



Short North Kids Volunteer Handbook

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Hello Veritas Kids Volunteers!

God is unfolding a vision for nurturing faith in the hearts of children here at Veritas. We are passionate about proclaiming the Gospel to our kids and are thrilled that you feel called to join us in that mission.

Veritas Kids exists to see children's lives transformed by the Gospel. We believe strongly that the truths of Scripture and the power of the Gospel are more than enough to transform even the youngest of hearts. By resourcing parents, equipping our church body and proclaiming the Gospel, we hope to see not only transformed children, but families and entire generations, as well. Our prayer is that Jesus is cherished in the hearts of our children and that He receives their praise and affection both now and for years to come.

I want to personally thank you for your willingness to be used by God and to partner with Him on His mission to see Christ glorified in the hearts of our children. Teaching children the gospel is no small task and, at times, will be challenging. We have a unique opportunity to show kids what it means to be the church and how they are called out of sin and into the Kingdom of God.

In the pages to come you will find out a little bit more about who we are, what we do, and how we do it. The safety of our children and the call to preach the gospel well are our highest priorities in Veritas Kids. Familiarize yourself with our policies, they aren't exciting but they are extremely important for the welfare of the kids in our care.

Again, I want to thank you for your willingness to serve with Veritas Kids. We are a ministry dependent on amazing folks like you. You are an important and necessary part in our mission to see kids' lives transformed by the Gospel!

With Gratitude,
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Philosophy

"We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments." Psalm 78:4-7

Vision

Veritas Kids exists to see the lives of children transformed by the Gospel. We desire to share God's glory and the gospel of Jesus Christ with our children so that they may respond with awe, set their hope in him, and be transformed by the Holy Spirit. (Psalm 78:4-7)

Core Values

What are core values?

Our core values are a set of non-negotiable priorities that govern everything we do in Veritas Kids. They are fixed points by which we navigate the practical execution and outworking of our ministry, as well as the measuring rod by which we determine success. There may be changes made to things such as the snacks we choose or curriculum we use. There may be variances in things such as teaching styles or music preferences. But our core values are unchanging. We commit to seeing our core values reflected in everything we do.

What are the core values of Veritas Kids?

We believe the Gospel transforms not only our minds, but our entire lives. The Gospel is at the core of all we do and teach because kids, just like adults, are sinful and in need of Christ's saving love (Romans 3:23; 6:23). In each of our classes, we aim to demonstrate this, as well as walk children through our rhythms of grace by constantly using them to point to Christ and the work he has done for us.

Worship

We value children as gifts from God; it is our hope that our children would find everlasting joy in Christ. We believe that like adults, God created each child to know Him, love Him, and build His Kingdom. We also believe that children, like adults, are broken sinners who live in a fallen world, and that the only remedy for their condition is the redemption through Christ. So, every Sunday, we aim to teach the wonders of God in spirit and truth, so his words may move in their heart and lead them to heartfelt worship and repentance.

Community

God has given the profound privilege of guiding and shepherding our little ones primarily to their parents. However, parents are not called to this task alone. At Veritas, we endeavor to

surround parents and families with biblical community, so we may encourage each parent to a deeply committed relationship with God then equip them to exemplify and impart the joy of knowing and loving God to each of their children (Deuteronomy 6:4-9). We desire to see God build community among our children so that they would form persevering friendships as they grow up in Christ and join him on mission to reach others. Finally, we also recognize that many children in our city don't have parents who know Jesus or in many cases they don't even have parents who love them. Veritas also desires to be a spiritual home for them as well, where they will find a family of mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters.

Service

Our Savior did not come with selfish ambitions, nor did he free us so that we may live that way. The salvation he bought us was intended to free us from the bondage of sin and selfish pursuits in our lives, so we can live freely loving, serving, and honoring others. We call all those in the church to exemplify this for our children through selfless service and grace, always outdoing one another in showing honor.

Additionally, by demonstrating a posture of selflessness, service, and grace, we set an example for our children. The strongest way to lead is by example - just as Jesus did for his disciples - and that is something we strive to do here at Veritas Kids.

