



Hixson Presbyterian Church Children's Ministry Policies and Procedures 2020-2021

The pastors, staff, and session want to make every effort to ensure that this ministry will glorify God in every detail. To do this, we must try to make each child feel comfortable, loved, and secure. This document contains our policies and procedures to ensure that is the case. COVID-19 revisions are highlighted in red.

HEALTHY CHILDREN POLICIES

Illness, Hygiene, and Injury:

1. We kindly ask the parents to refrain from bringing their child if they have had fever, vomiting, or diarrhea in the **past 72 hours (3 days)** without any anti-fever medication such as acetaminophen or Ibuprofen.
2. **Temperature checks will be done with a touchless thermometer at the check-in station. Any child, staff, or volunteer with a temperature above 100.4, per CDC guidelines, will be asked to leave.**
3. A parent will be contacted when a child develops any of the following symptoms while under our care: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, colored runny nose, excessive coughing, excessive crying, unusual rash, unusual tiredness, pink irritated eyes, or if child is simply not acting like usual self. If there is any question or concern about a child's health status, the parent will be referred to the Children's Ministry Director.
4. **We ask that if you or your child has been around anyone with COVID -19 to please stay home from children's ministry activities and nursery for 5 days. If at that point there are no symptoms are present, they may return.**
5. **If you, your child, or a member in your house has been diagnosed with COVID-19 it is your responsibility (per the waiver) to inform the Director immediately.**
6. **If you, your child, or a member in your house has been diagnosed with COVID -19 you may return to children's ministry after the required 72 hours (3 days) of being fever free without the use of anti-fever medication **and** symptoms improved **and** 10 days since symptoms appeared.**
7. **Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children or MIS-C associated with COVID-19 early symptoms include: trouble breathing, pressure or pain in the chest that will not go away, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face and severe abdominal pain. Should any of these symptoms occur, parents will be notified immediately.**
8. All families are required to designate allergies and special medical information. If special precautions need to be taken, the Children's Ministry Director will handle it on a case by case basis.
9. Smokers are respectfully asked wear an additional layer of clothing or smock when handling infants/toddlers.
10. Hand washing is the best way to protect both child and caregiver. Staff members will always wash hands upon arrival, after bathroom use, diaper changes, etc. They will also instruct the children in proper hand washing.
11. **Hand sanitizer will also be used as everyone enters the class and as they leave.**
12. **Per HPC Covid policy, children ages 10 and under are not required to wear a mask. Staff and volunteers will wear a mask in transit and while serving snack. Once settled in the room for lesson time, they may remove the mask for teaching purposes if they choose.**
13. If a child is injured, a parent will be contacted and the Children's Ministry Director notified.
14. Incident reports will be filed on things that are beyond incidental bumps and scrapes. Examples include, but are not limited to, bumps to the head, cuts that bleed enough to need a bandage, biting, hitting, etc.
15. When an injury is the result of another child (biting/hitting), the name of the child who inflicted the harm will never be revealed by our staff. An incident form will be placed on file and those parents contacted confidentially. We will also evaluate the situation and take extra steps to reduce the risk of it happening again.

Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Procedures: In accordance with the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens standard, all precautions will be observed at this facility in order to prevent contact with blood and other potentially infectious materials.

1. Identify tasks that have the potential of exposure. These include, but are not limited to, treating nose bleeds, First Aid, laundry, changing diapers and soiled underwear, and assisting a child who has vomited.
2. All blood and other potentially infectious materials will be treated as infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source material.
3. Disposable gloves will be available and used.
4. All garments soiled with blood will be bagged and removed from the classroom. Blood and other bodily fluids will be cleaned up or as soon as possible.

Food Allergies: The entire HPC children's wing is a peanut and tree nut free facility.

1. No peanuts, tree nuts, or products that contain peanuts or tree nuts are allowed in the children's wing.
2. Food brought in for special events will be strictly regulated by the Children's Ministry Director. Food will not be served if it cannot be guaranteed peanut and tree nut free. All labels must be saved and referenced.
3. If a child has any food allergy as stated in their file, the Children's Ministry Director will inform all staff and decide on a case by case basis on how to proceed.

Diaper Changing Procedures

1. Staff will always wear disposable gloves. A new set of gloves is required for each diaper changed. A box of gloves is available at each diaper changing station.
2. All diapers should only be changed on a diaper changing station.
3. Before changing a diaper, staff will wash hands and wipe down changing pad.
4. Staff will gather all supplies needed (diaper, gloves, etc.) before placing a child on the changing station.
5. A child will never be left unattended on a diaper changing station at any time.
6. Changing pad will be wiped down after changing.
7. Gloves will be removed by rolling inside out, so that any residue remains inside them.

