



Children's Ministry

Handbook

Life Spring Church

Spring Hill, Kansas

Lifekids Mission, Vision, and Goals

Mission: To help children know, obey, and glorify God, while equipping their spiritual leaders to lead them to become disciples of Jesus.

Vision: Children will experience and express the love of God through growing in God's Word together (Community) in age-appropriate Bible classes (Growth), worshipping as a body of believers through kids worship and "Big Service" (Worship), being an ambassador of Christ to our community through participation in local outreach events and service projects (Impact).

Goals: At Life Spring Church, there are a few goals we have in mind for Children's Ministry.

1. Provide a kid-friendly atmosphere where all kids feel welcome and experience Christ's love for them. *(Psalm 122:1 I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!")*
2. Help children hear, learn, and obey the word of God. *(Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.)*
3. Provide parents with resources for being their children's spiritual leaders. *(Deuteronomy 6:6-7 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.)*
4. Provide teachers/assistants with resources for being a child's spiritual leader at church. *(Ephesians 4:11-12 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.)*

Lifekids Policies and Procedures

These policies are put in place for the safety of children in our care, volunteers who work with children, and parents of children at Life Spring Church.

Lifekids Team Member

Volunteer Qualifications:

1. All volunteers must be regular attenders of Life Spring Church.
2. All volunteer **teachers** must be members of Life Spring Church or complete approval process by the Elder Board.
3. All volunteers must complete a Background Check (provided by the church.)
4. All volunteers must be 14 years or older to assist in the classroom. Teens ages 12-13 may help out in elementary classrooms, under supervision, if approved by the Director.

Joining the team- process:

After completing a Volunteer application and background check, you will be contacted by the Children's Ministry Director to find your "best fit" ministry area. We have many areas of service including Sunday school, Check-in Desk, Events Team, Kids Discipleship Club, and VBS.

Lifekids Team Member:

As a team member, you are representing the "church" to children. So, be careful what you say, make sure your actions are God-honoring, and your dress (clothing) is modest- if in doubt, don't wear, say, or do it! You are responsible for fulfilling your "job" duties and reporting to the Director over your ministry area if something is needed or there is a concern. For the safety of the children and to maintain security during Lifekids events/activities, only team members are allowed inside the Children's classrooms. The only exception is the security team on duty, staff members, and a parent (with Director approval). Spouses, friends, church members not currently working in CM, should NOT "visit" team members during their "duty" time, as it takes the teams attention off the children in their care.

Children's Ministry Policies:

- Two team members will be present in a classroom whenever possible.
 - If only one teacher/team member is in the room, door will remain open.
 - Always have 2 volunteers present if there is only 1 child or combine with another class- avoid 1:1 settings for safety of volunteer and child.
- Child with special needs (developmental, social, physical, emotional, allergies):
 - Children's Ministry Leadership will work with teacher and parent to come up with a plan of success for their child while attending Lifekids functions.
 - Plan will be in writing and kept in Lifekids Info Cards book- this information is confidential and will only be shared with those in care of the child on a "need to know" basis.
 - Plan will be updated yearly, or as changes in treatment, strategies, or instructions occur.
 - One-on-one "buddy" (team member) will be placed with child on as-needed basis.
 - Training will be provided to equip volunteers.
 - Program Director (ex. VBS, Nursery, SS, etc.) will make accommodations in the classroom as needed and as resources allow.
 - Child will be placed in age-appropriate classroom and promoted with peers:
 - Accommodations will be made on an individual basis.
 - Exception to policy made if determined it is the "best interest of child."
 - Food allergies- Program director is responsible for making sure an alternate food item/accommodation is provided for child with a food allergy. Every reasonable attempt will be made to reduce the risk of exposure of the allergen.
 - Parent will be made aware of food choices and provide alternate if LSC is unable to accommodate.
 - Teachers will be responsible for checking allergies before having food item in class- Allergy Alert sign will be placed on door before class so parents are aware of food being served. Teacher will take reasonable steps to eliminate exposure to the allergen during child's participation in Lifekids activity.
 - Epi-pen is only to be administered by Medical Team or parent and will be provided by the parent (prescribed by a doctor) along with instructions on use. Parent will meet with Medical Team if any further information is needed.

Classroom Procedures:

- Visiting children will have a "Teacher Tag" with important information and a "Parent Tag" with security number for pick up.
- We will strive to maintain the following ratios in our classrooms:
 - Infant- 1:3
 - K-2nd grade- 1:8
 - Preschool- 1:4
 - 3rd-6th grade- 1:15
- The classroom doors should never be locked and door window should not be covered.
- The lights should remain on, unless needed to be off for an activity.
- Teacher/team is welcome to decorate room as they like to enhance learning, but all furniture changes need to be approved by Program Director (Ex. VBS, JAM, etc.) to ensure room is kept safe and age-appropriate for all children in our care.
- Please use provided materials for hanging things on walls.
- If food is served, please check the "allergy list" posted inside your cabinet door. If there is a question, please speak with program director.
- Preschool/Elementary classrooms- it is best practice to post an Allergy Alert sign on the door whenever you are going to provide an activity with food. These are located inside your cabinet door.

Check-in:

Parent will check child in at the Children's Ministry Check-in Desk. A NEW Lifekids Info Card will be completed at the beginning of even ministry years. This will ensure the most up-to-date information in the child's records. Attendance is taken during the check-in process, but teachers are encouraged to keep an attendance chart in their classroom to encourage attendance/relationships.