Learning

While we are immediately saved when we believe in Christ, we are also always being sanctified daily until Christ returns. We believe that the home is the primary place where this takes place, rather than being a task "outsourced" exclusively to the church. However, the church is called to come alongside parents and encourage the work they are doing. As we do that, we desire to teach with:

- Excellence so the kids will learn the gospel of God—His word and His works (Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Exodus 13:14-16)
- Depth because the truth of the Gospel can be understood and applied by children even at a young age (2 Timothy 2:7)

Missions

God's transforming work is not only intended to bolster our hearts individually, but is intended to transform the world and bring God's kingdom to earth. We believe and long for this wholeheartedly, and we encourage our children to desire this as well. Only the Gospel can change children, families, neighborhoods, and schools, so we encourage our children to live in pursuit of this reality by boldly and lovingly sharing God's love and grace to others, both locally and internationally.

Foundations

Kids

At Veritas, we value kids as gifts from God, and welcome them to receive His Kingdom just as Jesus did in Mark 10. It is our hope that our children would find everlasting joy in Christ and that the Gospel becomes the compass by which they explore and navigate the rest of their lives. We believe that God created each child to know Him, love Him, and build His Kingdom through the local church. We also believe that children, just like adults, are broken sinners who live in a fallen world, and that the only remedy for their condition is the redeeming love of Jesus Christ, as is demonstrated through the Gospel.

Parents

As stated before, we believe that the home is the primary place of discipleship and growth for our kids. God has appointed parents to raise their children in the “discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 4:6). Rather than being taken on by their parents, the mandate to train children in godliness is too often “outsourced” exclusively to the church and is frequently considered the job of Sunday School teachers. However, Scripture clearly teaches that the primary responsibility and blessing of training children to love God and be transformed by the Gospel belongs to the parents; the church’s job is to partner with parents, equipping them to achieve that end. Parents have been entrusted with the call to teach their children the word of God (Deuteronomy 6:7), to lead (Proverbs 22:6), to cover their children faithfully in prayer (1 Samuel 1:27), and to live out a lifestyle before them that glorifies God (2 Corinthians 5:14-15).

The Church

Our responsibility and commitment as a church is to foster the emotional, physical, and, most importantly, spiritual development of your child in two primary ways:

1) By offering a safe, creative, and engaging place for kids to encounter Jesus and have their lives transformed by the Gospel. At each of our Sunday gatherings, we will provide a loving environment for kids to learn biblical truths and encounter the presence of God while parents participate in corporate worship. Our desire is that the children of Veritas experience a creative portrayal of biblical stories, discussion, musical worship, prayer, and visual arts, as well as times of guided play, in which they can experience community with other kids and build relationships with loving adults.

2) By assisting and equipping parents in creating and nurturing a Christ-centered home. We endeavor to surround parents and families in biblical community, to shepherd them in a deeply committed relationship with God, and to equip them to exemplify and actively impart to their children what it means to love God and glorify Him in all things. We want to acknowledge, train, and hold them accountable as the primary disciple-makers in their children’s lives.

Organization

Volunteer Rotation

All Veritas Kids volunteers re asked to serve four months out of the year. Teams serve on rotation of two months on, four months off.

Team A - January, February, July, August

Team B - March, April, September, October

Team C - May, June, November, December

Classrooms

Infants - The Veritas Kids Infants class consists of all children six months through 18 months old. This class is characterized by basic biblical truths, gentle play, and constant prayer. The Gospel is introduced to children through play, music, and movement. **Adult to child ratio - 1:5, Classroom capacity - 12 infants**

Lower Toddlers - The Veritas Kids Lower Toddlers class consists of children 18 months to two years old. This class learns through guided play, music, bible lesson, hand motions, and bible activities. Three year olds move up to the Three-year-olds class in September on “Pop-up Sunday” **Adult to child ratio - 1:7, Classroom capacity - 14 toddlers**

Upper Toddlers - The Veritas Kids Upper Toddler class consists of children three to four years old. This class learns through guided play, music, bible lesson, hand motions, and bible activities. Three year olds move up to the Three-year-olds class in September on “Pop-up Sunday” **Adult to child ratio - 1:7, Classroom capacity - 14 children**

