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Jesus said, “Let the little children come to Me.” Matthew 19:14

Children’s Ministry Handbook

Christ The Rock Community Church

Revised August 2023

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*“Start children off on the way they should go,*

*and even when they are old, they will not turn from it.”*

*Proverbs 22:6*

Dear Children’s Ministry Volunteer,

We are grateful that you have volunteered to come and disciple children as part of the Children’s Ministry team. Your commitment to serve God in this way will make an eternal impact for the Kingdom of God and in the lives of the children you serve. We also hope you feel the impact in your own faith walk with Christ and feel more connected to the body of Christ The Rock.

We are blessed for the work that God has done in your lives to bring you to a place of teaching and reflecting Jesus to each child you disciple each week. We thank God that He has put on your heart the value of our CTR kids’ ministry and our vision that all children would come to know, follow, and worship our Lord and Savior Jesus. God has done beautiful works in you so He can do beautiful works through you.

God also tells us that “…we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:10) This means, that by God’s grace, you will make an eternal impact for the kingdom of heaven and God will use you to show our kids that they matter and that God loves them. God will allow your name to be part of a child’s kingdom story, they will tell other people in their lives your name as the person that God put in their lives at the right time to teach them about Jesus and reflect His love to them.

We thank God for you. We thank God for the beautiful work He has done in you and all He plans to do through you. Welcome to the amazing ministry of discipling the children God has placed in our lives!

May God bless you and be with you as we serve His children and families together,

 The Children’s Ministry Team,

 Jamie Lane

Theresa Goyette

 Jen Reetz

 Elle Klein

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# CHILDREN’S MINISTRY VISION

Our Children’s Ministry Mission follows the overall mission of Christ The Rock, except that we focus on children specifically.

**VISION**

* ***All children, no matter their story, will come to know, love and worship Jesus.***

**MISSION**

* ***Together, we seek lost children, love children who are hurting and disciple children.***

**In Children’s Ministry we live out the Christ The Rock values by being......**

* **Child-Focused**

We look at our ministry through the eyes of children – the music, the teaching, and the room arrangements. Children’s Ministry is *their* place, designed just for them. We will be intentional in understanding current “kid-culture”: clothing trends, language, music to remove any barriers that would hinder a child from coming to Jesus.  *(1 Cor. 9:22-23; Mark 10:13-14)*

* **Safe**

We want to be a place that is physically, emotionally, and spiritually safe for kids. We want kids to be able to be themselves, ask questions about God, share their feelings, and explore relationships and their surroundings in safety. *(Mark 9:37, 1 Timothy 4:12)*

* **Application-oriented**

We strive to make God’s Word relevant to kids today. Our teaching answers the “*so what*?” question for kids enabling them to apply what they learn to their lives.  *(Proverbs 15:2; Psalm 119:11)*

* **Relational**

We want Children’s Ministry to be a place where every child connects with at least one adult leader. Kids need someone who cares and whose words and actions match. By being part of a small group, led by leaders who model an authentic relationship with Jesus Christ, children will be able to see the Christian life lived out in front of them. *(Psalm 71:18; 2 Timothy 2:2; 1 Peter 5:2-3)*

* **Creative**

We want to use music, drama, art, and other media to engage children in activities and learning. We encourage our leaders to teach in ways that may be non-traditional and unpredictable, yet Biblically accurate. *(Deut. 11:18-19; Psalm 78:5-7; Mark 10:13-14)*

* **Fun**

 We want Children’s Ministry to be a fun place for all children to come. *(Psalm 122:1)*

**We want every child to know:**

* **Birth through Preschool** | God made me, God loves me, Jesus wants to be my friend forever
* **Elementary through Preteen** | I need to make the wise choice, I can trust God no matter what, I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

# CHILDREN’S MINISTRY STAFF

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# GENERAL INFORMATION

#### What do I do if I can’t be there?

We understand there will be times you have other commitments (i.e., – weddings, family vacations, etc.). It is your responsibility to let us know if you are unable to be there by declining the serving request in CCB (Church Community Builder). Please use the tool in CCB, to contact other people in your same position to switch with you or to pick up your date. If you are sick the day of, please text, call, or email a staff member or call 920.730.8383 ext. 389 and leave a message.

#### Communication

Lessons will be sent via email weekly. You will receive an email each week, even if you are not scheduled.

Videos that are used for the lesson and videos explaining how to do the small group activities are included in the

weekly email. Be sure to watch the small group activity video for some great tips and help with your group.

#### Late Parents After Service

If a child remains in the group after all the other children have been picked up, there must always be two unrelated volunteers in the room.

#### Children Struggling in the Classroom

Sometimes children need a little extra care and compassion when they arrive. Please tend to their immediate needs. Depending on the age, this will vary.

* For infants/toddlers, beyond diaper changing, hunger needs and being picked up, trying to engage a child in some activity often stops a child from crying – eventually.
* Quiet reading, art, or bubbles are often the activities that can distract an upset child most frequently. Reassure children they are in a fun and safe place.
* Introduce the child to a small group leader and offer to do a one-on-one activity with that child.
* **If asked**, reassure children that their parents will come back for them. If appropriate, tell them the schedule, so they know what’s going to happen next and when their parents will come.

