



## General Practices

These “General Practices” are how we do ministry with children at BCC. They help us keep kids safe, secure and well managed to provide the best opportunity to do spiritual work in the lives of children and their families.

### Ministry practices

1. Our Mission: To help children know Jesus Christ and make Him known.
2. Our Vision: Growing Faith for Growing Kids. Our goal is to encourage kids to worship, learn, connect, serve and reach out to the world with the truth of Christ.
3. Our values:
  - Biblical Authority: We teach the Bible and bring it to life. We read it, point to it, quote it, memorize it, apply it, meditate on it, and encourage kids to obey it.
  - Relational Discipleship: Children’s Ministry creates an opportunity to build positive relationships among our volunteers, kids, and between our volunteers and their group of kids.
  - Age Appropriateness: We want to be intentional about reaching kids at their maturity level in everything we do.
  - Creativity and Fun: We understand kids learn in a variety of styles, and want to be creative in presenting lessons so all can relate.
  - Outreach: We encourage kids to take what they’re learning into their week and we provide outreach events as opportunities for kids to invite their unchurched friends.

### Safety/Security Practices

We have a responsibility to keep kids safe while they are here.

1. There must be at least two people in a classroom at any given time – one must be an adult. Families may serve together as long as there is one non-family volunteer present. We ask volunteers to arrive 15 minutes early to ensure proper coverage in the room. This also allows you to be settled and ready to greet kids as they arrive.
2. Check-in: As children are welcomed into the class, be sure the child has a printed or hand-written nametag. If not, encourage parents to check the child in at the Welcome Center.
3. Bathroom Practices:
  - a. Kids use the rest rooms in the Main Street area.
  - b. Children up through 4<sup>th</sup> grade must be escorted by an approved Main Street volunteer - teacher, assistant or welcome center volunteer.
  - c. The hallway bathroom door should remain open.
  - d. If a child needs assistance while potty-ing, keep the stall door propped open while assisting the child.
4. Allergies: Before serving snacks (goldfish and animal crackers provided in classroom,) check child’s nametag for any known allergies. If you would like to provide a special snack or incentive, please notify all parents at drop-off and post the *Allergy Alert* sign at the doorway.

5. Check-out Practices: Security check-out must be performed through 4<sup>th</sup> grade by checking parent's security tag against child's name tag before releasing a child. Siblings in middle school or older may claim a child ONLY if they have the correct claim tag to prove parental permission. Be sure to collect pagers from parents for nursery through preschool.

### **Appropriate Touch Practices**

We want to take steps to protect the children in our care. These are guidelines to observe while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry.

1. As ministry workers our behavior should be appropriate. Touching behavior should never give the appearance of wrongdoing.
2. A child's preference not to be touched should be respected. Do not force affection upon a reluctant child.
3. Touching initiated by the child can be appropriate. It should be a response to the child's need for comforting, encouragement, or affection. It should not be based upon the adult's emotional need. If a child approaches or touches a leader in a way that is inappropriate, or makes the leader feel uncomfortable, the leader should redirect the child's attention to something else. If a child repeatedly does this, the leader must explain to the child that there are ways we can touch that are ok, and others that are not appropriate. If the behavior continues, volunteers should work with Mary Beth (Early Childhood) or Tammy (Elementary) to contact parents.
4. Appropriate physical affection between workers and children are important for a child's development and are generally suitable in our church setting, but must be age appropriate. For example:
  - Children may give you a surprise kiss, but please, do not return the favor.
  - Hugs often abound in ministry with kids and this is ok. It is best with middle and upper elementary students that people use a side hug instead of full frontal hug. Being a little awkward makes it obvious no ill-intentions exist.
  - Children pre-school and younger may want to sit in the lap of volunteers. However, volunteers should encourage older children to sit beside him or her.
5. Leaders may touch children appropriately on the head, shoulders, back, arm, hand, knee, feet, or may shake hands or give "fives" plenty. Leaders should not massage children's shoulders/back for any length of time or squeeze arms, shoulders, legs, necks to cause pain.
6. Touching and affection should only be done **in the presence** of other children's ministry workers, parents, or in full view of other people. It **must** be in public spaces—**never when you are alone or in a secluded place**. It is much less likely that touches will be inappropriate or misconstrued as such when two adult workers, a parent, or lots of other people can see. This rule is especially important when diapering a baby or helping a young child change clothes or use the restroom.
7. If a volunteer is uncomfortable or suspects inappropriate touching by another volunteer, please discuss with Mary Beth (Early Childhood) or Tammy (Elementary.)

### **Identifying Abuse**

As Children's Ministry workers, we have a responsibility to watch for and protect against child abuse of any nature. If you are ever concerned about a child's safety, please bring it to the attention of Mary Beth (Early Childhood) or Tammy (Elementary.)