PreK - The Veritas Kids PreK class consists of children four years old until they begin Kindergarten. Four year olds move up to the PreK class in September on “Pop-up Sunday.” Children entering Kindergarten move up to the Elementary class on “Pop-up Sunday.” **Adult to child ratio - 1:12, Classroom capacity - 16 children**

Elementary - The Veritas Elementary class consists of children in Kindergarten-4th grade. Children experience large group and small group activities. This class is characterized by interactive Bible study, scripture memorization, and games and activities that reinforce biblical truths. **Adult to child ratio - 1:18**

Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities

Arrival Time

- Arrive no later than 8:45 for the 9:00 am Gathering.
- Arrive no later than 10:45 for the 11:00 am Gathering.

Preparation

- Arrive early to allow yourself time to welcome kids, greet parents, and ensure you have all of the necessary supplies for the days activities.
- Infant classroom leaders should remove shoes and wear clean socks. This will help to keep the floor mats clean.
- Wash hands and use hand sanitizer throughout the day.
- Wear your Veritas Kids T-Shirt or a Veritas Kids Apron.

Welcoming Kids Into the Classroom

- Create a warm atmosphere in your class, and welcome each kid with a smile.
- Greet both the kids and parents/caregiver by name.
- If a child displays symptoms of sickness (runny nose, cough, etc.), please do not allow them in the classroom. Discuss the Veritas Sick Policy with parents; refer to the Veritas Kids Handbook for further details. Kindly stress that we are simply trying to protect all of our kids and families, especially since they all are in small, enclosed areas. If need be, refer the parent to your Team Lead.

Diaper Changing

Please note that these diapering guidelines come courtesy of the CDC¹. ***The wearing of disposable gloves is strongly encouraged for all diapering.***

- Cover the diaper changing surface with disposable liner.
- Place the child on diapering surface and unfasten diaper.
- Clean the child's diaper area with disposable wipes. Always wipe front to back!
- Keep soiled diaper/clothing away from any surfaces that cannot be easily cleaned. Securely bag any soiled clothing.
- Place used wipes in the soiled diaper.
- Discard the soiled diaper and wipes in the trash can.
- Slide a fresh diaper under the child.
- Fasten the diaper and dress the child.
- Wash child's hands or clean with hand sanitizer.
- Remove liner from the changing surface and discard in the trash can.
- Wipe up any visible soil with damp paper towels or a baby wipe.
- Wet the entire surface with disinfectant.
- Wash own hands or clean with hand sanitizer.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/diapering/childcare.html>

Gloves should be changed between each child's diaper being changed.

Please note that only female volunteers ver the age of 18 can change diapers.

Crying

- The inevitable reality of caring for babies is that they will cry. But be aware, kids are smart; if the leader is visibly unhappy, frustrated, or annoyed, the kid will likely reflect that same attitude. Try to stay positive and patient!
- If continued crying persists beyond a 15 minute span, it's probably best to contact their parent. Simply notify the Team Lead of the situation, give to them the kid's check-in tag number, and the Team Lead will take it from there.

Cleaning

- Throughout the class time, sanitize toys any toys have been mouthed between uses by wiping them down with a Clorox wipe.
- Throughout the class time, clean any spills that may occur.
- After the gathering, please sanitize all toys (wipe small toys with a Clorox wipe and Lysol bigger toys); put everything in its appropriate location.
- Wipe down all surfaces with a Clorox wipe.
- Return extra supplies to the cabinets.

Snacks/Feeding

- ALWAYS check for allergies before giving snacks. *Please remember: all classrooms are nut-free.* Wipe down surfaces before and after class to help protect against allergy risks.
- Veritas will provide snacks; snacks from home are not permitted unless approved by the Kids' Director or team lead (this might be due to a child's special diet, allergies, or other extenuating circumstance).
- Kids should all be seated in a designated area for eating.
- Pray before serving snack.
- NEVER give a child a bottle without instructions from the parent. Before giving a bottle to a child check labels and bags to be absolutely certain you give the right child the right bottle. Check with the Team Lead when in doubt.
- Additionally, you should never mix a bottle of formula for a child; only feed a bottle that is already filled with milk.

