



**Children's Ministry
Policies, Procedures, & Guidelines**

Contents:

I.	Philosophy of the Children’s Ministry.....	2
	Mission.....	2
	Vision.....	2
	Key Verses to Guide Ministry	2
II.	Policies & Procedures.....	3
	Health.....	3-4
	Infectious Diseases.....	5
	Hygiene.....	5-6
	Safety.....	7-8
	Security.....	8-9
	Child Abuse.....	9
	Parent Policies.....	9-11
III.	Volunteer Guidelines.....	11
	Requirements to Serve.....	11
	Training.....	11
	Classroom Guidelines for Teachers.....	11-13
	Curriculum.....	14
IV.	Forms.....	14
	Volunteer Application.....	15-16
	Incident Report	17

Philosophy of Children's Ministry

Mission Statement:

To provide a safe environment where all children are engaged in God's Word and nurtured towards Christ-like faith and action.

Vision for our Children and the Ministry:

Parents:	Environment:	Relationships:	Spiritual:
Partnering Training Equipping	Safe Nurturing Peaceful Stable	Stimulating Fun/Engaging Diverse Welcoming Cultivating Peers and Adults Feel Valued Celebrate with each other Share together	Equipped for a lifetime Growing and sharing faith Gospel centered curriculum Applying scripture and interpreting scripture Opportunities to serve and evangelize Have a heart for mission and service Put God first Ongoing transformation Practice spiritual disciplines Profess faith and be baptized

Key Verses to Guide Our Ministry:

Children are Gifts from God: Psalm 127:3-5 & Luke 17:2

Grow together in the fruits of God's Spirit: Galatians 5:22

We all need grace and a Savior: John 3:16

We all strive to demonstrate God's greatest commandment: John 15:12 & 1 Corinthians 13: 4-7

Policies & Procedures

Health

Wellness:

Children MUST be free of the following for at least 24 hours (without medication) before entering:

*Fever of 100 or higher

*Vomiting or diarrhea

*Conjunctivitis (pink eye or other infection)

*Rash

*Nasal drainage that is green or yellow

*Sore Throat

*Open Sores

*Cold

*Excessive coughing

*New onset of a severe headache

*Difficulty breathing

*Loss of taste or smell

*Lice

**If a student has experienced any of the Covid-19 related symptoms (those underlined above), children will need to meet all three of the following criteria before entering:

1. At least one day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever reducing medication); and
2. The individual has improvements in symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath); and
3. At least 5 days have passed since the symptoms first appeared.

If a child has Covid-19 symptoms but is not evaluated by a healthcare professional or tested for Covid-19, the individual is assumed to have had it and will need to wait to enter until the above three steps of criteria are met as well.

If in close contact (within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more) with someone else who is confirmed or probable to have Covid-19; must remain at home for 5 days after contact.

If in close contact and vaccinated with no symptoms, may return but will need to wear a mask until 5-7 days after exposure.

If a child develops any of these symptoms while checked-in, the parent will be notified immediately for pick up. The child should be moved at least 6 feet away from all other children and all toys handled removed from play area and disinfected.

Health Protocols for Classrooms:

1. Especially for younger children, try to minimize toy sharing. If you notice toys have been placed in mouths, please set aside to sanitize after class.
2. Masks are welcomed.
3. There is a hydration station in the hallway that students may use to fill their own water bottle brought from home. Please DO NOT have students use the water fountain without a cup or bottle.
4. No food or candy is allowed to be eaten in the classroom. You may hand students an individually wrapped, store bought treat to be enjoyed at home.
5. Everyone should sanitize hands as they enter and exit the room.

Injury & First Aid:

We can administer ONLY band-aids and ice packs.

If a child is injured while in the care of the children's ministry, the teacher/volunteer will immediately notify the children's minister or ministry leader who will then immediately notify the parents. The teacher/volunteer will need to complete an Ouch Report which can be found in the classroom or at the Check-In station and should be turned into the children's minister or ministry leader to be kept on file as soon as possible. All injuries should be reported no matter how small they seem.