If, after tending to the immediate needs and trying to engage in activities, the child is still crying or upset, talk to a staff member or page the parent by calling ext. 389 and asking them to page the parent number.

* Tell the child you have called his/her parents and continue to try to engage in the activity.
* When the parent arrives, explain to the parent strategies that were tried and encourage them to try again next week. Tell the parent that he/she may stay with the child and participate in children’s ministry if desired.
* If the parent decides to leave, let the parent and child know we look forward to seeing them again next week.
* Be sensitive to answer any questions the parent might have and be sure to ask if they have any tips that will help to engage their child for future times (i.e., – favorite toys to play with, books to read, comfort item to bring with them, etc.).

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**AGES & RATIOS**

#### Volunteer Ages

**L**EADER **G**UIDELINES

We believe children will return each week because of the relationships formed with YOU! This is why we encourage volunteers to have a bi-weekly or weekly commitment to serving.

**Helper** | Grades 1 through 5

* Must serve with a parent
* May serve with 2-year old through Kindergarten
* May sit on the floor and play with the children, but may not pick up or hold children

**Middle School Volunteer** | Grades 6 through 8

* May serve without a parent
* May serve with 2-year old through 5-year old
* May serve as tech in any classroom.

**High School/Adult Volunteers** | High School and above

* May serve in any area as gifted

All leaders are expected to attend all meetings and trainings, as well as abide by all policies and procedures as stated in our manual.

Student Leaders serving in Children’s Ministry are subject to the same responsibilities as adults, and they are expected to be an integral part of the ministry.

#### Volunteer/Child Ratio

* Ages 0-11 months | ratio 1:2
* Ages 12-17 months | ratio 1:3
* Ages 18-23 months | ratio 1:4
* Ages 2 years | ratio 1:5
* Ages 3 years | ratio 1:6
* Ages 4-6 years | ratio 1:8
* Grades K-6th| ratio 1:10

\*\*If rooms need to be combined, a notice will be posted for parents telling them where to pick up their children.

#### Age Level Groupings

* Infants
	+ 0-11 months
	+ 12-17 months
	+ 18-23 months
* Two Year Olds
* Three Year Olds
* Four and Five Year Olds
* Kindergarten
* 1st and 2nd Grade
* 3rd and 4th Grade
* Club 56| 5th & 6th Grade

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# DRESS CODE

To honor God and ourselves, we believe it’s important to set a good example to our kids and the families we’re serving. So please keep in mind:

* + No low-cut shirts
	+ No spaghetti straps or bra straps showing
	+ No midriff showing
	+ No underwear showing
	+ No short skirt or shorts – they must come down to the mid-thigh or lower
	+ No inappropriate slogans or band names on shirts

**Bottom Line: If you are unsure if something is okay to wear; choose something else!**

# TEAM AGREEMENT

* Have a personal relationship with Jesus
* Agree to a background check if 18 or older
* Be in agreement with the core beliefs of the church
* Be faithful to your assigned position
* Attend all trainings
* Be faithful to regular church services
* Attend huddles prior to the start of ministry for prayer, announcements, and team collaboration
* Be neat in your appearance
* Pray for the children and families in your group
* Unless it is an emergency, please do not use your cell phones in front of children; this includes taking pictures, talking on the phone, texting, etc.

**L**EADER **G**UIDELINES

# VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

#### Arrive on time

All leaders should arrive no later than 30 minutes prior to service start time. This time will allow for preparations and connection with those you are serving with and allow those serving before you to leave. There is a direct correlation between how smoothly ministry goes and leaders arriving on time. When you are late, it affects a number of people in a number of ways. We appreciate you taking this seriously.

#### Be prepared

Please come fully prepared and ready to go. That means lessons, lyrics, or whatever else is needed to present, play, or teach.

#### Communicate

We want to hear from you. If you’re going to be absent, please inform a staff member asap. We don’t like surprises. In addition, you are in the trenches. We are open to all feedback…what’s working, what you would like to see done differently.

#### Stay Calm

Christ The Rock is a large church with a large number of children, parents, and leaders. It is also a place with a large number of needs, wants, problems, decisions, and expectations. Because of this, things don’t always go the way they are planned to go. Mistakes happen and things get forgotten. While we are striving for excellence and are trying to assure that things go smoothly, sometimes they don’t. We appreciate your patience with each other and with us.

We have also noticed that parents often to come to church exhausted and in a hurry. At times they say and do things they are sorry for later. Your Christ-like response at these times will help bring peace to the parent and to the child.

#### Develop

As a volunteer at CTR, we want you to always be learning and growing closer to Jesus. As a church, we want every

person who is a part of CTR to live The Intentional Life, as a follower of Jesus, investing time:



* Daily time with **God** in prayer and Bible reading
* Weekly **gather** in worship and learn in community with our c our church family
* Meet in a small **group**, a temporary care/support/healing group for a time and a Discipleship group long-term
* Continually as we **go**, living on mission with serving, giving, and making disciples

**L**EADER **G**UIDELINES

# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

* **Courtesy Desk and Greeters**

Joyfully welcome families, assist with check-in, and provide a secure environment for children’s ministry.

#### Infant Team Member

Provide a loving, healthy, and safe environment for our infants and toddlers up through the age of two. We want our youngest children to feel from their very first experience that church is a place where they are loved and can learn about Jesus’ love.