Dismissal:

All children must remain in classroom until parent or authorized person picks up. Parent will show Key tag or temporary tag to pick up their child. IF a parent does not have their key tag, please send them to the check-in desk for a temporary tag. Once key card is shown, verify nametag matches security number listed and remove nametag. Child is dismissed. If a temporary tag is given, please collect, verify, and return to the CM Check-in Desk after class. *Child will keep nametag if already checked in for Kids Church (K-3rd grade).

Restroom Procedures

- When taking a child to the restroom, always take at least one other child- age appropriate groups. Elementary classes- child can go into restroom by themselves, but adult should remain in hall to supervise back to class.
- Women working in the classroom should always have the responsibility of taking child to restroom or changing a diaper, whenever possible.
- When helping a preschooler in the restroom, leave the door propped, never closed.
- In restroom emergencies, contact parent to change their child (preschool- elementary age.) Provide bag for soiled clothing.
- There should always be another volunteer present when a diaper is changed.

Illness:

- We have a well-child policy during all church activities, classes, and events.
- If a child is sick at check-in, please remind parent of policy.
- If a child gets sick during attendance, please contact Program Director or Security so parent can be contacted and child picked up.
- A child will not be admitted with any of these symptoms: frequent coughing, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, contagious skin conditions, eye discharge or pink eye, and/or runny nose (anything but clear discharge).
- Teacher/Team member are not to give a child medication of any kind. If a parent requests this, please refer them to program director.
- We ask you not to volunteer in any ministry if you are sick. Please notify your leaders and request a replacement.

Minor Accidents:

- During Sunday mornings and Lifekids events, there is always a Security/Medical Team member present. They will be monitoring the hallways and campus. There is also a radio located in the Resource Room to contact them if needed.
- FIRST AID kits are available at the Check-in Desk (both Elementary and Nursery) and in many classrooms. Ice is also available in the kitchen.
- Report any hazardous situations to the Security Team or leadership immediately and correct if safe and possible.
- If a child is injured in any way, please notify the security team or Program Director.

- Deal with injuries right away. Do not get the parent unless absolutely necessary. However, do tell the parent about the injury when they pick up their child, regardless of how minor the injury. If a parent reacts negatively, it is wise to inform the Program Director so that they are aware of the situation.

Major Medical Emergencies:

In case of a serious emergency involving broken bones, severe cuts or bleeding, convulsions, fainting, unconsciousness, allergic reaction (has epi-pen) or other serious injury, follow these procedures:

- Notify the Security/Medical Team- radio is located in RR.
- Keep calm and keep children and the injured child as calm as possible. Have children move away from the injured child- DON'T MOVE THE INJURED CHILD.
- The person in charge (Security/Medical Team) will call 911 after assessing the situation and give the information and directions as needed.
- If an epi-pen is needed, the Medical Team will administer and call EMS.
- As soon as the Security/Medical Team is notified, the Teacher/Team member should return to help in removing other children in the classroom from the scene of the accident.
- The person in charge (Security/Medical Team) will locate the parents and advise them of the condition of the child and procedure suggested by medical personnel.
- An incident/accident form should be written as soon as possible with specifics of medical personnel- this is done by the Security/Medical Team.

Guiding Behavior:

Discipline is a time for teaching--the very kind of teaching Jesus did with his disciples. It is not meant to be punishment, rather a chance to stop inappropriate behavior and help the child find a more appropriate way to behave. Here are some procedures for correcting behavior:

- Go over classroom rules and expectations, before the class begins. Keep them simple and be consistent.
- Prevent problems before they occur. The best way to avoid trouble is to stop it before it happens. Provide planned activities and keep kids engaged.
- Set clear, consistent boundaries. Kids need to know what they CAN do, model it!
- Redirect behavior. Try offering the child another activity.
- Give the child an option- offer 2 choices and let them choose.
- Acknowledge feelings and show the child that you care.
- When an issue occurs, problem solve with the child before frustration.

If you have tried redirection and talking through the problem without success, then it is time to call in the Program Director. It is their responsibility to talk with the parents about behavioral issues.

A Few Tips to Keep in Mind:

1. Acknowledge a child's good behavior.
2. Talk about the action and not the child's personality.
3. Remember that seventy percent of communication is non-verbal.
4. When addressing a child's behavior, always lower your voice.
5. Realize that a child's behavior may simply be a cry for your attention.
6. Avoid hurrying a child. A hurried child is usually a frustrated child.
7. Pray for God to give you patience and show you how to best teach the child.

Fire or other Emergencies:

- Line up students by the door and take a head count.
- If possible, have at least one leader at each end of the line.
- Know your exit route and quietly and calmly lead students out by proper exit.
(Located on the wall by the door.)
- Proceed to the **designated "safe spot."**
- Once you are clear of the building, take a head count and attendance.
- Return to building only after the "All Clear" has been sounded.
- Please do not dismiss any students from outside, unless you are unable to re-enter the building.
- For the safety of the children, parents may NOT get their child/children before the class has left the building.

Children's Ministry Handbook Agreement

I acknowledge, as a volunteer and representative of Life Spring Church and the ministries of LifeKids, that I have received, fully read, and understand the LK Policies and Procedures Handbook. As a requirement for volunteering in LifeKids ministries, I agree to abide by the written policies and procedures as stated or amended in the future, to the best of my knowledge and ability.

Volunteer Name (Printed)

Volunteer Signature

Parent Signature *(for teens only)*

Date