

Safety & Security Policies & Procedures for Masonboro Baptist Church Children's Ministry

Rev. 3/6/19

In order to provide the safest and most secure environment for all children and families at church and on church outings, parents, volunteers, and staff should follow these guidelines as well as the instructions of church staff and emergency responders.

To reduce risk 1) Be prepared and equipped 2) Quickly respond to emergencies 3) Know how to get help 4) Document incidents thoroughly 5) Follow these guidelines and encourage others to follow them as well.

I. Emergency Response- Volunteers and staff will focus on 1) MOVING children to the safest location as quickly as possible 2) CONTACTING emergency responders, church staff & parents 3) PROVIDING emergency aid when needed.

A. Fire-

- a. Use posted evacuation plans in each building to safely exit the building.
- b. Take children, emergency binder (behind door), and walkie talkie with you when you evacuate.
- c. The last volunteer to leave should double check that all have evacuated and doors are closed if safe to do so.
- d. Move children to the designated safe place* and remain there for parent pickup or further instructions. Be sure all children and adults are accounted for.
- e. Dial 911 and report your location to church staff using walkie talkie or cell phone.

***Safe locations are: 1) Sanctuary 2) Gym 3) Cross in the cemetery.**

B. Weather Emergencies-

- a. If outside, move children inside the closest safe building immediately. Do not remain outdoors if it is thundering or lightening or if a weather emergency watch/warning is in place.
- b. In each building, choose an interior hallway, room, or bathroom away from windows and doors for shelter in place during the emergency.
- c. Take children, emergency binder, and walkie talkie with you to safety location. Account for all children and adults and notify staff/parents of your location using walkie talkie and/or cell phones.
- d. If tornado warning is in effect, instruct children to kneel facing an interior wall with hands covering their heads.

C. Medical Emergency-

- a. Call for help first. Use the walkie talkie or cell phone to reach a staff person and dial 911 using a phone.
- b. Provide any necessary emergency care for the victim, but do not move the victim unless necessary to prevent additional injuries or for providing appropriate treatment.
- c. Have another volunteer move unaffected children in the same vicinity to another nearby location. Be sure all children and adults are accounted for and notify staff of their location.
- d. Contact victim's family as soon as you can and complete an incident report form.

D. Missing Child-

- a. As soon as you are aware that a child is unaccounted for, immediately contact church staff and other volunteers using walkie talkie or cell phone and begin search.
- b. While one volunteer remains with each class, other volunteers should begin looking for the child checking each classroom, bathroom, outside play area, parking lot (including cars). Notice any nearby people or situations. Be aware the child may be lost or frightened or they may be hiding. Take walkie

talkie with you as you search. Ask others you see along the way if they have seen the child and call out their name while searching.

- c. Church staff or a volunteer will notify the child's parent as soon as possible.
- d. As soon as child is located, use walkie talkie to notify others that child is safe. Return child to the classroom or his or her parents and complete an incident report. Take steps to prevent future incidents if a child is known to wander off or hide.
- e. If child is not located within 10 minutes of beginning a search, contact 911 using a phone. This can always be cancelled if the child is located. Waiting 10 minutes isn't necessary if there is reason to believe the child is in imminent danger.

E. Unauthorized Person or Intruder-

- a. If there is no apparent threat, a volunteer or staff person should approach the unknown person and ask them what they need. Direct the person out of the children's building and to the proper location and contact a staff person for assistance.
- b. If there is reason to believe children or adults are in danger, immediately take action. Move children into safest classroom and lock the door and close the blinds. Have children gather quietly away from windows and doors.
- c. Dial 911 using a phone. Use walkie talkie or cell phone to notify others that there is an intruder present, but do not reveal your location using walkie talkie.
- d. If possible, block door to classroom with furniture or other heavy items.
- e. Use caution before attempting to evacuate. Be sure evacuation route is safe and that you are able to quickly get all children to safer location before you attempt an evacuation. If you leave, take emergency binder and walkie talkie with you.