* **Two’s Team Member**

Assist the room leader in providing a safe and fun environment for two-year-olds. Help to engage children during the lesson and guided playtime. We want them to begin to understand that God made them, loves them, and wants to be their friend.

* **Room Leader (Serving with ages 2 and up)**

Manage the classroom, oversee check-in/check-out, and announce when it is time for the next activity. In some classrooms you may also be the one who teaches the lesson. You serve as a resource and support for the small group leaders.

* **Small Group Leader (Serving with ages 3 and up)**

Lead and connect with a specific group of children to help them grow in their relationship with Jesus and others. Lesson and materials provided.

* **Large Group Teacher (Serving with ages 3 and up)**

Engage kids in the message of the lesson during the large group time. Teaching provides a springboard for dynamic and meaningful activities and conversations during small group time. Lesson and materials provided.

* **Tech Team**

As the manager of lights, video, and sound, you create an engaging large group time, which sets up large group for success, which helps the message to stick with the kids.

* **Care Team**

Come alongside small group leaders to assist them with meeting each child where they are at, so that all children can successfully participate in Children’s ministry. Provides one-on-one attention for children who may need extra support.

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**G**ROUP **M**ANAGEMENT

# SPECIAL NEEDS

Care Team is our special needs ministry. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for all people with different abilities to learn about God’s love for them in practical ways. This is accomplished through interaction with their peers and leaders in a developmentally appropriate environment.

We strive to specifically serve those people who have special needs by providing a one-on-one support person in the room and if necessary facilitating the child’s involvement so the child may get the best possible benefit out of his/her time at Christ The Rock.

If there is a child who you feel could benefit from the Care Team, talk to the room leader, who may be able to help you with some strategies that can be used to help the child. If the room leader feels Care Team is necessary, he/she will contact the Children’s Ministry staff.

# MAINTENANCE OF ROOMS

Due to multiple ministry use, it is the responsibility of each leader to clean the room after use. (i.e., diaper garbage put outside classroom door, room straightened up, furniture put back as found, tables cleaned off, etc.). Contact a staff member if clean-up supplies are needed.

**GREET, MEET, TAKE A SEAT |** THE CONNECTION

The first ten minutes of your ministry will determine the remainder. Relationships are key! It helps the children feel more connected and comfortable walking into the room each week while also making the parents feel safe leaving their child with you.

**GREET** | “Hi, welcome to\_\_\_\_\_ ! We are happy you are here!”

This is the first impression of the room. When checking children in and out of the room each week, have a warm heart, a big smile, and a welcoming personality. As parents and children arrive, we want the first impression to be a positive one. A confident and composed leader can calm an anxious child and an apprehensive parent.

**MEET** | “Come on in! Let me show you around!”

Once a child is checked into the room, someone will meet her at the door as she enters. This person will help them feel comfortable by involving them in the environment. They will help each child find a provided game or activity where the child can make connections with other children and leaders in the room. This volunteer has the ability to recognize the needs of each child and has an enthusiastic spirit!

**TAKE A SEAT** | “What do you do for fun? Share with me something fun you like to do/toys you like to play with.” Make connections by playing games with the children, participating during worship and encouraging the children to be interactive with each other. This is important because this is the lasting impression the child has leaving the program. Did someone ask me my name? Did I get asked to come back next week? Did anyone care enough to invest in my life?

**G**ROUP **M**ANAGEMENT

# DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Life Stage** | **Characteristics** | **Leader Action** |
| Birth-12 months | Key Word: Dependent Physical: Cries to communicateMental: Starting to learn all five sensesSpiritual: Absorbs attitudes of those around them | Give Care 1 Peter 5:7 |
| Toddlers | Key Word: DiscoveryPhysical: Active, Growing Rapidly Mental: Sees everything, wants to handleSpiritual: What they do is determined by others | Right Responses Exodus 2:9 |
| Age 2 – 3 | Key Word: ImitationPhysical: Active, “Let me do it”Mental: Realistic, likes to touch and feel Spiritual: Likes prayer before meals and bedtime | To Impress Mark 10:14 |
| Age 4 – 5 | Key Word: ReceptivityPhysical: Continual motion, restless, wiggler Mental: Open mind, a bundle of questions Spiritual: Trusting, literal | To Guide Psalm 32:8 |
| Grades 1 – 2 | Key Word: ActivityPhysical: Active, play is importantMental: Curious, imaginative, wants certainty Spiritual: Discerning, capacity for reverence | To Control Proverbs 22:6 |
| Grades 3 – 4 | Key Word: InvolvementPhysical: Steady growth, better coordination Mental: Influenced by group approvalSpiritual: Makes decisions based on right and wrong | To Love2 Corinthians 2:4 |
| Grade 5 - 6 | Key Word: EnergyPhysical: Loud, boisterous, thoughtless Mental: Hero worshiper, inquisitive Spiritual: Worshiper, “doer of the Word” | To Direct2 Timothy 3:15 |

**G**ROUP **M**ANAGEMENT

# BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT/DISCIPLINE

**Goal |** Children are safe so they can become disciples of God. Our objective is not to sit still and be quiet. It’s about learning.