Administering an Activity

- Use a call and response to transition into a new activity (i.e. Eyes On Me, Dead Fish).
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before giving the instructions for the activity.
- Pick your battles. If you have the attention of most of the class while one or two kids refuse to participate, go ahead and get through the activity. Discipline and instruction for the one or two kids can take place after.
- Add a new facet to the activity often. Kids this age get bored quickly and are easily distracted.
- Monitor and maintain appropriate behavior throughout the activity.

- Verbally encourage kids throughout the activity: “I saw that, great job! Thank you for listening.”

Making the Most of Free Play

- Limit the number of options kids have. This may mean putting away a portion of toys or inviting them to participate in one or two activities, such as building with blocks or listening to a story. This will decrease chaos and encourage kids to play and share together.
- When able, engage the kids on the day’s lesson. Ask review questions and spend time in prayer.

Volunteer Requirements and Expectations

Application and Background Check

Before beginning work in any child or youth-related ministry at Veritas, applicants must be an active part of the Veritas community for at least six months. The applicant should be a member (or be currently pursuing membership) at one of the congregations, as well.

Volunteers and workers will be thoroughly screened. As part of the application process, applicants must answer these two questions:

1. Are you aware of any current or past claim or lawsuit, or of any situation that could result in a claim or lawsuit in connection with an allegation of abuse or sexual misconduct?
2. Have you ever participated in, been accused or convicted of, or pled guilty or no contest to any abuse or sexual misconduct?

Additionally, volunteers and workers will have a background check conducted. This check will consist of a Social Security trace, as well as checking names against the sex offender watch list, global watch list, and national criminal watch list. No worker or volunteer may be a part of a child-related ministry without a current background check in place.

Finally, as part of the application process, interviews will be completed and references will be contacted.

All volunteers who are 18 year of age and older must complete a Veritas Kids Volunteer Application which includes:

- Online Application
- Background Check
- Electronic Signature for the Child Safeguarding Guide
- Electronic Signature for Kids Leader Handbook
- Interview
- References

Age Requirements

Volunteers who are under the age of 18 may serve in the following capacities:

- Little Volunteer - Children 1st through 5th grade can serve in the toddler room as a Classroom Aid, if accompanied by one of his/her parents. These volunteers **do not** count towards a classroom ratio, as they have a 1:1 ratio with their parent.
- Junior Volunteer - Middle School students (6th-8th grade) can serve in the Toddler room and the Preschool room as a Classroom Aid if accompanied by an adult. These volunteers **do not** count as adults and **do** count towards classroom ratios.
- Student Volunteer - High School students (9th-12th grade) can serve in all areas of Veritas Kids with the exception of Team Lead, as long as they are paired with an adult 18 years of age or older. These volunteers **do not** count towards classroom ratios.
- Only female volunteers who are 18 years of age or older may provide diapering or restroom assistance to children.

General Expectations

Love Jesus - All Veritas Kids Volunteers should be in a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and love kids out of an overflow of their love for Christ and His love for them.

Be On Time - All Veritas Kids volunteers should arrive no later than 30 minutes prior to the gathering in which you are serving. This will allow time for prayer, preparation, and connection with their team and families.

Come Prepared - Please arrive to your classrooms fully prepared. All teaching materials will be sent to you no later than two days prior to the worship gathering. Please take that time to memorize your lessons as well as prepare any skits, games, or crafts you may be using.

Grow - Just as Veritas Kids is a place for children to grow spiritually, we expect all of our volunteers to be growing spiritually as well. Growth can occur in the following ways:

- **Become a Member:** All Veritas Kids Volunteers should be a member of Veritas Community Church or be pursuing membership.
- **Join a Community Group:** Growth happens best in the context of community. We ask all of our volunteers to be regular attenders of a community group.
- **Regularly Attend a Worship Gathering:** Service is great and necessary, but cannot be the extent of your church attendance and should not replace attending a worship gathering. The teaching schedule is structured so that you can attend a worship gathering either before or after you serve (Serve One/Attend One).

Appearance - All volunteers should wear their Veritas Kids Volunteer T-Shirt or Veritas Kids apron. Comfortable clothing such as jeans, capris, or shorts of appropriate length are also encouraged. Women should try to refrain from wearing skirts, as it makes working with children (physical play, sitting on the floor, etc.) difficult.