II. Volunteer Responsibilities

- A. All volunteers should be approved by the church staff and have a background screening on file (if over 18).
- B. All volunteers should attend an annual safety meeting to review policies.
- C. All volunteers should be familiar with all policies, how to respond in an emergency, who to contact for assistance as well as the campus layout, building codes, and locations of first aid kits, fire extinguishers, etc.
- D. Volunteers are encouraged to participate in First Aid and CPR courses.
- E. Volunteers are asked to take their position seriously, understanding that they are responsible for the safety and well-being of the children in their care. Be sure they have your full attention.
- F. Practice active awareness and diligence. Know which children and how many are in your care, know if any children have medical conditions or allergies that you may need to respond to, know which children are at risk for a custody dispute. This information is in the emergency binders in each classroom and on your attendance sheet, but if you are unsure, contact staff or parents for clarification.
- G. Only release children to the parent or guardian or designated individual. If there is any concern at all about who is picking up a child, contact the children's minister for assistance. If you do not know the parents, ask for an identification. Parents of young children who checked in at the kiosk should have a sticker that matches the one on their child.
- H. Be especially vigilant during transitions from one area to another and during drop-off and pick-up times. Be sure you communicate with other volunteers, parents, and church staff any pertinent information.
- I. Volunteers should understand what position they are filling and any specific expectations for that position. Position descriptions explain what each volunteer position involves.
- J. All volunteers should adequately prepare for their role, communicate clearly with staff, volunteers, and parents, and demonstrate Christ-honoring behavior that enriches the opportunities children will have to experience and respond to God's love. Volunteers are to be positive role models.
- K. It is very important that volunteers are present in the place they need to be at least 15 minutes prior to the time the activity is scheduled to begin. Volunteers who are running late, sick, or otherwise unable to fill their role should contact the children's minister and those with whom they are scheduled to volunteer as soon as possible.

- L. Two volunteers (age 16 and older) must be present at all times within reasonable distance to clearly see and hear what is going on and to respond if they are needed for assistance. If two volunteers are not present, contact the children's minister. Volunteers should not leave children unattended and should never be alone with a child or group of children in a closed room or vehicle.
- M. The children of volunteers may remain with their parent as long as their presence does not prevent the volunteer from fulfilling his or her role with the children. Children of volunteers should not play or wait in another room or outdoors unsupervised.
- N. Adults not approved as volunteers should not be in the classroom with the children at any time (excluding parents).
- O. Volunteers should notify the children's minister and parents any time they plan to be in an area other than their usual location with their class. Children should not be taken off campus without the knowledge of the children's minister and parental consent. Only approved drivers may operate church vehicles or transport children.
- P. Appropriate ratios of children to adults should be maintained. Contact staff if your group is too large for the number of volunteers present.
 - a. Babies-3's- 2 adults per 6 children
 - b. 4's-kindergarten- 2 adults per 10 children
 - c. 1st-3rd grade- 2 adults per 12 children
 - d. 4th-6th grade- 2 adults per 16 children
- Q. All incidents of suspected abuse or mistreatment should be reported immediately to the church staff, and when necessary, to the police and parents. If you see or hear something, say something. Likewise any concerns regarding the behavior, development, or well-being of a child should be discussed with the children's minister and appropriate interventions or strategies put into place. Concerns regarding other volunteers should also be discussed with the children's minister as soon as possible.
- R. Eligibility to volunteer
 - 1. Those who volunteer in a teaching capacity should
 - a. Be at least 16 years of age
 - b. Be an active participant in the life of the church for at least 6 months.
 - c. Identify himself or herself as a Christian and be actively growing in his or her faith.
 - d. Meet standards required by the church and the children's minister for volunteers who will work with children.
 - 2. Those who volunteer in a non-teaching capacity should
 - a. Be at least 13 years of age and in the 7th grade (or higher). Only volunteers 16 and older count towards 2 volunteer requirement.
 - b. Be an active participant in the life of the church for at least 6 months.
 - c. Meet standards required by the church and the children's minister for volunteers who will work with children.
 - 3. The church staff, Nominating Committee, and Children's Ministry Council have the responsibility of recruiting and recommending volunteers. These guidelines will guide their decisions, but other factors may also affect a person's eligibility to volunteer at the discretion of these bodies.

III. Parent Responsibilities

- A. An adult (or sibling 12 or older) should physically walk the child between buildings on the church campus and should ensure the volunteers are present prior to leaving the child.
- B. Parents should pick up children in a timely manner as soon as the event ends.
- C. Children who are sick (or who are contagious) should not participate in church activities until they are well. Follow the same guidelines that apply for school and/or daycare regarding fevers, vomiting, lice, etc in order to keep all children healthy.
- D. Parents should complete or update the Child Information and Permission Form annually and keep the children's minister and volunteers aware of any changes in the child's health or household.