Potty Use / Potty Training Procedures

1. Our staff will never insist that a child use the potty until the parent has made a request. This should occur following a period of potty training at home.
2. Our staff will be sensitive when assisting children with use of potty, honoring the child's request for privacy or for help.
3. Our staff will wear gloves when a child needs lots of assistance.
4. Our staff will instruct children in proper bathroom hygiene such as wiping, flushing, and washing of hands.
5. A staff member will never be out of eye or ear shot of another adult when assisting a child in the potty. For example, they will never go alone into the bathroom with a child and close both the bathroom door and stall door. They will always inform another staff member what they are doing.
6. A child who is fully potty trained will simply be escorted to the bathroom door. The staff will remain in the hallway until the child is finished and escort them back to class.
7. **The toilets and sink will be disinfected after each use.**

Head Lice Policy

1. If head lice is discovered while the child is in our care, a parent will be contacted and asked to pick up the child. The child may return once all lice and nits have been removed. In cases of children with long hair, we ask that hair be worn in a bun or braids for one week following treatment.
2. Parents of other children in that class will be notified that head lice was discovered, and will be advised to check their child thoroughly.

SECURE CHILDREN POLICIES

Drop off/Pick-up Procedures

1. The desk attendant(s) at the check-in station will sign kids in as they arrive. Temperature checks will happen before the child is signed in. Parents must be present to receive the pick up stub. No self check-in will be done at this time.
2. Returning families will have their information already in the computer system. The desk attendant will do the temperature check and simply mark the child(ren) as present on the computer. Adhesive nametags will print out for the children to wear. Parents will have a pick-up stub to keep with them to present at pick-up.
3. For new families, a parent or guardian will fill out a card with basic information to be taken to the classroom. The desk attendant will do the temperature check and then fill out a handwritten nametag and pickup stub.
4. Children may walk independently to the classroom or with a runner. While parents are highly encouraged to remain out of the children's wing hallways, children having difficulty separating may be walked to class by the parent. Upon reaching the classroom, the parent and child will be greeted and diaper bags, etc taken. No additional check-in will happen at the room.
5. Parents and Guardians with a pickup stub may enter the children's wing to pick up the child at the classroom. Noone else will be allowed into the area.
6. NOONE without a pick-up stub may leave with a child. If a stub is lost, ask them to see the children's welcome desk to obtain a new one. Staff at the welcome desk will work it out with them and present them with a new stub as long as they are an approved person to pick up.
7. Siblings must be 16 years of age to pick up and must have a stub with them.
8. The one exception to this procedure is for Children's Church. A clipboard check in system will be used.
9. Once reasonable amount of time has passed for check-in, the doors will be closed and the wing will remain on soft lockdown until check-out time.

Supervision and Care

1. A classroom of children will never be left unattended.
2. Accountability and adherence to the ratios outlined in the Child Protection Policy will always be upheld.
3. If a child cries for an unreasonable amount of time, the parent will be contacted.
4. Children will be instructed to play appropriately with toys and to use resources wisely.
5. Damages, broken, or dangerous toys and equipment will be removed from the classroom.

Photo/Video Policy

Only designated staff are allowed to take photos and videos of the children and only for reasons outlined in the signed parent agreement. Individual staff members are not allowed to take photos/video of the children nor are they allowed to post them online (website, social media). In addition, staff members are not permitted to make comment or elude to any child and/or their behavior on or off social media.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

The mission of HPC in situations where discipline is necessary is best accomplished when there is a clear understanding of the importance of the home/church partnership as well as the creation/sin/forgiveness/redemption mindset. Our goal is to help children learn and grow from their mistakes, understand that we are all sinners, and with God's help, we can work towards making the right choices.

As we seek to love God, love each other and love the world, we must consider how our actions affect others and the community. When discipline is necessary, we will work with the child and their family to help grow and learn from the inappropriate behavior, as well as others who were affected by their choices.

CODE OF CONDUCT: At the beginning of a new season, children will be taught the Code of Conduct. All children will have the Code of Conduct reinforced throughout the year by their teacher in an age-appropriate manner.

Love and Obey God

- I will speak of God in respectful ways.
- I will respect myself because God created me in His Image.
- I will be respectful in the words I use and how I use my body.
- I will obey adults who are leading and teaching me.

Love Others

- I will be respectful of others and I will not hurt others
- I will interact with others using kind words and not resort to name calling, swearing or inappropriate language toward each other.
- I will respect other's things and use it only with permission.
- I will include others in work and play.
- I will respect everyone by remembering "no touching except for helping."
- I will learn to apologize and ask for forgiveness when I mess up and seek God's help to learn from my mistakes.