#### Reasons for misbehavior

* “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23
* Unmet needs
* “Remember everyone in the room has a story that leads to misbehavior or defiance. Nine times out of ten the story behind the misbehavior won’t make you angry, it will break your heart.” – Annette Breaux
	+ Physiological – lack of food and sleep
	+ Safety – family, health
	+ Love/belonging – friendships, family
	+ Esteem – confidence, respect of others or by others
* Unrealistic expectations
* Unreached learning style

o We teach the way WE learn. When we do that, we leave out a huge chunk of children, and then they act out because how we are teaching isn’t engaging them.

* Ignorance of rules
* There are different rules in different places (i.e., home, school, church, etc)
	+ Language you could use is, “At church, we ...” (tell them what should be done)
* Consistency
* They are children!

#### Misconceptions of discipline

* Discipline = mean
* Children don’t like rules
* We can’t discipline at church
* If we discipline, children won’t like us
* The goal is to keep children perfectly quiet
* A disciplined environment is no fun and then they won’t come back

#### Strategies for responding to misbehavior

* Non-Verbal Cues
* Use proximity
* Give “the look”
* Use gestures
* Verbal Interventions
* Call on or drop a name
* Give a directive
* Redirect the misbehavior

#### What you can do to prevent misbehavior before, during, and after…

* Before…
* Know your lesson well (inside and out!) Be over prepared
* Think through any potential problems
	+ I’ll need to move the chairs, so they aren’t in the way - know that before it’s time to teach the lesson
* Invest in relationship (we are making disciples). The better the relationship the better they will behave.
* Pray

**G**ROUP **M**ANAGEMENT

* During…
* Give your full attention to the task at hand (no cell phones!) Make the most of every opportunity. Children crave our undivided attention.
* Acknowledge each child (use their names as much as possible – even the quiet children!)
* Know your surroundings (eyes in the back of your head)
* Smooth transitions
* Steady momentum (no down time)
* Get children out of chairs
* Add variety and fun (no one likes boring)
* Choose your battles. Is it something that is bothering you or affecting learning?
* Correct without disrupting group
* After…
* Ask yourself…
	+ What worked?
	+ What didn’t?
	+ When did I lose them?
	+ What caused problems?

**Children’s Ministry Expectations** | The Great Commandment

* Matthew 22: 37-39

o Jesus replied, “’You must **love** the **Lord** your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your **neighbor** as **yourself**.’”

* Children are expected to follow the three rules:
* Love God
* Love Others
	+ Kindness
	+ Respect
* Love Ourselves

#### Consequences

* **First time** | Give the child a verbal warning. When doing so – get down on the child’s level, make eye contact, and speak in a loving and calm manner
* **Second time** | Remove the child from the activity
* **Third time** | Contact a staff member for assistance
* **Fourth time** | Staff member will contact the parent to tend to the situation

# TIPS FOR GATHERING ATTENTION

There are many techniques for gathering attention. Below are some ideas to use. It is a good idea to choose a few. Practice them with your group so they know what to do and what is expected of them. Adding a few of these will also help keep the attention of the group when teaching.

* Whisper while talking in front of a group. They will likely quiet down to listen. *Ex: “If you can hear my voice, clap once.”* Repeat until everyone is participating.
* You clap a rhythm-they clap the same rhythm back to you and sit quiet waiting for direction.
* With a louder voice say “1-2-3 FREEZE”
* Raise your hand. The children respond by raising their hands and stop talking. Eventually the whole room is quiet and everyone is raising their hand. You can announce your direction at that time.
* 10 second countdown (10-9….2-1) until silence
* 1-2-3…Eyes on me!
* Teach volume levels, with volume 0 being no one talking, volume 5 being the loudest voice. Hold up number of fingers for the volume you want the children to use.

**S**AFETY **A**ND **S**ECURITY

# GENERAL INFORMATION

#### Absolutes

* Nametags are worn by all leaders while serving. This identifies you as a leader to parents and other leaders/ministry staff. You may not enter the Children’s Ministry area without this nametag. Before serving, stop at the self-check in or the Courtesy Desk to get your nametag.
* Under no circumstance is an adult or teen to be alone in a room with an unrelated child. This includes the elevator.

#### Transitions

* Preschool and elementary groups make regular transitions between rooms. It is important that we make sure children remain in the correct groups and don’t wander during those transitions.
* When you line up to leave your room, make sure all the children are accounted for. Room leader should take a headcount or assign someone else to take a headcount.
* If possible, have one leader in front of the line and one leader at the end of the line.
* Take your attendance sheets with you whenever you leave your room. You will need this to check in children who are late, make sure you have all the children accounted for in case of an evacuation or if a parent needs to check out a child early.
* When you line up to return to your room, make sure all the children in your group are accounted for. You may need to check name badges to make sure you don’t have children from different rooms in your group. Take a headcount or assign someone else to take a headcount.

#### Missing child

* Remove all distractions, music, videos, etc. and make an announcement in the room calling for the child’s name. Ask children and leaders in the room to help you look under furniture, in closets, bathrooms, etc.
* Notify the check-in desk (ext. 389) and a CTR staff member with a description of the child, age, and classroom.
* Check immediate area, including bathrooms, hallways, closets, other rooms, etc., turning all lights on while calling the child name.
* Staff member will notify the parents if not found within 5-10 minutes.
* When child is found, notify desk to stop the search.