Arrival and Check-In Procedure

Welcome Parents - The Team Lead should be welcoming children and parents as they enter the Veritas Kids area. Classroom volunteers should wait in classrooms to greet parents and children as they arrive.

Check-in - A Team Lead will help new families create a “new household” on Planning Center check in. A profile should be created for parents/guardians (i.e. if two parents, there should be two profiles etc.), and a profile for each child. Print name tags for each child to wear in a visible location on their shirt, front or back. Parents will take a parent tag with them into the gathering.

Check-out - Parents/Guardians wait behind ½ door in kids hallway in order to check-out children. Parents/guardians must have parent tag in order to check-out children. If a parent/guardian does not have their tag, they must speak with Kids Director and show ID and answer security questions.

Policies and Procedures

The following pages contain the policies and procedures for Veritas Kids. For the safety and well-being of our kids and volunteers, it is imperative that Veritas Kids volunteers carry out the policies below.

Two-Adult Rule

In order to keep all interactions with children and youth above reproach, our church requires at least two, unrelated adults to supervise all child/youth events. No one adult should ever be alone with children

In addition to this, no counseling should occur in a one-on-one, unobservable context. All interactions with children and youth should be **observable** and **interruptible**.

Food Policy

The feeding of young children is a serious responsibility. Therefore, children should be fed before coming to church. Infants will be given formula, milk, juice or water as provided by the parents. Time and circumstances may not allow for spoon-feeding. A snack of water and crackers (e.g. Goldfish, animal crackers, Cheerios, etc.) will be served to children attending the preschool class. If the lesson plan calls for any snacks or food tasting other than these, an Allergy Alert will be posted at the check-in desk to inform parents. *Please remember: all classrooms are nut-free at all times.*

Sick Policy

For the comfort of our children and the safety of others, parents are asked to keep their child at home if they exhibit one or more of the following:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or higher within the last 24 hours
- Vomiting within the last 24 hours
- Diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Severe coughing
- Colored nasal drainage
- Pink eye
- Head lice or bed bugs
- Undiagnosed rash
- Any communicable diseases

Children who appear to be sick, or become ill at church, should be isolated from the other children and their parents should notified immediately.

Sleeping Baby Policy

Sleeping babies will not be accepted into the nursery. If a child is asleep, they can be checked into the nursery (to count towards ratio) and remain with their parent(s) until they awake.

Restroom Policy

It is the strict policy of Veritas Kids that all diaper changes and toilet assistance will be done in the presence of two adult volunteers. While Veritas has full confidence in all of our volunteers and desires our children to see men in serving roles, because of the unknown backgrounds of children we serve, as well as their parents, only women may assist with diapering and toileting.*

**Note: We recognize that this policy is not ideal. We deeply desire for our children to see and trust men in loving, serving roles, and we do not desire to feed into unhealthy stereotypes. However, we write policies like this to protect our church and its children from dangers that are prevalent in today's world. For men who feel slighted by this stereotype, we grieve with you. As a church, we should strive to change large systemic and cultural problems, including unhealthy stereotypes. However, policies must be written to protect against the greatest possible odds. Please bear with us; we live in a broken world.*

As for our male volunteers, we ask that you not let this policy influence how you see yourself or how you interpret children seeing you. As a male team member, we trust that you can communicate care and trust in other tangible ways to the children with whom you work.

If possible, try to restrict restroom visits to the allotted restroom time. The following outlines the Veritas Kids restroom procedure:

- Encourage all parents to take their kids to the restroom prior to dropping them off in class.
- If a kid needs to use the restroom, please use the following procedure:
 - Kids must be accompanied by TWO leaders (preferably a Classroom Leader and the Team Lead) to the appropriate restroom (men's/women's room). Leaders should wait outside of the stall for the children, and then walk them back to the classroom.
 - As stated before, only female leaders can provide restroom assistance or accompany children to the restroom. If a child needs assistance, only enter the stall with another adult in the doorway watching you.
 - For older children(elementary class or older), a volunteer will clear out restroom and then let them use the restroom on their own.