## Diaper Changing Practices

1. Women in high school and older may change diapers in the nursery and preschool in established changing areas in plain view—do not close the bathroom doors while changing diapers. Men are not allowed to change diapers.
2. Be prepared with all needed supplies. Place a disposable paper liner on the changing table. Gather diaper, wipes, and disposable bag. Wear non-latex gloves.
3. Gently place child on changing table. Always keep a hand on the child. Talk with the child during the change.
4. Remove child's clothes and begin changing. Wipe from front to back, using wipe only once and continue until area is clean. Place diaper and wipes in disposable bag. Slide fresh diaper under the child and secure in place. Dress the child.
5. Clean the child's hands with baby wipes (infants) or hand sanitizer (older children.)
6. Clean the changing area: Dispose of the paper liner and clean the table with Clorox wipes, allowing it to air dry.
7. Wash your hands using proper hand-washing techniques.

## Discipline Practices

1. A well prepared leader and a clear and consistent plan for class time will often eliminate the need for disciplining children.
2. Teachers can develop their own style for how they manage their classroom and can expect levels of energy and activity that differ from other classrooms.
3. At BCC we NEVER strike, shake, spank, belittle, demean, or call names in order to discipline children.
4. At BCC we view kids' inappropriate behavior, disobedience or purposeful distractions as **opportunities for discipleship**. We believe God can use difficult situations to grow Christ-like character.
5. Process for discipline:
  - a. Be prepared as well as possible before class. Pray for students, especially challenging ones during the week.
  - b. Establish clear rules and expectations for the class/ministry time.
  - c. Remind child of rules/expectations when they are misbehaving.
  - d. Deal privately with the individual who is acting poorly rather than in front of the group.
  - e. Remove a defiant or disobedient child from activities and set him or her to the side for an appropriate "time out." Then take the opportunity to discuss the disruption and welcome him or her back to the group
    - i. Inform Mary Beth (Early Childhood) or Tammy (Elementary) to strategize a plan for working with the child.
    - ii. Involve parents in solutions—speak to them that day or call them during the week for insight and ideas on creating a successful environment.
    - iii. Use an incident report to note the behavior if you feel it is significant or dangerous to others. Incident reports should be brought to the Welcome Center.
  - f. If problems persist, the child may be removed from the classroom and brought to Welcome Center where we will determine if the parent needs to be contacted.
  - g. In the case of severe behavioral issues, additional actions will be considered by the Children's Ministry team, staff and elders.

## First Aid

1. First Aid kit is stored in Main Street Welcome Center. Band-Aids are located in all classrooms for minor incidents.
2. Even if the injury seems minor, inform a parent after class. Examples: non-bleeding cut, scrape, bruise, bump, or the child becomes scared but IS consolable.
3. If the injury or incident is more serious, bring the child to the Welcome Center for care. Parents will be contacted at that time. Examples: bleeding cut, gash or serious scrape, if a child is un-consolable because of an injury, experiences dizziness or blacks-out, vomiting, fever, stomach upset, deep cough, green/yellow running nose, allergic reaction, bee/wasp stings or other illness.
4. Potty-ing accident: Extra clothing is available in the bathrooms off of Rooms 106 and 109. Place wet clothing in a plastic bag. If a carpeted area has been soiled, please mark the perimeter with blue painters tape and inform the Welcome Center team.
5. Remove other children from area if it has been affected by vomit, diarrhea, urine, blood, etc. Mary Beth (Early Childhood) or Tammy (Elementary) will contact the Maintenance Director about clean-up.

## Emergency

The best response to an emergency is being prepared.

1. Be sure you are aware of which children are assigned to your room. Do periodic counts, especially while traveling. Should you discover a child missing, notify the Welcome Center, so they can begin emergency procedures.
2. If a lock-down situation should arise, children and volunteers gather away from view of doors and windows and encourage everyone to be quiet. CM staff will disperse and lock all classroom doors. Remain in place until the emergency has been cleared by CM staff.
3. If a building evacuation is required, remain calm and take the following steps:
  - a) Grab sign-in roster, assemble ALL children and follow established evacuation route to the appropriate Parent Connection Area.
  - b) Elders and other key leaders assemble at nurseries to assist in evacuation.
  - c) Stay away from building and emergency vehicles.
  - d) Do an immediate head count to be sure you have all kids who are listed on the roster.
  - e) Have children stay seated until the "all clear" has been given to return to the building.
  - f) OR if you are instructed, begin parent pick-up outside by comparing security labels and child's nametag. Be sure to check kids off the class roster as they are picked up.
  - g) Stay in designated area until all children are claimed by a parent.