Bodily Fluids Procedure:

1. Control bleeding by applying pressure with a clean towel or cloth and care for the injured appropriately depending on the severity of the situation.
2. First aid supplies are located in rooms.
3. In order to protect everyone, disposable gloves are to be worn when handling any accident involving blood or body fluids.
4. If an emergency prevents the use of gloves, immediately clean the exposed skin with soap and water to reduce the possibility of infection.
5. Any teacher with an open wound or lesion should keep it covered until the area is healed.
6. Clean any affected surfaces with disinfectant.
7. Wash hands, even after wearing gloves.

Infectious Disease

As we have a biblical mandate to minister to all people, the occasion may arise when we are called to the health care needs of children with serious diseases, including, but not limited to Hepatitis-B, HIV, and Tuberculosis.

Parents or guardians of children with these types of health concerns are expected to inform the Children's Minister. All information will be held confidential, but if deemed necessary a medical committee may be asked to assemble and provide instruction for how to instruct teachers and caregivers for appropriate protection. If the parent or guardian does not agree to disclosure to those teachers or caregivers, the children's minister will provide lessons for the family to use at home with the child.

Hygiene

Maintaining a clean environment is a top priority. Therefore, proper hygiene should be followed in handwashing, diapering in nurseries, and cleaning of the room as well as toys.

Handwashing:

Teachers or Caregivers should wash/sanitize hands...

1. Upon arrival into the room.
2. Before preparing, serving, or eating food.
3. Before and after feeding infants or children.
4. After using or helping a child use the toilet.
5. After every diaper change.
6. After removal of disposable gloves.
7. After contact with body fluids (such as spit up, nasal discharge, tears, saliva, urine, stool, blood, or vomit).
8. Before leaving the room.

Infants and children should wash/sanitize hands...

1. Upon arrival into the room.
2. Before handling or eating food.
3. After using the toilet.
4. After contact with bodily fluids.

*According to the Center for Disease Control, the proper method to wash hands is to wet them, rub soap into a lather and rub hands together for 15 seconds. Rinse. The faucet should be turned off with a paper towel. If your room does not have a sink, please use the sanitizer provided.

Diaper Changing:

1. Gather all necessary items.
2. Lay child on a strip of changing paper.
3. Put on a new pair of disposable gloves for every diaper change.
4. Remove wet/soiled diaper and use wipes or damp paper towels to clean child.
5. Place wipes and diaper in plastic bag or lined trash receptacle with lid.
6. Remove gloves by pulling the glove inside out from the wrist so that all residue remains inside the glove.
7. Put on clean diaper.
8. Wash hands with soap and water after each diaper change.
9. BE SURE TO CHECK BABIES NEAR THE END OF THE SESSION TO SEND HOME DRY.
10. Same procedure applies to those wearing pull-ups.

Cleaning Room and Toys:

Nursery Rooms (downstairs) –

Put away toys and tidy the room.

- Sanitize used toys and manipulatives.
- Wipe down surfaces (tables, mat, counter, changing table, chairs, large toys).
- Spot check floor – cleaning up any large crumbs, etc. and make sure floor is cleared for cleaning staff to vacuum.
- Bag up dirty laundry.
- Turn off lights; lock doors.

Preschool – Elementary Rooms (upstairs) –

Put away toys and tidy the room.

- Sanitize used toys and manipulatives.
- Wipe down surfaces (tables, mat, counter, changing table, chairs, large toys).
- Spot check floor – cleaning up any large crumbs, etc. and make sure floor is cleared for cleaning staff to vacuum.
- Turn off lights; lock doors.

Safety

Upstairs Classrooms – Preschool – Elementary

Severe Weather Plan:

1. The security team lead will notify staff and leadership to take emergency precautions.
2. Teachers will line students up and encourage a calm and orderly line.
3. Classrooms 200 – 207 will exit north stairwell and move to the downstairs men’s restroom at the bottom of the stairs. If overflow is needed, some may go into the copy room as well. Classrooms 210-217 will exit south stairwell and move to the women’s restroom at the bottom of the stairs.
4. Once in the restroom instruct for children to get in a sheltering position – kneeling with hands over head.

Active Threat Plan:

1. The security team will notify staff and leadership to take emergency precautions.
2. Children’s Hall monitor, will alert all teachers to hide.
3. **Hide:** Teachers should do everything possible to hide all children in the classroom. Lock and barricade the door – putting as many things as possible between the door and the children. Try to keep children calm, reading the Bible, other books, or praying quietly. Try not to make any noise.