Be a Caretaker

- I will take care of church property. This includes furniture, books, equipment, sporting equipment and the building.
- I will tell an adult about any damage done.
- I will help keep the church clean inside and out.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Consequences Used: Consequences should match the problem behavior (i.e. if a child uses scissors to cut paper and throws it all over the floor, their consequence would be to pick up their mess and then try the scissor activity again using the appropriate behavior modeled by the teacher). HPC personnel will not use corporal punishment at any time. It is unacceptable for any staff or volunteer to use any form of physical discipline.

Repeated Minor Offenses: After three related offenses which a teacher has attempted to handle, misbehavior will be reported to the Children's Ministry Director as well as the parents. The Children's Ministry Director will work with the teacher and parent on behavior strategies.

Major Offenses: Major offenses should be IMMEDIATELY reported to the Children's Ministry Director, who will immediately get the parent. These include but are not limited to: Physical aggression toward self or others, throwing objects, overturning furniture or other tantrum behavior, direct defiance/non-compliance toward any adult, attempts to leave church property.

HIRED AND VOLUNTEER STAFF POLICIES

Cell Phone Policy

In emergencies, cell phones can be used as needed for communication. For this reason, all staff may keep their phones on them, on silent or vibrate. There is **absolutely no reason** for a staff person to be using their phone unless it is an emergency. Emergencies do not happen every day so it should not be a regular occurrence while supervising children.

Required training

A thorough training on the following will take place annually or upon hiring: Policies and Procedures, Emergency Procedures and Crisis Management Plan, Child Protection Plan, Curriculum, current trends and issues, meeting special needs, and other current trends and issues as needed.

Care of Space and Equipment

1. Classrooms will be well-stocked with essential items (Lysol, hand sanitizer, wipes, gloves, etc.)
2. Toys and equipment will be stored in a safe and organized manner. Examples are:
 - a. Avoid having any breakable (glass, porcelain) items in the room. If you must have such item, store it inside a cabinet, out of reach of the children, and in no danger of falling out. Do not store breakable items on a shelf or counter at height above where children play, get changed, etc.
 - b. Avoid any hot liquids (coffee/tea) in the room. If you do have such items, it must have a lid and be placed in the corner of the counter out of reach of children.
 - c. Nothing of any sort of danger to the child should be placed in or hanging off the cubbies above the changing areas. Only extremely light weight items may be placed here.
 - d. Nothing should ever be placed on the top of the half-door except the offering envelopes on Sunday mornings. When needed, sign in clipboards will be hung on the upper half of the door.
 - e. **Toys that cannot be properly disinfected will not be used.**
3. The room should be left orderly with toys picked up, craft items stored, etc.
4. Toys, equipment, light switches, surfaces etc. will be sprayed or wiped with disinfectant after each event.
5. Any item that finds its way into a child's mouth will be placed in the "Yuck Bucket" to be disinfected.
6. Broken or damaged toys and equipment will be removed until repaired or replaced.
7. **Classrooms will be disinfected after each use. (ex: The 4th/5th grade Sunday School Classroom will be disinfected before the K/1st grade Children's Church Class enters).**

Personal Guidelines

1. Staff will arrive on time, be prepared and stocked for the day.
2. Staff will dress appropriately to allow freedom to interact with children. Please give special attention to necklines and waistlines as they can shift while bending down, picking up children, etc.
3. Staff conduct and conversation should always be professional and honor God.
4. If staff members need to be absent contact with the Children's Ministry Director needs to happen in a timely and reasonable manner.
5. Staff members must stay home if they have had fever, vomiting, or diarrhea in the **past 72 hours (3 days)** without any anti-fever medication such as acetaminophen or Ibuprofen.
6. **Temperature checks will be done with a touchless thermometer at the check-in station. Any child, staff, or volunteer with a temperature above 100.4, per CDC guidelines, will be asked to leave.**
7. **If a staff member has been around anyone with COVID -19 they will asked to stay home from children's ministry activities and nursery for 5 days. If at that point there are no symptoms are present, they may return.**
8. **If a staff member or someone in their house has been diagnosed with COVID-19 it is their responsibility to inform the Director immediately.**
9. **If a staff member or a someone in their house has been diagnosed with COVID -19 they may return to children's ministry after the required 72 hours (3 days) of being fever free without the use of anti-fever medication **and** symptoms improved **and** 10 days since symptoms appeared.**

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

1. Fire

Communication system: Fire alarm, verbal, cell phones

Director responsibilities: Call 911, ensure the evacuation plan is being followed, and communicate with parents as needed. Prohibit any unauthorized outside communication concerning the event.

Teacher/Volunteer responsibilities: Guide participants to the designated meeting area, account for all participants, keep them as calm as possible, prohibit any outside communication concerning the event.

Designated areas are as follows: the pavilion or the far end of the parking lot.

