

First Baptist Church
California, Missouri

"Faithfully Bringing Children to Christ"

FBC Children's Ministry

WORKER'S MANUAL



Table of Contents for Worker's Manual

Introduction	Page 3
Purpose and Programs	Page 4
Motto	
Purpose Statement	
Scripture Verse	
Ministry Programs	
Definition of Terms Used	Page 5
Workers' Qualifications	Page 6
General Qualifications	
Future Qualifications	
Worker to Child Ratio	
Volunteer Recruitment	
Workers' Responsibilities	Pages 7-10
General Responsibilities	
Child Illness / Accident Responsibilities	
Emergency Situation Responsibilities	
Workers' Behavior Guidelines	Pages 11-15
Expected Worker Behavior	
Expected Child Behavior	
Three-Step Discipline Process	
Child Protection Policy	
Forms	Pages 16-18
Child Information form	
Child Accident / Incident Report form	
Sign-in/Sign-out sheet	

Introduction

Dear FBC Children's Ministry Worker,

The FBC Children's Ministry Team was developed to bring together the planning for the various children's areas already in existence at First Baptist Church, as well as future growth opportunities. One of the projects of the Children's Ministry Team is the development and continued enhancement of this Children's Ministry Policy Manual.

This FBC Children's Ministry Policy Manual provides a framework to support the church's families, children, staff, and volunteers that are integral to the First Baptist Church Children's Ministry. Many hours have gone into the development of these policies, but this cannot compare to the thousands of hours that FBC staff and volunteers have spent planning and carrying out the Kingdom's work of training our children to understand the love of God.

This policy manual is a work in progress. There are topics that will be addressed in future revisions of the policy manual. If you have comments or questions regarding this policy manual or the children's ministry activities, please contact the church office at (573) 796-4452.

Keeping Our Focus on Christ,

Children's Ministry Team

Eula Maye Bond, Children's Sunday School Director

Beth Ziehmer, Preschool Sunday School Director

Jay Fortner, AWANA Commander

Sha Fortner, AWANA Commander

Marcia Burgher, Preschool/Children's Choir Director

Dorothy Huff

Mary Schreck

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FBC Children's Ministry Purpose and Programs

Our motto is:

Faithfully Bringing Children to Christ (FBC).

Our purpose is:

FBC Children's Ministry exists to provide opportunities for children to know, love, and follow Jesus Christ and to help their families become deeply committed Christians.

Our verse is:

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14 (NLT)

Our Weekly Children's Ministry Programs:

- **Children's Choir**
 - Purpose- *Reaching children through music.*
 - Wednesday Nights from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. during the school year.
 - For children three years old through 6th grade.

- **Sunday Morning Kids Club (Sunday School)**
 - Purpose- *Bringing children to Christ through friendship and Bible stories.*
 - Sunday Mornings from 9:30 – 10:25 a.m.
 - For all children birth through 6th grade.

- **Sunday Worship Nursery**
 - Purpose- *Providing a safe, nurturing environment for infants and small children so their family members can attend worship services.*
 - Sunday Mornings during the early and late worship services.
 - For children birth through four years old.

- **Children's Church**
 - **Purpose-***Bringing children to Christ through an age-appropriate worship service.*
 - Sunday mornings starting mid-way through the 10:30 worship service.
 - For children four years old through eight years old.

- **AWANA**
 - Purpose- *Training Approved Workmen that Are Not Ashamed.*

- Sunday Nights from 5:00 – 7:15 p.m. during the school year.
- For children three years old through 6th grade.

Definition of Terms Used

- **Director** *The primary person responsible for overseeing several ministry classes' organization, instruction, and activities.*
- **Worker** *Any person serving in the FBC Children's Ministry.*
- **Lead Worker** *The primary person responsible for overseeing classroom instruction and activities.*
- **Volunteer Worker** *Any non-compensated person responsible for assisting classroom instruction and activities.*
- **Staff Representative** *The member of paid ministerial staff that works directly with the Children's Ministry Team.*
- **Parent** *The parent or guardian of a child.*
- **Parent's Designee** *An adult or family member that the parent allows to pick up the child at the conclusion of an activity. The Lead Worker should be informed of the designee at the time the child arrives.*
- **Adult** *A person 18 years of age and older.*
- **Child/Minor** *A person under the age of 18 years.*

FBC Children's Ministry Workers' Qualifications

We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses . . . in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love. 2 Corinthians 6:3-4, 6

It is the desire of FBC Children's Ministry to have qualified, volunteer workers ministering to the children of our church and community. Below is a list of qualifications that each worker must meet before they are able to serve in our children's ministry area:

- **General Qualifications**

- Each Children's Ministry worker should display Christ-like character and a desire to bring children to Christ.
- Each Children's Ministry worker will be informed of the children's ministry policy and guidelines.
- Each Children's Ministry lead worker will have been a member of FBC church for at least six months.
- There should be two adult workers per room. It is recommended that if the workers are related, a third non-related worker should be present.