Fire Emergency Plan:

1. Sirens will go off.
2. Teachers will line students up and encourage a calm and orderly line.
3. Classrooms 200 – 207 will exit north stairwell and move to the nearest exit that is safe (most likely the north doors). Classrooms 210-217 will exit south stairwell and move to the nearest exit that is safe (most likely the east or north doors).
4. Outside, the students should be led to the bus barn doors in the east parking. Teachers should take attendance to make sure all students are accounted for. Parents will be directed to get them from this location.

Downstairs Classrooms – Nurseries

Severe Weather Plan:

1. The security team lead will notify staff and leadership to take emergency precautions.
2. Teachers will place babies in the evacuation cribs.
3. Teachers will move cribs to the nearest Women’s restroom.
4. Teachers will then hold babies trying to protect their heads.

Active Threat Plan:

1. The security team will notify staff and leadership to take emergency precautions.
2. Children's Hall monitor will alert all teachers to hide.
3. **Hide:** Teachers should do everything possible to hide all babies in the classroom. Lock and barricade the door – putting as many things as possible between the door and the babies. Try to keep babies calm, reading the Bible, other books, or singing softly. Try not to make any noise.

Fire Emergency Plan:

1. Sirens will go off.
2. Teachers will place babies in an evacuation crib.
3. Teachers will use the nearest exit that is safe to exit the building. (Most likely the west doors next to the auditorium.)
4. Outside, the teachers should push the cribs to the bus barn doors, in the east parking lot, where parents will come to get them.

Security

Parents:

*Check in is mandatory for 0-3rd grade.

*All children must have a sticker before entering Children's Worship or classroom. Please place the sticker on the child's back.

*All stickers will include the child's name, parent/guardian name, phone number, and any **allergies or special needs noted**. Please also verbally let teachers know to look for allergies and/or special needs at drop off.

*Check in stations are located at the top of the north stairwell and at the door to nurseries.

*All children will be held in classroom until the adult with the matching code sticker arrives.

*If you wish to have an older sibling pick-up, they need to have the matching code sticker. Only siblings 4th grade and up may pick-up.

*You may get the app on your phone to make things go even faster!
Church Center App in the App Store or Google Play.

*After checking in on your phone, scan the barcode at a printer located at the check in station.

*Thank you for your help in making this a safe environment for our children!

*If you lose your sticker or have other questions, please text 817-995-8500.

Teachers:

Thank you for your help in making our check in system effective.

*If a child does not have a sticker, they may not enter class, please direct them to the check in station.

*At dismissal, **please make sure those picking up have the matching tag and collect stickers.**

Child Abuse

By law, if you suspect any incidents of child abuse, it is your responsibility to report:

Call: 1-800-252-5400

Or report online: dfps.state.tx.us

The Children's Minister should:

1. Document all efforts at handling the incident.
2. Report the incident to the church's attorney if guidance is needed.
3. Seek Christian counseling services for the family if needed.

Parent Policies

Parents are a child's first and most important teachers. Teachers here at Southside count it a privilege to partner with parents in laying foundations for faith in young lives.

Parents can help teachers by observing the following guidelines:

1. Become familiar with Southside Policies and Procedures for the Children's Ministry. These are well thought out by multiple committees and created to ensure the care and safety of all children.
2. If you ever have questions or concerns with guidelines, please feel free to reach out to the Children's Minister.

Before Coming to Church:

1. Remember to label all items (i.e. diaper bags, pacifiers, bottles, cups, etc.)
2. Preschoolers who are being toilet trained need to have a change of clothes in a labeled bag.
3. Leave your personal toys at home.
4. Bring your child regularly to church. Your child will feel more comfortable when church is a part of your established routine.
5. Talk to your child positively about going to church. Use the names of your child's teachers and other friends in class when talking about happy times at church.

Arriving at Your Child's Room:

1. Make sure you have checked your child in and their sticker is on their **BACK**.
2. **Please have your child try to use the bathroom prior to class or Children's Worship. This helps our volunteers so much!**
3. Parents **should NOT enter the classroom or linger at the door**. Drop them off at the door with a hug and smile, saying I'll be back in a few minutes. This is for security reasons as well as to help our teachers and other students with separation anxiety. If your child should experience prolonged anxiety, teachers will notify you to come back for them.