- E. Parents are strongly encouraged to remind volunteers of serious allergies or medical conditions every time they drop their child off to reduce the risk to their child. We do sometimes have snacks as part of activities, so please be sure volunteers know of any restrictions and provide an alternative for your child if necessary.
- F. Only prescription medications (with the exception of Benadryl for allergies) can be left for volunteers to administer and a medication permission form and emergency action plan must be on file for the volunteers to accept these medications.
- G. Parents should read all communications from the church regarding children's activities. Email, text reminders, bulletins, and other announcements provide details regarding upcoming events to remain informed.
- H. Parents should discuss all concerns and questions directly with the children's minister.
- I. Parents should sign children in and out of infant and toddler classes using the sign in sheet or at the kiosk. In other classes, parents should be sure the volunteer in charge sees that the child has been dropped off or picked up. Parents may be asked to show identification before picking up their child as a precaution if they are not known to the volunteers. Parents should always inform the volunteers if someone other than themselves will pick up their child or if there is a custody concern.
- J. Pagers are available for parents in the nursery area. Parents of children 3 and younger are encouraged to take a pager when they sign in their child and return it when they pick up. Parents of older children may need pagers in certain circumstances and should discuss this with the volunteer or children's minister.
- K. Parents should provide diapers, wipes, bottles, baby food, pacifiers, etc. for babies if needed. Bags should be labeled clearly and hung on the child's labeled hook.
- L. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the children's ministry by regularly volunteering, donating supplies or making other contributions as needed.

IV. General Safety & Considerations

- A. Children's buildings are to remain locked during church activities. One door to each building is equipped with a key code entry and a doorbell. This is the designated door for entry and exit. Be sure doors are completely closed and locked behind you each time you go through them. Volunteers should be diligent about being aware of guests and others who may be trying to enter the building. Children are not permitted to use the key code entry boxes.
- B. If you open a window, be sure to close and lock it when you leave the room.
- C. At the end of class, put away all items and throw away all trash. If dirty diapers or food are in the trash, please take the bag to the dumpster. Return pagers, walkie talkies, and baby monitors to their chargers. If anything was moved from another room, please return it. Turn off the lights when you leave.
- D. Report any damaged or unsafe items to the staff and do not allow children to use them.
- E. Help keep classrooms and storage places clean and ready for the next group.
- F. Diapering- be sure to sanitize the changing table and wash your hands after changing a diaper. Put diapers in plastic bags and into the trash.
- G. Serving food- clean tables and hands prior to serving food or drinks. Be sure food is appropriate for the child's age and that none of the children are allergic to the ingredients before serving the food. If children have snacks from home (this is discouraged outside of babies and toddlers), be sure these also will not be problematic for those with allergies before allowing them to eat them in the class. Children are asked not to eat doughnuts inside the children's buildings except under special circumstances.
- H. Guests- children who are not regular attenders or who are first time guests will need to have a child information card completed by the parent at drop off. Attach this card to the attendance sheet. Welcome children and parents and ask them if they need assistance finding the sanctuary or their classroom. Be sure they know when and where to pick up their child and the entry code for the building. Contact church staff using walkie talkie if possible to greet guests. It is very important that we have the first and last name of every child in attendance and the name and contact information for their parents.
- I. Attendance sheets are to be used. If a child's name is not already listed, then write it in at the bottom. Accurate attendance records are important.

- J. Please follow the volunteer schedule. If you are unable to serve, arrange to trade with another volunteer or contact a substitute. Please let the children's minister and those you are scheduled to serve with know of any changes. If you have an emergency or cannot find a substitute, please contact the children's minister as soon as possible.
- K. Let the children's minister know if there are any problems or concerns, suggestions, or comments you would like to make. The easiest way to handle these things is for us to talk about them openly and deal with them directly as soon as possible.

What we need to do to get all of this in place- still working on implementation:

1. We still have kids without forms
2. Child information cards for visitors
3. Emergency Binders updated & expanded
4. Position descriptions updated
5. Post fire evacuation plans in every room
6. Locks installed on every classroom door and curtains or blinds on every window (including doors)
7. Offer CPR and First Aid
8. Refill/replace sanitizer bottles, wipes, tissues, and paper towels
9. New schedule will need to be in compliance