- **Future Qualifications** *(To be implemented at a later date.)*

- Each Children's Ministry worker will authorize a background check or provide proper documentation of prior background check completed within the last three years.

- **Appropriate Worker to Child Ratio**

- Birth through age two: No less than one adult to four children.
- Age two through four: No less than one adult to five children.
- Age four through kindergarten: No less than one adult to five children.
- 1st through 6th grade: No less than one adult to six children.

- **Volunteer Recruitment**

All church members are vital to the success of the FBC Children's ministry, through prayer support, giving, and volunteering. The volunteers who lead the children's programs hold a very important position in our ministry, as they carry out the ministry activities. Parents, family members, and other adults within the church are encouraged to serve in the children's programs. Contact the church office to offer your assistance.

FBC Children's Ministry Workers' Responsibilities

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it. Proverbs 22:6 (NIV)

It is the desire of FBC Children's Ministry to have clear and communicated responsibilities that each worker understands and executes. Below is a list of responsibilities that each worker is expected to perform in their specific children's ministry area:

- **General Responsibilities**

INFORMATION

- Under the guidance of the appropriate Children's Ministry director, lead workers should ensure that a 'Child Information Sheet' is collected on each child. This information should be safeguarded and not left out for public display. Encourage the parents to provide information on allergies, other health concerns, and special child issues.

ARRIVAL / DEPARTURE

- At least one Children's Ministry worker should be in the appropriate area (classroom, gym, sanctuary, etc.) to receive children 15 minutes before an activity.
- It is suggested that the Children's Ministry worker make visual, if not verbal, contact with the parent or guardian of the child when child arrives (if possible).
- For health and safety reasons, each Children's Ministry worker in the nursery area should make sure that child's items (bottles, pacifiers, diapers, diaper bag) are labeled and distributed to appropriate child.
- Children's Ministry workers should make sure that children do not possess gum, candy, or personal toys in the Children's Ministry activities. If this occurs, please remove from child's possession and return to child at the time of his/her departure.
- Children's Ministry workers should release children to the designated area to be picked up by the parent or parent's designee at the conclusion of the activity. Supervision needs to be provided until all children have departed. Preferably children through first grade will be picked up at the classroom by the parent or parent's designee. If a worker has special pickup procedure, it is their responsibility to communicate this to the parent or parent's designee.
- It is the parent's responsibility to pick up children at the appropriate time and place at the conclusion of the activity. If consistent tardiness occurs with a parent, please inform the parent and then, if necessary, notify the director of the ministry activity.

ENVIRONMENT

- Children's Ministry workers should attempt to maintain a clean and orderly environment; this will help to keep focus and prevent injuries. (Specific attention should be given to the nursery area: handling child accidents, cleaning toys, and cleaning nursery equipment.)
- Children's Ministry workers should attempt to maintain a safe environment; this also will help to keep focus and prevent injuries. (Please remove any possibly dangerous or harmful toys and properly put away any possibly dangerous or harmful equipment.)
- Donation of toys and furniture are subject to inspection and determination of appropriateness for the activity setting. Encourage the donator to contact the church office regarding any donation of items so the appropriate director can be notified and determine if the items can be utilized.

FOOD

- Usually the nursery keeps Cheerios on hand and they can be given to children unless the parent states otherwise. Nursery workers will only give children items indicated as approved on information form.
- An allergy alert poster will be posted at the classroom door of the preschool rooms if a food will be served in class that day as part of an activity.
- Children's Ministry workers should be provided with up-to-date knowledge by the parents of any food allergies that the child is known to have.

- **Child Illness/Accident Responsibilities**

ILLNESS

- Protecting children from germs and sickness is not entirely possible, but parents and workers can cooperatively help children and workers to avoid illness as much as possible. Keeping ill children away from other children is part of that protection. It is recommended that a child should remain home for **24-48 hours after** last having a fever, vomiting or diarrhea, a sore throat, eye infection, skin rash, or after starting antibiotics.
- If a Children's Ministry worker perceives a child to have symptoms of illness or disease, the child should immediately be separated from the other children and the parent should be contacted.

ACCIDENT

- In the event of minor first aid requirements, the Children's Ministry worker should handle the situation as determined necessary by the worker. No medication will be administered until the parent is located to administer it. All administration of medications is the responsibility of the parent, except for teething tablets/gel and diaper creams/ointment as designated by the parents. If the parent cannot be found, he/she should be informed of the injury and circumstances when they pick up their child.
- In the event of a more severe first aid requirement, the Children's Ministry worker should calm child down, put child in a position to reduce shock (lying down with feet up), and if necessary, control bleeding by applying pressure. If the worker feels it is necessary to call 911, they should do so. The parent should be located immediately. If 911 has not been called and the parent feels that an emergency response is necessary, then they should do so. The Children's Ministry worker should fill-out a 'Child Accident/Incident Report' after situation is stabilized.

- **Emergency Situation Responsibilities**

It is the desire of FBC Children's Ministry to have clear and communicated guidelines for the workers to follow in case of emergency. These guidelines are necessary for the safety of the children and the workers. They should be understood and followed by the workers and parents.

EMERGENCY RELOCATION INSIDE

- In case of emergency requiring relocation inside, a bell will sound three consecutive rings. The worker should instruct the children to stay in the room and get under something sturdy, such as a table or desk. If this is not possible, have children crouch near an interior wall, bent over with their hands on the back of their heads. The worker should stay in the classroom with the children until a staff member or program director comes to release. Parents can pick-up their children after they have been released.

EMERGENCY RELOCATION OUTSIDE

- In case of emergency requiring relocation outside, a bell will sound one continuous ring. The worker should make sure all children exit the class and then walk them to the lower East parking lot- using the predetermined path. Once at the lower parking, the worker should have their children sit in a circle and re-take attendance. Any missing children should be reported immediately to a staff member or program director. The worker should stay with the children until a staff member or program director comes to release. Parents can pick-up their children after they have been released.

EMERGENCY LOCKDOWN

- In case of emergency requiring lockdown, a predetermined codeword will be given to the workers- so as not to frighten or alarm the children. The worker should instruct the children to silently crouch near a wall out of sight of any windows, bent over with their hands on the back of their heads. If possible, the worker should cover the window. The worker should stay in the classroom with the children until a **staff member** or **program director** comes to release. Parents can pick-up their children after they have been released.

FBC Children's Ministry Workers' Behavior Guidelines

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrong. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices in the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. I Corinthians 13:4-8

It is the desire of FBC Children's Ministry to have clear and communicated behavior guidelines that each worker will follow and expect the children to follow. Below is a list of behavior guidelines that each worker and child is expected to encourage and display:

- **Expected Worker Behavior**

- Children's Ministry workers should display Christ-like character and a desire to bring children to Christ.
- Children's Ministry workers should respect other Children's Ministry workers and realize that we are all on the same team working towards the same goal.
- Children's Ministry workers should provide a positive environment with children (For example, 'Please use your walking feet' instead of 'No running' or 'Please use your inside voice' instead of 'Stop yelling').
- Children's Ministry workers should accept their responsibility to enforce appropriate behavior to ensure the safety of other children and adults.
- Children's Ministry workers should be fair and consistent in what they discipline for, when they discipline, and how they discipline.
- Children's Ministry workers should avoid ultimatums, threats, yelling, and belittling a child. They should lower their voice and remind the child of rules and expected behavior.
- Children's Ministry workers should **ONLY** use physical force to restrain a child from harming another person or himself/herself.
- Children's Ministry workers should always follow the 'Three-Step Discipline Process'; unless alternate suggestions are provided by the parent.
- If the incident progresses through the 'Three-Step Discipline Process', the Children's Ministry worker will complete the 'Child Accident/Incident Form'. The form will be kept confidential and on file with the Children's Minister or staff representative.
- If chronic discipline problems occur, the situation should be discussed with the activity director and Children's Minister or staff representative.

- **Expected Child Behavior**

- Children should respect the Children's Ministry worker.
- Children should respect other children.
- Children should respect the church building and ministry area.
- Children should cooperatively participate in the activity.

Three-step Discipline Process

1. **EXPLAIN:** Workers should explain to the child what the unacceptable behavior was and then help them determine a better way to respond or behave the next time.
2. **SEPARATE:** If the child continues to disobey or disrupt an activity, the child should be separated from the rest of the group for not more than one minute per each year of age of the child. This separation could include 'Time-In' or 'Time-Out' separation.
3. **INVOLVE THE PARENT:** If the child continues to be a major disruption to the class or activity, the parent will be asked to join the class and control the child or the parent will be asked to remove the child for the rest of the class.
 - a. This does not mean the child cannot return for the next class or activity on another date. The child may just be over-stimulated, tired, or simply having a bad day.
 - b. Please keep in mind that the child will watch how you react to the situation. If you handle the situation well, the less likely the child is to be anxious about returning to the classroom at a later time.

Child Protection Standards

The following standards are intended to assist Church Personnel in monitoring and supervising behaviors and interactions between adult leaders and children to identify and stop those that:

- May be inherently harmful to children;
- Are the type used by child molesters to groom children, youth and their parents; or,
- May create the conditions where abuse can occur more easily.

These standards should also be used by paid staff and volunteers to make decisions about interactions with children in church-sponsored and church-affiliated programs. They are not designed or intended to address interactions within families. Adherence to these policies not only enhances the protection of our membership, but also ensures that the basic values of our church are preserved.

Child Protection Standards

1. All leaders (paid and volunteers) shall complete child/youth protection training to serve in our children's ministry. Paid staff will be required to submit to background checks from an accredited agency.
2. No person shall be allowed to volunteer as an adult leader with children unless that person is a member of First Baptist Church. A person may assist as a volunteer under the direction of an adult leader who has completed child/youth protection training.

3. Two adult leaders (paid and/or volunteers) or one adult leader and a parent of a participant, both of whom must be 21 years of age or older and unrelated, are required for all scheduled activities, trips, or outings.
4. Parents or guardians shall complete written permission forms before adult leaders (paid and volunteers) transport children for a church-sponsored activity or for any purpose, including permission to transport children home.
5. One-to-one counseling with children will be done in an open, public, or other place where private conversations are possible, but occur in full view of others (i.e. – an office with a windowed door or clear view from the outside) between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., except when such counseling takes place on a church activity (Note: even on a church activity, one-to-one counseling should still be done in an open and public place). One-to-one counseling between paid staff and children outside the church is prohibited. First Baptist Church authorizes only ordained ministers who have been called by this congregation to conduct personal and private counseling with children.
6. Adult leaders (paid and volunteers) will respond to children with respect, consideration and equal treatment, regardless of sex, race, religion, culture or socio-economic status. Paid staff and volunteers shall portray a positive role model for children by maintaining an attitude of respect, patience, and maturity. They shall avoid even the appearance of favoritism.
7. Adult leaders (paid and volunteers) are prohibited from possessing any sexually-oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing etc.) on church property or in the presence of children off church premises.
8. Adult leaders (paid and volunteers) are prohibited from using the Internet to view or download any sexually-oriented materials on church property or in the presence of children.
9. Adult leaders (paid and volunteers) are prohibited from the use, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or the misuse of legal drugs while in the presence of children, or while participating in or assisting with programs or activities specifically for children.

Note: At any time, violation of any of these guidelines may result in immediate dismissal of paid staff and separation of volunteers from children's activities.

Standards for Appropriate Affection

First Baptist Church is committed to creating and promoting a positive, nurturing, and safe environment for our children's ministry that protects our children from abuse and our adult leaders (paid and volunteers) from misunderstandings. When creating safe boundaries for children, it is important to establish what types of affection are appropriate and inappropriate, creating a well-understood standard for each individual to reference. Stating which behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate allows adult leaders (paid and volunteers) to comfortably show positive affection in ministry, as well as to identify and educate individuals who are not maintaining safe boundaries with children. These Standards were developed referencing, in large part, behaviors known to be used by child molesters to groom children and their parents for future abuse. The following standards are to be carefully followed by all adult leaders (paid and volunteers) working around or with children.

All adult leaders (paid and volunteers) who work with children shall agree to read, sign, and comply with First Baptist Church Standards for Appropriate Affection.

1. Appropriate forms of affection: Love and affection are an essential part of church life and ministry. There are many appropriate ways to demonstrate affection while maintaining positive and safe boundaries with children in public rather than private ways.
 - Brief hugs.
 - Pats on the shoulder or back.
 - Handshakes.
 - “High-fives” and hand slapping.
 - Verbal praise.
 - Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms.
 - Arms around shoulders.
 - Holding hands during prayer.
2. Inappropriate forms of affection: The following forms of affection are considered inappropriate with children because they have the potential to be misunderstood and many of them are the behaviors that child molesters use to groom children and their parents for later molestation or can be, in and of themselves, sexual abuse:
 - Inappropriate or lengthy embraces.
 - Kisses on the mouth.
 - Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff-only areas or other private rooms/areas.
 - Wrestling.
 - Tickling.
 - Any form of unwanted affection.
 - Giving gifts or money to individual children without parental permission and awareness.

Reporting Requirements

1. Adult leaders (paid and volunteers) shall report any violation of Child Protection Standards immediately to the Pastor, Chairman of the Deacons and Chairman of the Personnel Committee.
2. After an appropriate and thorough investigation, the Pastor, Chairman of the Deacons, and Chairman of the Personnel Committee shall take appropriate action. Disciplinary action shall be taken only by the Personnel Committee and/or the Deacon body, but any individual found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including permanent separation from Church children's activities.

Investigations will be conducted on a confidential basis wherever possible.