Tips and Suggestions:

1. Be sure to participate in various parenting classes or studies throughout the year that you can participate in.
2. Be sure to talk and study with your children more at home. Once or twice a week is not enough. Beginning at age 2, students will come home with a sheet that goes over what we studied in class. This page gives suggestions of ways you can continue the conversation at home with them.
3. Look for ways your family can serve together at Southside.

Promotion:

Students are promoted once a year. One exception might be the nursery, if one is getting too full. Otherwise, we promote the end of each August. Children receive a Bible from the church as they promote to 1st and 6th grades. The classes and ages are listed below:

Baby Nursery
(0-12 months)

Toddler Nursery
(12-24 months)

2's Class

(2 prior to September 1st)

3's Class

(younger 4's also welcome)

PreK

(will attend kindergarten the following school year)

Kindergarten

1st – 2nd Grade

3rd Grade

4th – 5th Grade

Volunteer Guidelines

Requirements to Serve

Complete Southside Application to Volunteer to be approved by Children's Minister

Complete Background Check through Ministry Safe

Complete Ministry Safe Training Video and Update Every 2 Years

Training

A Southside Children's Ministry Training/Appreciation will be offered to all teachers and volunteers in person twice a year (in the fall and spring) and also be available to view online. This training will be specific to Southside curriculum and children.

Classroom Guidelines

All volunteers should be neat in appearance and wear the name tag provided so parents can clearly identify the approved volunteers.

Teachers/volunteers should arrive 5-10 minutes prior to class to make sure the room is ready to receive children. Children are set up for success when there is an opening activity ready to go for them.

2 Person Rule: There should always be 2 volunteers in every classroom. If for some reason there is not a second, the hall monitor should be alerted and the door should remain open.

If a new student with special allergies or special needs enters class. Please alert the Children's Minister. (text 817-995-8500)

Bathroom: Ages 2-3 - The teacher or teacher assistant will need to help those who are potty training. Always make sure the hall monitor is nearby at the sink area while assisting. Ages 4+, make sure you see the hall monitor and you can send the child to the restroom. If you do not see the hall monitor, the teacher assistant will monitor from the hallway near the sinks.

Discipline: As much as possible using preventative measures should eliminate the need for further discipline.

- **Proximity** – stay close to students; circulate
- **Rules** – be firm, fair, consistent
- **Enforcement** – choices and consequences (see below for an appropriate consequence)
- **Vision** – keep end result in mind, anticipate, mutual respect
- **Expectations** – one gets what one expects, teacher attitude
- **Needs** – meet students' needs, Maslow's hierarchy
- **Touching** – Kind words, High fives, Smile
- **Interest** - Express genuine interest in student
- **Value of Biblical Knowledge** – What you're teaching is so important - Be prepared
- **Enthusiasm** – Students reflect you attitude!

- Taken from Great Expectations

If a child's behavior is disruptive or harmful after using preventative measures, it may be appropriate for the teacher to correct a child's behavior with love and respect. For example, if a child is throwing a block, it would be appropriate for the block to go away for a while. Gentle reminders of taking turns and showing kindness are often needed especially with little ones.

If disruptive or harmful behavior still continues, please notify the Children's Minister. The Children's Minister may request to meet with the child's family; we can all work together to create a plan to make sure the child is experiencing success in the classroom. Communication and teamwork are imperative.

What if a child bites or hits another child? Or a child gets hurt?

All bites/cuts need to be cleaned with soap and water.

Notify the Children's Minister (text 817-995-8500)

An Ouch Report needs to be filled out and given to the parents as well as one to the Children's Minister. (Copies are located in your classroom along with the first aid kit.)

Notify parents immediately that their child was bitten/hit/fell IF skin has been broken and/or the child is inconsolable.

Help parents understand that we are sorry this happened but unfortunately it is inevitable with young children sometimes and we will do everything in our efforts to prevent accidents and help children that are frustrated/aggressive. Let the parent know that you are concerned and listen to them.

Notify the parents of the child who bit/hit when they pick up their child and assure them that we love their child and look forward to their return the following week.

Do not use names of who bit/hit or who was bitten/hit. Please be as general as possible.

PRAY, and ask that God would help us to use circumstances such as these to model grace and forgiveness.