2. Tornado

Communication system: Verbal, Cell phones

Director responsibilities: Direct participants to the nearest shelter area when possible. Ensure the plan is being followed and communicate with parents as needed. Prohibit any unauthorized outside communication concerning the event.

Teacher/Volunteer responsibilities: Guide participants to the nearest shelter area, account for all participants, and keep them as calm as possible.

Shelter areas include Room C-4, Resource room, kitchen and bathrooms.

3. Severe Thunderstorm

Communication system: Verbal, Cell phones

Director responsibilities: Stay informed via phone, tv, etc of changing weather conditions, determine and inform teachers/leaders of safe activities to pursue, and communicate with parents as needed. Prohibit any unauthorized outside communication concerning the event.

Teacher/Volunteer responsibilities: Keep participants indoors, away from windows and doors, and accounted for. Stay informed of changing weather conditions.

4. Earthquake

Communication system: Verbal

Director responsibilities: Direct participants to a safe position and communicate with parents when possible.

Prohibit any unauthorized outside communication concerning the event.

Teacher/Volunteer responsibilities: Direct participants to a safe position. Afterward, evacuate as needed.

5. Evacuation

Communication system: Verbal, Cell phones

Director responsibilities: Contact appropriate emergency services. Inform teachers/leaders that it will take place and ensure they know the safest route and designated meeting area. Communicate with parents as soon as possible. Prohibit any unauthorized outside communication concerning the event.

Teacher/Volunteer responsibilities: Guide participants to the designated meeting area using the safest route, account for all participants, and keep them as calm as possible.

6. Lockdown Procedures (suspect on the run, nearby robbery, active shooter in the area, intruder, etc)

Communication system: Verbal, Cell phones

Director responsibilities: Stay informed and be subscribed to an outlet of local information of this nature. Inform teachers/leaders in a discreet manner and institute lockdown procedures. Communicate with parents as needed. Prohibit any unauthorized outside communication concerning the event. Call 911 when needed.

Teacher/Volunteer responsibilities: Follow instructions, account for all participants, and keep them as calm as possible.

Soft lockdown: Ensure all exterior doors are locked as well as interior doors including the M-2 access door. Keep all participants indoors and in the secured children's wing.

Hard lockdown: Instruct kids to move to an interior room such as C-4 or the Resource room. Close and lock or barricade the door. Turn off classroom lights. Keep kids calm and quiet.

Active shooter in the children's wing and accessing rooms: Staff will use discretion and have the freedom to make the call to direct participants to flee out of the building away from the active shooter if possible. Account for all participants and call 911.

7. Missing person procedures

(On church property) Teacher/Volunteer searches the immediate area for a reasonable amount of time asking other teachers/participants for information. Notify the event leader and they will help search for another reasonable amount of time as well as contact the parents. The event leader will make the call when necessary to have all teachers/volunteers gather their participants in one location and conduct a head count. A systematic search using other church staff and leaders will be done of the surrounding areas for a reasonable amount of time. The event leader will contact the appropriate local authorities if deemed necessary. Teachers/Volunteers will keep other participants calm and shall not make any unauthorized outside communication concerning the event.

(Off church property) As the nature of the activity allows, the on-church property procedures will be followed. If the nature of the activity does not lend itself to a search party being formed (ie a rafting trip), the leaders of that activity will be informed and their procedures followed. The leader will contact appropriate church staff and parents if needed. Teachers/Volunteers will keep other participants calm and will not make any unauthorized outside communication concerning the event.

Emergency Response Plan

In the event of a serious injury, natural disaster, fatal incident, the procedures will be as follows as much as possible and reasonable:

1. Leader will call 911 and ensure proper emergency services are responding.
2. Teachers/Volunteers will attempt to get participants to a safe location, accounted for, and calm. They will keep the participants as calm as possible and prohibit any outside communication about the event. Those trained in CPR/First Aid will triage and meet needs as best as they can and can stay safe doing so until emergency services arrive.
3. Leader will contact parents and appropriate church staff.
4. If participant(s) are in need to being transported to an emergency health facility and parents are not on site, the leader will determine who accompanies them with medical release in hand.
5. The leader will ensure that only one appointed person will handle all correspondence with the media and anyone else seeking information.
6. The leader will cooperate fully with authorities to determine cause and preventability when applicable.
7. Following the event and when applicable, go through these steps to address the incident:
 - a. Collect and review information using an incident report form filled out by all witnesses
 - b. Appropriate church leadership will use findings to address areas of concern, such as policy and procedure, and initiate changes as deemed necessary.
 - c. If involved with an activity off campus and if negligence on the part of a recreational facility is suspected, discuss at length with the appropriate church leadership and church's legal counsel.