#### Photography/Video Policy

We want to respect families’ privacy, therefore, only staff members may share pictures via CTR social media. We ask that you only take photos of children if you are asked by a staff member.

**S**AFETY **A**ND **S**ECURITY

# BATHROOM POLICY

#### Please encourage parents to take their child to the restroom prior to drop off.

**Diapering**

When changing diapers, please follow the procedures below:

* For your protection gloves are to be worn during diapering
* Diapering should be done at a changing table or on changing mat on the floor
* The child should be laid on a clean changing table/pad
* Diapering should be done within eyesight of other leaders
* Have all supplies ready before placing the child on the changing table
* Always be attentive, keeping one hand on the child
* Help the child wash their hands and place the child back with the appropriate group
* Dirty diapers and gloves are to be discarded in the diaper pail or trashcan (taken out by a leader at the conclusion of the program)
* Clean changing pad with disinfecting spray after each diaper change
* Hands must be washed after diaper changes (child and volunteer)

#### Toilet trained children who have accidents

If a child has an accident, change the child, and inform the parent upon pick up. There is extra clothing available in the bathrooms.

* For your protection gloves are to be worn
* Changing should be done within eyesight of other leaders
* Dirty clothing should be placed in a plastic bag for parents upon pick up – don’t rinse out clothing.
* Gloves are to be discarded in the trashcan (taken out by the leader at the conclusion of the program)
* Hands must be washed after changing

#### Restroom Usage

Going to the restroom can become a ‘field trip’ for some children who may become restless at certain times and look for something else to do. However, please keep an eye on the child because body language (“the dance”) is a good indication of how serious they are about needing to go.

If a child needs to use the restroom, please follow these procedures:

* If the classroom has half doors, volunteers may enter to help the child. If full doors, remain outside and only enter if needed. If entering, leave the door slightly open.
* Grades 1-4
* Children must be accompanied to the restroom by a leader
* Volunteers should station themselves in the hallway
* Encourage child to wash hands after
* Grades 5 & 6 | Children may go to the restroom without a leader

**S**AFETY **A**ND **S**ECURITY

# WELL CHILD POLICY

#### Illnesses

* In the best interest of children, staff, and leaders, individuals with a contagious illness will refrain from participating in ministry until symptoms are gone. Symptoms include:
* Fever over 100°F within the last 48 hours without fever reducing medication
* Discharge from ears or eyes (pink eye)
* Undiagnosed rashes
* Open, oozing sores
* Vomiting or diarrhea during the past 48 hours
* Runny nose (with any colored discharge)
* Harsh coughing
* Any highly contagious condition such as chicken pox

#### What to do if a child looks sick?

* If a child has a runny nose (with any colored discharge), persistent cough, fever or rash, we will ask the parent to keep their child with them. If you notice this during the ministry time, please call the Courtesy Desk (ext. 389) and have the child picked up.
* If you notice a child is sick during check-in, please remind the parent of the wellness policy and ask addition questions to determine if the child is healthy enough to stay and play. Ex – *“Your child looks like he may not be feeling well. (name what you are seeing/hearing – ex: I hear your child has a pretty harsh cough.) Could you tell me more about how he has been feeling the last few days?”* You can make the determination if the child is healthy enough to stay or if he should stay with the parent for the day.If you do send a child away, let a staff member or the Courtesy Desk know.

#### Precautions for all staff and leaders –

* Complete first aid kits are located near the Courtesy Desk, in the lower level hallway, and by the water fountain in the office reception area on the 2nd floor. Smaller kits are available in each classroom. Look for the red cross symbol on a drawer, cabinet or closet.
* Gloves must be worn before touching or cleaning surfaces affected by blood and bodily fluids. Hands must be washed immediately after removing gloves.
* All wounds on leaders or children that have not formed a scab must be covered.
* Toys that have been in a child’s mouth should be put by the sink in the classroom and sanitized after the children leave.

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# ALLERGIES AND MEDICATIONS

#### Food Allergies

Allergies are listed on the child’s nametag sticker. Please do not bring in any foods to share in your room. At times, snacks may be provided for children Be sure to check for allergies before distributing any snacks. If a child has an allergy, you need to make sure that she\he does not come in contact with the allergen. If you know about an allergy and then they are given something that causes a reaction, we will be potentially subject to liability.

#### Medications / Epi Pen

It is important to remember that **we do not dispense any over the counter or prescription medications.** In the event a child needs more attention than we can provide, please notify a staff member and the parent will be notified.

All children who require an epi pen for severe allergies need to have a completed Epi Pen Administration Form, which is kept in a Ziploc bag with the child’s epi pen. It’s up to the parents if the leader or the child carries the epi pen. We cannot administer medications to prevent an allergic reaction. The epi pen is used in an emergency.

# CHILD INJURY

#### What do I do if a child is injured?

**Minor injuries** can be treated with a little tender loving care. Small first aid kits are available in each classroom. A staff member will follow up with the parent, if necessary, the following week.