Teacher Responsibilities: Deliver the lesson following the provided curriculum. Teachers may feel free to create their own activities to go along with the lesson but are asked to follow the Scope and Sequence of the curriculum. If teachers would like more detailed support with lesson plans, they may request a Ready, Set, Teach Box from the Children's Minister.

Greeter/Hall Monitor Responsibilities: Be available prior to class at the check in station to assist as needed in checking in students. If a student has allergies or special needs, please alert the Children's Minister (text 817-995-8500). Monitor from the hallway those using the restroom. Be available to assist a teacher who needs it. In case of an emergency, be ready to alert all teachers and help as needed. Be alert to any suspicious activity and report to the Southside Security Team via Walkie Talkie.

Teacher Aide Responsibilities: Be ready to assist teachers as needed. This may include helping take children to the restroom, making copies, or helping students with classroom activities.

Buddy Responsibilities: You are assigned to a particular child to assist as needed with appropriate support and accommodations. The Children's Minister will go over the child's needs with you with the parent's permission.

Miscellaneous:

Teachers/Volunteers also need to make sure all children are picked up and the room is tidied before leaving. (See hygiene for specific details)

Please no outside food in the classrooms. Beverages with a lid and placed away from children is okay to have in the classrooms.

Please use the provided clips and marker board area to display student work and/or teaching visual aids, posters, etc. Please DO NOT staple, nail, or hang items to other parts of the wall without approval of the Building Committee.

Supplies, equipment, and/or furniture may not be added or removed from classrooms without consultation with the Children's Minister.

Curriculum

Sunday Morning:

Gospel Project – an in-depth study of the Bible – both Old and New Testaments. By the time a child exits 5th grade, they should have gone through the Bible 3 times. Each lesson also makes a connection back to Jesus.

Teachers may use the guides to create their own lesson activities OR they may request a Ready, Set, Teach Box and the Children's Minister will provide detailed plans, copies and all resources needed for the lesson.

Wednesday Evening:

Thematic units that follow church scope and sequence for the year. Children's Minister will provide lesson plans for all volunteers.

Forms:

Application

Incident Report

Southside Church of Christ
2101 Hemphill Street | Fort Worth, TX 76110

Children’s Ministry Safety Application Form
CONFIDENTIAL

This is not an employment application. The purpose of this form is to assist in the creation of a safe environment for children and students who participate in the programs of Southside Church of Christ or those programs that use Southside Church of Christ facilities.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Sex: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Marital Status: _____

(single, married, separated, divorced, widowed, etc.)

Are you a member or regular attender of this church? _____ If so, for how long? _____

How long have you lived at your current address? _____

Previous address: _____

List all other cities and states where you have lived as an adult (please use back of page if necessary):

Please list the name, address, city and state of other churches you have attended regularly during the past 10 years (please use back of page if necessary):

Please list *all previous church work* involving children, students, or vulnerable populations (impaired, adults, special needs individuals etc.). (List each church's name and address, type of work carried out, dates, and a **contact person** familiar with your work there. **Use back of this page for more space, if necessary.**):

Please list *all previous non-church work* involving children, students or vulnerable populations. (List each organization's name and address, type of work carried out, dates and a **contact person** familiar with your work there. **Use back of this page for more space, if necessary.**):

Because our church cares for our members and our children, and desires to protect them, please answer the following questions. We understand that the answers to these questions may be private and deeply personal, and we will respect and protect your privacy. Please use the back to add more information, if desired. (This information will be kept entirely confidential.)

Do you consider yourself to have been physically or sexually abused as a child?

Have you ever physically or sexually abused a child?

Has someone ever accused you of abusing a child?

RELEASE

I authorize Southside Church of Christ to contact all individuals, organizations and references listed on this **Safety Application Form** in order to verify the information I have provided to the church. I agree to release from liability any person or organization that provides information concerning me, including those persons I have listed as references, as well as contact persons from my previous church and non-church work, listed on this application.

I understand and agree that any information received from the background check and application verification will not be disclosed to me, and I hereby waive any right I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me on this form.

By signing this form, I certify and affirm that the information I have given on this form is true, complete and correct in all respects.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

BOO-BOO REPORT



Name of Child:	Date:
Time of Injury:	Location and type of injury:
How the injury occurred:	
Treatment for Injury was:	
Notification:	Follow-up Care: