious. If a child is exhibiting symptoms of illness such as fever, diarrhea, open skin lesions or blisters (as in chicken pox), or colored nasal discharge, the parents should keep the child home.
2. Volunteers are required to use latex gloves and proper hygiene procedures to change diapers, wipe noses, and handle blood spills.
3. Regular hand washing is required for both children and volunteers.
4. Toys and equipment are washed and disinfected regularly.
5. Crib linens are changed between babies and washed after each use. Cribs are not shared by multiple babies.
6. Volunteers are not permitted to work in the nursery if they are sick.

Volunteers have the right to refuse a child on the basis of questionable symptoms. To prevent this, parents are asked to comply with the following guidelines:

1. A child should be kept home when any of the following exist:
 - **Fever** (Children should be free of fever for 24 hours after a contagious disease before coming back to church)
 - **Vomiting or diarrhea**
 - **Any symptom of childhood diseases** (scarlet fever, German measles, mumps, chicken pox, whooping cough)
 - **Common cold** (from onset through one week)
 - **Sore throat**
 - **Croup**
 - **Any unexplained rash**
 - **Any skin infection** (boils, ring worm, impetigo)
 - **Pink eye or other eye infection**
 - **Thick green, yellow, or constant nasal discharge**
 - **Any communicable disease**
2. Children who appear ill during a class will be kept away from the other children until the parent arrives.
3. Please inform the LCC Children's Ministry Coordinator if your child appears to have contracted an illness while attending an LCC event so that other parents may be notified if necessary.
4. Neither volunteers nor church staff members are allowed to give any medications to any child.
5. Parents of children with special needs are encouraged to contact the church before arriving on Sunday.
6. The parent(s) or other custodian(s) of children with any serious allergies, feeding peculiarities, or other noteworthy issues should alert the Child Check-In Station.

Guidelines for Children's Behavior in Church Meetings

There are many opportunities to train and instruct our children in righteousness. Much of this instruction is to take place in the realms of everyday life, according to Deuteronomy 6:7. As the church gathers for various meetings, there are numerous opportunities for our children to benefit from these times of interaction with other believers, and this section is an attempt to provide some guidelines that will allow Biblical parameters of behavior to be reinforced. It is our desire to help children to know what is expected of them, to help those who give care or teaching to know how to deal with any aberrant behavior of the children, and to help parents to be able to give leadership to their children, so that all involved in the various meetings will be able to get the full benefit from our gatherings. Please take the time to meet with your children and prepare them for our meetings in the following areas:

DURING SUNDAY SERVICES

If your children remain in the service with you, please be sensitive as to whether their behavior is creating a distraction to others. If your children are older, please help them to benefit from the service time by sitting with you and observing their participation and interest. Please don't allow children to roam the halls, make unnecessary trips to the bathroom, or get in conversations during the service. If your children are smaller, please sit near an exit that will allow you to step out if they become unsettled or distracting.

AFTER SUNDAY SERVICES

Children 10 and under should not be unsupervised in the building. After the meeting children should be located near one of their parents or another person assigned by the parents to be responsible for them. Inappropriate behavior (running, rough play, throwing things, loud play, climbing on the platform and other church structures, etc.) should be promptly addressed by parents in order to provide leadership for the children of the church, as well as maintaining an environment conducive to ministry.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY SETTINGS

Please remind your children of the importance of honoring those who are in authority, and of the importance of being attentive during times of worship and instruction. We want our children to both enjoy and respect the gatherings and work of the Holy Spirit in these meetings. Please make it a habit to inquire from their teacher or leader how they did during the meeting and if there are any areas of behavior they feel need to be addressed by you.

Behavior that should be corrected by teachers and parents should include:

- Disobedience to those in authority
- Unruly, distracting behavior
- Disrespectful behavior
- Behavior that's destructive to another person's property
- Improper language and attitudes

If improper behavior is in need of being addressed, teachers should:

1. Instruct the child as to how their behavior is improper, and what would be acceptable behavior in that area so as to be a blessing to the whole class.
2. If the behavior continues, the person in charge may respond by warning the child of consequences if they continue to disregard your instruction (he may be denied a privilege or isolated from the group). If the child is placed in time-out, provide him or her with a simple, understandable reason for the time-out, and provide a clear explanation of your expectations.
3. If this does not remedy the behavior, and the child will not respond to the authority of the teacher, then we ask that the parent be called upon to address the child and administer proper correction before the child be allowed to continue to participate in the meeting. If the nature of the behavior is of a serious offense or continues without change after being addressed by the parents, then we would ask the parents to keep the child with them during the meetings until there is adequate change to allow the child to participate.

Helpful Considerations for the Church Family:

HUMILITY

Few areas have greater ability to cause us to become judgmental when approaching others or defensive when approached by others than the behavior of our children. The reality of parenting is that we need the insights of others in this area. If the Lord calls you to address the behavior of a child, please have the heart of a humble servant in approaching a parent, who may be struggling to lead that child. If you are approached by another parent or leader, please give grace and receive whatever is useful from their observation without being defensive or feeling judged.

PROPER AWARENESS OF INDWELLING SIN

All in the church should be aware and somewhat expectant that children will do inappropriate things from time to time. Our desire is not to create an atmosphere where children are being scrutinized because of any deficient behavior, but rather one where parents are growing in their ability to give adequate leadership to these areas of our children's lives.