#### First aid kit contents

* Band-Aids
* Gloves
* Ice packs

**Serious injury** involving broken bones, convulsions, fainting, unconsciousness, or other serious bodily injury should be treated as follows:

* Check to make sure the injured child is in a safe place. Do not move the injured child if it’s not necessary.
* Assign someone to call 911.
* Stay calm and reassure the child while another person gets assistance from a staff member.
* Staff will contact the parent and take over the situation so you can return to your group.
* You may be asked to give information to assist the staff in reporting the incident.

#### Incident Report

When an injury occurs, we ask that you complete an incident report for insurance reasons. Incident reports are found in the classroom check-in/communication binder. This form needs to be signed by the person picking up the child.

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# BITING POLICY

We want to ensure every child is safe while in our care. Christ The Rock provides an environment that encourages and promotes cooperative interaction, respect for others, and non-aggressive problem solving between children. Our leaders plan activities and supervise carefully to prevent biting from happening in the first place. There are times, however, when everyone cannot be within immediate reach to prevent a bite. Biting is a normal stage of development for young children who are teething and still developing their language skills.

For safety and health concerns, we take biting seriously. When it happens, it can be scary, frustrating, and stressful for children, parents, and leaders. It is also not something to blame on children, parents, or leaders. Children bite for a variety of reasons: speech delays, simple sensory exploration, panic, crowding, seeking to be noticed or intense desire for a toy. Repeated biting becomes a pattern of learned behavior that is often hard to extinguish because it does achieve results: the desired toy, excitement, attention. At this age, children are not mature enough to realize their biting will hurt another person, so the “cause-effect” relationship is not internalized.

The following guidelines will be used when a biting incident occurs:

First Incident:

1. Parents will always be informed if their child has bitten or was bitten through an incident form (which is filled out individually for each child). The name of the biting child will not be released.
2. Volunteers separate the two children involved in the incident. Proper first-aid protocols are followed for the child who was bitten, and an incident report is written. The child who has bitten is provided some one-on-one supervision and attention.
3. The room leader and/or a CTR staff member talks with the parent(s) of the child who did the biting. At that time, resources on the subject of biting are provided and an individualized plan is developed to help prevent another occurrence.

Additional Incident(s):

1. Steps 1 – 3 above are followed.
2. The parent(s) of the biting child meet with a staff member to review the individualized plan (see #3 above) and determine what, if any, future measures shall be taken to support the child.

We make every effort to extinguish biting behavior quickly and to balance our commitment to the family of the biting child and to our other families. In most cases, the above steps have proven successful.

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#  BULLYING POLICY

We believe that all people are made in the image of God and are unconditionally loved by God. Everyone is equal and we treat each other with dignity and respect. Christ The Rock Church will provide a supportive, caring, and safe environment for children to come without fear of being bullied. Bullying of any form is not tolerated in our church or groups, whether carried out by a child or an adult.

**What is Bullying?**

Bullying is hurtful, unkind, or threatening behaviour which is deliberate and repeated. Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group of people towards another individual or group, where the bully or bullies hold more power than those being bullied. If bullying is allowed, it harms the perpetrator, the target, and the whole ministry.

Bullying common in a classroom setting:

* Physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, pushing or inappropriate/unwanted physical contact)
* Verbal (e.g. name calling, ridicule, comments)
* Emotional/indirect/segregation (e.g. excluding someone, spreading rumours)
* Visual/written (e.g. graffiti, gestures, wearing racist insignia)
* Damage to personal property
* Threat with a weapon

**Responding to Bullying:**

* 1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
	2. Separate the kids involved.
	3. Make sure everyone is safe.
	4. Stay calm.
	5. Don’t ignore the situation.
	6. Don’t force others to say what they saw happen.
	7. Don’t question the children involved in front of other kids or together. Question each child separately.
	8. Don’t make the children involved apologize or patch up relations on the spot.
	9. Report the bullying to a staff member and fill out an incident report about the situation for each child involved.

**CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT**

#### Check-In Process

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* Parents must check in children via computer to receive 2 printed name stickers per child prior to room drop-off. Parent should put one sticker on the child. Parents will also receive 2 parent stickers per family and should put these stickers on. No child or parent will be allowed to enter the Children Ministry area without a sticker on.
* The second child name sticker will be given to a check-in volunteer who will place it on a sheet in the check-in binder. **Please check the child’s name sticker to make sure he or she is checking into the correct room.** The child is then allowed to enter the room.
* Once children enter the room, they are not allowed to leave the room until the correct “Check-Out Process” is followed.

#### Check-Out Process

* ALL parents MUST present a parent sticker before their child is allowed to leave the room.
* A leader will check the parent’s sticker and compare that number to the child’s name sticker. **Both need to match before child leaves the room.**
* If a parent has lost the parent sticker or the security code does not match, the leader needs to direct the parent to a staff member at the courtesy desk. Your response could be something like this:

o *“I am not authorized to release children to parents without a security badge. Please go to the courtesy desk and a staff member can assist you. We have security processes in place to protect your children, and I am sure you understand the importance of your child’s safety.”*

# CUSTODY CONCERNS

If there is a custody concern that we need to be aware of, parents will need to communicate that with the CTR staff. You will be informed of any issues as we are.