Process for Discipline

The effective spiritual formation of all our children requires a stable environment. In order to create and maintain such an environment, instances that require disciplinary action will be handled in the following ways:

- Immediate verbal correction with a loving attitude.
- Separation of a child from the larger group for one-on-one discussion, encouraging them to love others. This discussion should contain the following:
 - A non-threatening posture - Bend down and make eye contact with the child.
 - Address the heart issue, not just the behavior
 - Prayer
- Placement in time-out that is accompanied by prayer—both for and with the child.
- Share the situation with the Team Lead and the child's parents. Ensure that you honor the child and at the same time, encourage the parents.

If problems persist, parents may be asked to keep their child with them for the remainder of the worship gathering.

Parent/Guardian Alert

If you should need to call a parent/guardian anytime during a worship gathering, contact the Team Lead. Team Leads will take the number from the child's name tag, along with their initials, and give it to the media tech in the main gathering area. If the parent is not responding, Team Leads will call the parent's cell phone or find them personally to notify them of any situation involving their child.

Sanitation and Hygiene Policy

It is our commitment to maintain the safest, cleanest environment possible in order to ensure the health and welfare of all children. Measures to ensure a clean environment include:

- Proper hand washing by both volunteers and children. You should wash or sanitize your hands:
 - When you first arrive to your classroom.
 - After a diaper change.
 - After accompanying a child to the restroom.
 - Before handling food.
- Sanitation of mats, toys, and furniture after each use.
- Cleaning of classrooms after each worship gathering by Veritas Kids volunteers.

Child Safeguarding

As a people who strongly believe in Biblical mandates to follow God's will in *all things*, we believe that abuse of any kind - especially sexual abuse - is morally and ethically wrong. It constitutes as mistreatment and/or abuse of vulnerable people groups. Abuse is, at its core, a misuse of the power and authority given by God to those in leadership positions. Additionally, it tarnishes the church's representation of the character of Jesus Christ, and is an abomination to the very heart of God.

Thus, Veritas maintains a strict zero-tolerance policy against child abuse and neglect. Child abuse and neglect includes physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, negligent treatment, or maltreatment.

A separate document, *The Child Safeguarding Guide*, has been created to address this topic in depth. All volunteers will be required to read and sign this document before serving with Veritas Kids.

Accidents, Incidents, and Emergencies

First Aid - The nature of children and the activities they engage in will occasionally result in accidents or injuries. A fully-equipped first aid kit is available for use at each building. In the event of a medical incident:

- First, notify the Team Lead and the child's parents.
- If the parent is unavailable, administer appropriate treatment measures based on your discretion.
- Never administer medication of any sort, including things such as ibuprofen or Neosporin. If a child needs medication of any sort, it is the responsibility of the parent to give it to them.

- If there is a spill of body fluid (blood, vomit, etc.) latex gloves must be worn while caring for the child, as well as during clean up.
- Fill out a detailed Incident Report.

Medical Emergencies - On the rare occasion that an injury involves broken bones, fainting, convulsing, unconsciousness, or other serious bodily injury occurs, they should be treated as follows:

- Assess the scene to determine if there is an emergency risk situation. If you and/or the child are at risk, immediately move to a safe location.
- Remain calm and keep the injured child as calm as possible. Do not move the child if movement may result in further injury.
- Send a fellow volunteer to notify the Team Lead.
- The Team Lead will notify the child's parents and call 911, if necessary.
- Fill out a detailed Incident Report.

Fire - In the event of a fire:

- Instruct those around to stay calm, remain silent, and walk while evacuating.
- Count all children in the room and lead the children out of the building in an organized, quick fashion using the locations pre-planned evacuation route.
- All children will be taken to the parking area away from the building. Class role will be taken once again when outside the building.
- As a general rule, a safe position outside is the distance equal to twice the height of the building. So, if a two-story building is 14 feet high, the assembly point must be 28 feet away from the building.
- Do not re-enter the building for any reason until emergency responders have given you the "all clear."

Power Outage - Flashlights are readily available to all classrooms. If a power outage were to occur, children would be entertained and kept secure until their parents arrive. Normal security procedures would be followed.

