
POLICIES

Ministry can only happen when Children are safe. The policies below are several non-negotiable policies that will help us keep children and volunteers safe while providing an environment that is welcoming and comfortable for families.

1. **Background Checks and Screening** - We run background checks on all of our children's workers. We also do an interview. This process helps us weed out those that may bring harm to children. That said, a troubled past isn't necessarily an automatic disqualification from ministry. If that's you, we'll just need to get to know you first.
2. **Travel in Packs** - Never be alone with a child. With younger children, there should always be two leaders in the room. The older rooms may occasionally have a single teacher, but should always stay in a group. A single teach must never be alone with a single student. This helps to protect the church, the child and the worker. As such, the leadership's goal is to make sure all classroom's are appropriately staffed (with two or more adults whenever possible). If you feel your room is unsafe, find the Director or a coordinator.
3. **Age-Appropriate Touch** - Part of creating a safe and comfortable environment is making sure all touch in our ministry remains 100% appropriate. That can change depending on the age group (ex. babies are going to be held, 1st graders are not). Use this rule of thumb: Don't touch a child anywhere a one-piece bathing suit would cover, Don't have them in your lap (toddlers and infants excluded). That said, touch is important to children. Give high-fives, fist-bumps, side-hugs, play tag, and comfort them with a hand on the shoulder. If another volunteer is acting inappropriately, tell the director or a coordinator. Even if you are not sure whether the behavior is appropriate, we won't embarrass them, but we will make sure the kids are completely safe. If this is new to you, feel free to double check what's appropriate with leaders at any time.
4. **About the Bathroom** - Never go into the bathroom with a child. If there is an accident or emergency, assist the child with the door open and in line of site of another adult. Only women are allowed to change diapers or assist younger children with the restroom. The door should still remain open in these cases. This rule isn't because we distrust men, but because most guest families are less comfortable with men changing their children. It also encourages men, who are less likely to serve with infants, to get involved.
5. **Handling Injuries** - If a child gets hurt, attend to their needs immediately. This may be as simple as a band-aid, but you may encounter something more serious. If it's more serious, go find the director or a coordinator to figure out the best next steps. Just make sure the child is safe before you go for another leader. If there are multiple adults, have one stay with the child. If they need an ambulance, make that call right away, then find the appropriate leader.
6. **Photos** - Don't take any photos without parental permission.