# PAGING PARENTS

There are times within ministry where parents are needed to tend to a situation. Most parents will be attending services in the worship center, but occasionally a parent may attend a class, or a meeting held during service times. The parent should let you know if they are not going to be in the worship center. If a parent is needed, please call extension 389 and ask them to page the parent. Give the child’s tag number, name, and classroom. If the parent is in a class or meeting, they will be contacted by a staff member.

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# REPORTING ABUSE

#### PHYSICAL ABUSE

**How can you tell if a child is being (or has been) physically abused?**

It can be difficult to determine from a child’s behavior or emotional state whether abuse has occurred. The best way to know if a child has been abused is if the child tells you.

There may also be **physical signs**, such as:

* welts and bruises in various stages of healing,
* fingernail marks
* human bite marks
* burns
* lacerations
* abrasions in the pattern of an instrument
* missing, loose, or broken teeth

It is very possible for a child to be physically abused without anyone noticing if the child’s injuries are hidden by clothing.

There are several indicators that strongly suggest a child is being abused:

* Frequent physical injuries that are attributed to the child’s being clumsy or accident-prone
* Injuries that do not seem to fit the explanation given by the parents or child
* Conflicting explanations provided by child and/or caregivers, explanations that do not fit the injuries, or injuries attributed to accidents that could not have occurred given the child’s age (for example, an immersion burn on a child too young to walk or crawl)
* Habitual absence from or lateness to school without a credible reason. Parents may keep a child at home until physical evidence of abuse has healed. One should also be suspicious if a child comes to school wearing long-sleeved or high-collared clothing on hot days, since this may be an attempt to hide injuries
* Awkward movements or difficulty walking; this may suggest that the child is in pain or suffers from the aftereffects of repeated abuse

#### SEXUAL ABUSE

**How can you tell if a child is being (or has been) sexually abused?**

Children who have been sexually abused may display a range of emotional and behavioral reactions, many of which are characteristic of children who have experienced other types of trauma.

These reactions include:

* An increase in nightmares and/or other sleeping difficulties
* Withdrawn behavior
* Angry outbursts
* Anxiety
* Depression
* Not wanting to be left alone with a particular individual(s)
* Sexual knowledge, language, and/or behaviors that are inappropriate for the child’s age

Although many children who have experienced sexual abuse show behavioral and emotional changes, many others do not. It is therefore critical to focus not only on detection, but on prevention and communication—by teaching children about body safety and healthy body boundaries, and by encouraging open communication about sexual matters.

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#### What can you do if a child discloses that he or she is being (or has been) abused?

If a child discloses abuse, it is critical to stay calm, listen carefully, and NEVER blame the child. Thank the child for telling you and reassure him or her of your support.

Do not interview the child regarding the suspected abuse. Do not discuss the suspected abuse with other leaders, parents, etc. All information regarding the child should be kept confidential with the staff/pastors.

*It is not the responsibility of the volunteer, ministry leader, or Christ The Rock staff to actually determine if abuse has taken place.  The volunteer and staff member’s responsibility is simply to report suspicions to the appropriate state or county agency.*

Because Wisconsin state law requires immediate notification of suspected abuse, the volunteer who suspects or is informed of abuse is required to make a phone call to the appropriate state agency *before the end of the ministry event.* The volunteer will make this phone call with the assistance and support of the ministry leader.

#### Appropriate action to take as a response.

* Secure the safety and anonymity of the child first. Do not confront the accused.
* Don’t assume that the child is being abused. There may be many explanations for why a child is behaving in a particular way or for how a child was injured.
* Go immediately to a staff member with your concerns. They will help you determine next steps and

support you if a call to an agency is needed.

*Child Sexual and Physical Abuse Fact Sheets. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network, April 2009.*

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**H4 | HUG, HIGH FIVE, HANDSHAKE, HOLD**

Not only is safety and security important for our children, but it is important for leaders and staff as well. Here are a few guidelines to ensure safety for our children and leaders while providing ways for our leaders to show affection to our children without compromising their integrity:

**Hug** | Hugging a child is a natural response when children are seeking affection

* If a child runs to a leader for a hug, the ‘catch and release’ method is preferred. Quickly give a hug and release from the hug gently.
* Side hugs are most appropriate. Instead of a body to body front hug, a side to side hug will not be misunderstood and be just as effective.

**High five** | High fives are a great way to show encouragement to a child

* It is a great expression to say, “Way to go!”
* Children as young as 12 months can learn how to high five.

**Handshake** | Handshaking is a friendly way to greet someone, especially for the first time

* Any child older than 2nd grade should politely be discouraged from holding the leader’s hand. A child who is just learning to walk and toddling around may need the help of the leader’s hand for stability. This is perfectly acceptable.

**Hold** | Some children seek to be held by a leader as a form of security or affection

* If a child seeks sitting on the lap of the leader, we ask the leader to gently place the child directly next to them and away from the lap for elementary ages. Sitting on laps is acceptable for children preschool age and younger.

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# EMERGENCY EVACUATION

## Definitions

* **Evacuation:** The orderly movement of persons to a destination that is safer than the original location.
* **Shelter in place/lockdown:** Containing people in secure areas until released, when a dangerous situation is occurring inside the building, outside the building, or at a nearby location.
* **Reunification:** An orderly and documented process of allowing parents and/or guardians (with identification) to sign for and pick up their minor child from a secured area.
* **Tornado Watch** - Conditions are favorable for the development of tornados in and close to the watch area.
* **Tornado Warning** – a tornado is indicated by radar or sighted by trained spotters; therefore people in the affected area should seek safe shelter immediately.