Tornadoes, Storms, and Severe Weather - In case of a tornado or other severe weather:

- Instruct others to remain calm and stay in the building due to emergency. Going outside poses a risk of injury or death.
- Children will be calmly escorted to the hallway outside of the classrooms. They will be taught how to sit with their back against the wall, knees tucked under their chins, arms wrapped around the knees, and heads bent down. All children will be accounted for and efforts will be made to keep them calm and entertained.
- Stay in your safe location until the "all clear" is given.

Earthquakes - Veritas Kids volunteers will keep children away from heavy hanging objects, tall or heavy furniture, ruptured hot water heaters, gas lines, flammable liquids and electrical wires. Children will be gathered under a supported doorway or sturdy table and kept calm and secure.

Active Shooter - At Veritas, we value safety and are constantly working to develop better, more effective ways to protect our children. When it comes to the possibility of an active shooter scenario, we believe that prevention is our best line of defense. Our church security teams are committed to monitoring for suspicious activity, and we are continually looking for the best way to secure our children's rooms.

If you hear gunfire, see a person with a gun or other weapon, or become aware of some other physically dangerous situation, take immediate action to protect yourself and others. Additionally:

- Close and lock doors to children's classrooms.
- Use chairs and any other furniture to block the door.
- Stay away from windows and out of view.
- Turn off lights.
- Take children to the farthest inside corner of the room - that is, the corner of the room that is in line with the door and is hardest to see.
- Hide behind heavy furniture or anything that will hide your location and/or protect you from gunfire.
- Stay in your safe location until the "all clear" is given.

Non-Injury Incidents - In the event of a non-injury incident that is cause for concern, please notify the Team Lead. Non-injury incidents may include, but are not limited to:

- Behavior that may indicate possible child abuse.
- Inappropriate talk or touch from children.
- Physical altercations between children.
- Fill out a detailed Incident Report.

Incident Reports - Immediately following any accident, incident, or injury, an Incident Report must be filled out by a volunteer that witnessed the event. The Incident Report also requires a parent signature. All Incident Reports should be turned in to the Director of Kids immediately following the Gathering. (An example of the Incident Report is available in Appendix B.)

Special Populations

Children with Special Needs

At Veritas, we believe that all children - including those with special needs - are:

- Fashioned in the image of God (Genesis 1:26)
- Created with unique gifts, abilities, and challenges (Psalm 139:13-15)
- Have had their days ordained by God (Psalm 139:16)

We also believe that the parents and families of those with special needs have the same need to be fed, nurtured, and grown by the church as those parents and families of typical children.

Because of these beliefs, children and young people with special needs are welcome to be a part of all kid-related Veritas events - including Sunday morning classes, childcare, etc. During initial registration, we ask that parents notify us of any conditions that might require additional support and/or help, ensuring that we can appropriately staff the room for the event.

As with all children, please ensure that you have the parents' cell phone number and/or information as to where they will be should you need to contact them for anything. If, at any time, the child or young person with special needs has needs outside of what you feel comfortable providing for, please contact the parent immediately for guidance and/or assistance.

Foster Children

Veritas welcomes all children in foster care to be a part of childcare during events. During initial registration, we ask that parents notify us of any circumstances that might require additional support and/or help. (When a child is in foster care, often, the biological family does not have custody and cannot pick up a child. Be aware of these situations.)

When a child is in foster care, there is also a need for added privacy. No photos should be taken of these children. These kids should not be talked about or mentioned by name outside of church. Moreover, staff and helpers should not solicit information about whether foster parents plan to adopt, why the children are in care, where their birth parents live, etc., as this information is typically confidential and sensitive.

Appendix A - Sharing the Gospel with Children

Children are sinners in need of grace just like adults. They need the truth of the gospel applied to their hearts. So, what should we do?

1.) Stress the facts of the Gospel- God desires us to be faithful to our relationship with Him. This means knowing Him, obeying Him, and loving Him.