## Important Considerations

* **Action of parents.** Parents who think their children are in danger or who are unfamiliar with the procedures may panic, place themselves, their children, or others in danger and may not listen to verbal direction of staff. Or parents may try to reunite with their child without following procedures, leading to a false missing child response and search after the event.
* **Securing evacuation routes/zones.** If time allows, leaders should sweep the evacuation routes and evacuation zones for potential hazards prior to moving anyone.
* **Evacuation zones.** Several evacuation zones have been selected, due to the number of people to be evacuated and possible adverse conditions. When evacuating people, it is important to be aware of vehicle traffic and avoid walking across public roads. People may need to change evacuation zones in order to remain upwind of any smoke, fumes, or other perceived hazard.

#### IDENTIFICATION OF HAZARD

Any staff member or volunteer should be alert at all times while on campus. Immediately report to staff member or guardian anything that poses a hazard to the staff and visitors.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY NOTIFICATION

Anyone who observes or detects a hazardous condition or emergency, will immediately notify a staff member or the guardians and begin emergency procedures to move people to safety with the goal of preventing or limiting injury and loss of life.

If a staff member or guardian cannot be reached, call 911. **When calling 911**, it is important to give the location of incident within the building, as well as, the type of emergency, number of victims, your name, and callback number.

If the fire alarm activates, the fire department and safety personnel are automatically called by the alarm company.

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## Evacuation Procedures

IN CASE OF FIRE ….

* Leader check safest evacuation route
* Grab Classroom evacuation procedure sheet and the evacuation map off the wall and follow instructions
* Grab Emergency go bag
* One leader in front of the line and one leader in the back of the line
* Take attendance sheets/binder
* Do a headcount
* Close classroom doors
* Take children to designated assembly area

IN CASE OF SEVERE WEATHER…

* Grab Emergency go bag
* Take attendance sheets/binder
* One leader in front of the line and one leader in the back of the line
* Do a headcount
* Close classroom doors
* Take children to designated safety area in lower level of building. See Classroom evacuation procedures sheet if questions.
* Once in safe location, instruct the children to take the duck-and-cover position. Adults should also assume this position once the children are in place.
* Return to your room (if necessary) when the All Clear Signal has been given.

IN CASE OF INTRUDER…

* Evacuation (If at all possible, evacuate the building)
* Grab attendance sheets/binder and Emergency go bag
* One leader in front of the line and one leader in the back of the line
* Do a headcount
* Take children as far away as you feel is safe
* If possible, call 911 and give them your location for later reunification
* Lockdown in the classroom
* Turn off lights and lock classroom doors
* Keep children quiet and away from windows

## Assembly Locations

* West parking lot
* Field line

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# INCIDENT REPORT

**Christ the Rock Children's Ministry**

**Incident Report**

*Please complete this report for the following kinds of incidents:*

1. *any injury that could potentially require follow-up care.*
2. *any incident that needs to be reported to parents (i.e. biting, bullying, etc.)*

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**Date:** **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** **Time: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Person filling out this report: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Describe the incident and the volunteer’s response:**

**Was a parent notified?**

* **Yes**
* **No**

**Do we need to do any follow-up with the child or the parents?**

**What can we do to prevent this kind of incident from happening in the future?**

**Volunteer’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent/Guardian’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Please give this form to the coordinator on duty or put it in the classroom binder. Thanks!**

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# EPIPEN ADMINISTRATION FORM

**EpiPen® Administration Permission Form**

**To be completed by parent or legal guardian and placed in zip lock bag with EpiPens®:**

Child’s Name: (as it appears on the EpiPens®): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Child’s Age/Grade: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Emergency Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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My Child is Allergic To: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I I hereby authorize the Christ The Rock (CTR) Children’s Ministry staff and volunteers to administer an EpiPen®

 to my child if he or she has known exposure and/or a severe allergic reaction to a specified allergen.

I I agree to release, indemnify, and hold harmless CTR and any of its staff, volunteers, or agents from lawsuit,

 claim, expense, demand, or action against them for administering the EpiPen.®

 I am aware that the injection will be administered according to the instructions on the EpiPen® packaging

 by a volunteer who is not a healthcare professional. I have read the Allergy Information and EpiPen®

 Administration Policies and Procedures and agree to provide EpiPens® as required.

 I understand that 911 will always be called when an EpiPen® is administered to my child.

The following medication has been prescribed. Check as appropriate:

* **EpiPen®** (the premeasured dose is 0.3 mg. of Epinephrine)
* **EpiPen® Jr.** (the premeasured dose is 0.15 mg. of Epinephrine)
* **Auvi-Q** (the premeasured dose is 0.3 mg. of Epinephrine)
* **Auvi-Q** (the premeasured dose is 0.15 mg. of Epinephrine)
* My child has received adequate training on how and when to use an

EpiPen® or Auvi-Qand can use it properly in case of an emergency. He or she

will carry a medication at all times.

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Parent/Legal Guardian Printed Name Parent/Legal Guardian Signature Date

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