- **Deuteronomy 6:4-7a** - Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children.
- However, all of us are in rebellion against God. Children, just like adults, are sinful and in need of a Savior.
- **Romans 3:23** - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. This is one purpose of the Bible's teaching. As it shows us the holiness and goodness of God, it also shows us our deficiencies, our rebellion, and our sin.
- **Galatians 3:10** - All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."
- **Romans 3:20** - Therefore no one will be declared righteous in His sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.
- Teachers should use teaching about actions and attitudes to kindly point out the deficiencies of children. Ask searching questions. This is an especially helpful tool with elementary school children. In this way, we will help our children understand their need for Jesus and His Gospel.
- Jesus Christ took the punishment for our sin by bearing the wrath we deserve on the cross. He was the substitute for sinners.
 - **Galatians 3:13** - Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."
- Speak freely and often about the need to repent of sin and to trust in Christ.
- Encourage unchurched children to come to Veritas Kids. God saves sinners through exposure to His preached and taught Word. Pray that the ministry of Veritas Kids will influence every child that walks through our doors.
- Trust God to work in the hearts of His children to bring them to Himself through faith, in His time and in His ways.

Children, just like adult sinners, are easily deceived and manipulated (Ephesians 4:14). Just like adults, they may be tempted to find assurance in their own good works or religious practices rather than in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. So, what should we do?

2.) Speak freely and often about the need to repent of sin and to trust in Christ - Encourage children to confess their sins and ask for mercy, but do not offer false assurances.

- Do not assure them that a prayer for mercy (a "sinner's prayer") guarantees their eternal destiny. It does not.

- Human hearts long to find assurance in things that we can manipulate – our own knowledge, emotional experiences, prayers, or our works. We must discourage children from seeking assurance in such things.
- Salvation is a work of God. We must teach children that assurance is found in Jesus Christ and His work alone. Trust that God the Holy Spirit will assure those who are truly changed (Romans 8:16). Trust that He will bring conviction or assurance as He sees fit.
- Do not pressure children for commitments. Rather, trust that God is already at work in their hearts! Your responsibility is to faithfully tell the Gospel to them and leave the results to the Lord.

Signs of true faith are sometimes harder to recognize in children than they are in adults. It can be difficult to tell the difference between natural maturing and a Holy Spirit-wrought change of heart - this is especially true since children naturally want to please adults. So, what should we do?

3.) Express joy, but use discernment - If a child - on his own initiative - says he is trusting in Christ, express joy, but use discernment about validating that expression as one of saving faith. Offer encouragement to him to continue placing his trust in Christ throughout his life.

- If a child from a believing family speaks with you about the Gospel, let his parents know the questions their child is asking. Parents are called to be the primary shepherds of their children, and they should be closely involved when their children are asking these questions. Encourage parents, with the support of Veritas's pastoral leadership, to discern their child's heart carefully.
- If a child from an unchurched family speaks with you about the Gospel, let the Veritas staff know so we can explain the Gospel clearly to the child's parents, let them know about the questions their child is asking, encourage them to continue bringing their child to church, and build a relationship with them. If the Lord is doing a work in the child's life, we trust that He will be faithful to complete this work (Philippians 1:6).
- Do not be skeptical about a child's sincerity. Although we want to be careful not to give a child a false sense of security, neither do we want to unwittingly discourage children from believing that God can grant them saving faith as a child. Offer encouragement to children to continue placing trust in Christ throughout their lives.

Appendix B - Veritas Kids Incident Report

Date of Incident _____
Reporter Name (First & Last) _____
Name of child impacted (First & Last): _____
Child's Birthdate __ / ___ / ____
Father's Name _____
Father's Phone # (____) _____
Mother's Name _____
Mother's Phone # (____) _____

Describe the nature of the incident. Include as many details as possible.

Was first aid administered? (Yes / No) If so, describe the care given.

Were any other children involved in the accident? If yes, what are their full names?

Was 911 called? (Yes / No) If so, what is the name of the attending physician?

Names of Veritas Childcare staff who were present in the room:

Were the parents informed the day of the incident? (Yes / No)
Was a copy of this incident reported offered to parents? (Yes / No)
Was a copy of this incident report given to parents? (Yes / No)

Parent Signature _____

Was a follow up phone call made? (Yes / No) Date of the call ___ / ___ / ___

Other remarks or important information:

Signature of reporter & Childcare Director:
Reporter _____ Date _____
Childcare Director _____ Date _____