

REDEEMER
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Children's Ministry
Policy & Procedures Manual
(Summary)
2019-20

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Worker Selection and Qualifications

Children's Ministry Terms Used In This Handbook

For the purpose of this handbook:

- **Child** refers to children in the 5th grade or younger.
- **Children's Ministry** refers to any official Redeemer Community Church (RCC) corporate event where parents or guardians entrust children to workers of the church. Any event without the prior notification, approval and authorization of the pastoral leadership team of the church is not a Redeemer Community Church corporate event.
- **A minor** is anyone 17 years or younger.
- **An adult** is anyone 18 years or older.

Screening Process

As a necessary precaution, all those working with children, compensated and non-compensated, must be screened. All workers must meet the following requirements before being permitted to serve in Children's Ministry:

1. Must be a member in good standing of Redeemer Community Church, with a signed church covenant on record, or a youth (between the ages of 12-17) in good standing with appropriate evaluation.
2. Must never have been convicted of child abuse or a crime involving actual or attempted sexual molestation of a minor.
3. Must have completed the application for children's ministry and returned it to the RCC CM Director. Note: The information on the application is confidential and will only be reviewed by the pastor overseeing CM, CM director and additional pastoral staff when necessary.
4. Must complete and pass an online background check.
5. The pastor overseeing children's ministry will make the final approval regarding children's ministry volunteers.

Minors assisting parent workers

It is appropriate and encouraged that young adults between the ages of 12-17 work alongside their parents or as a class assistant in children's ministries. All youth volunteers must meet the following guidelines:

- A youth children's ministry application must be completed and approved by the children's ministry director.
- The youth must meet the eligibility requirements for service as described in **Infection Control and Medical Emergencies**.

Children under the age of 12 may serve alongside their parents provided the following conditions are met:

- The children must meet the eligibility requirements for service as described in **Infection Control and Medical Emergencies**.
- The presence of the child does not distract the parent from fulfilling his or her commitment to caring for the infants and toddlers entrusted to Children's Ministry.
- The child does not pick up any infants or toddlers in the nursery and walker's classroom.
- The child must remain under the supervision of their parents at all times.

Child Classroom Advancement

Children will advance to the next age group on the following schedule during the school year:

- Children in the nursery may advance to the walkers' room at the discretion of the parents once they meet the age requirement. In general, children who are 15 months old, walk well, and are very active should advance.
- Children in the walkers' room may advance to the 3's & 4's room at the discretion of the parents once they meet the age and potty training requirements. Children in this room must be potty-trained or have permission from the children's ministry director for advancement
- Children in all other classes are encouraged to stay in the same classroom for the entirety of a school year. Should a parent have a request to move a child, that request should be made to the children's ministry director.

Child Protection Policy

It is our desire to provide a safe and godly environment that will protect our children from any potential harm, to the best of our ability. All persons having oversight of children through our children's ministry are required to read the following policy and complete the application for children's ministry work.

Screening Requirements

The screening requirements listed under Worker Selection and Qualification will be followed.

General Guidelines

The security for checking in and dismissing children will be followed. See **Security System** section for more details.

Children's Ministry will follow a two-worker rule, which is as follows:

No worker may be alone with a child without a second worker being present, unless the worker is the child's parent or legal guardian.

Workers who are minors must always work with an adult.

Children's Ministry workers are not permitted to take children from the premises of the school building (or meeting location).

All children's ministry workers hands must be visible at all times. No worker may turn away from the class (ex-turn a rocking chair away toward a wall while rocking a baby or toddler) or isolate themselves where their hands are not visible.

All incidents of suspected child abuse must be reported to a pastor or the children's ministry director immediately.

Child Abuse Reporting Requirements

Legally and morally, those who reasonably suspect child abuse are obligated to report it. Legal definitions of abuse include:

- "The physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of a child under the age of eighteen, by a person whom is responsible for the child's welfare, under circumstances which indicate the child's health or welfare is harmed or threatened thereby." (Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Public Law 93-247, 93 Congress, Senate 1191, 1974)
- "Any sexual activity with a child-whether in the home by a caretaker, in a daycare situation, a foster/residential setting, or in any other setting, including on the street by a person unknown to the child. The abuser may be an adult, an adolescent, or another child, provided the child is four years older than the victim." (National Resource Center on Child Sexual Abuse, 1992)

Church workers should be alert to the physical signs of abuse and molestation, as well as to behavioral and verbal signs that a victim exhibit. Some of the more common signs are summarized below (Sloan I., Child Abuse: Governing the Law and Legislation, 1983)

- **Physical signs** may include: lacerations; bruising; irritation, pain or injury to the genital area; difficulty with urination; discomfort when sitting.
- **Behavioral Signs** may include: unusual anxiety when approaching church, classroom or nursery area; nervous or hostile behavior toward adults; “acting out” of sexual behavior; and withdrawal from church activities and friends.

Workers should report these indicators to the Children’s Ministry Director or Children’s Ministry Point Person, especially if they appear in combination with one another, recognizing that in and of themselves, they do not prove abuse.

Allegations of abuse will then be reported immediately to a pastor. The person reporting should include:

- The name of the accused
- The name of the child
- The name of the parent
- The time and location of the incident

The report will be made by calling the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services at 800.252.2873. For more information on signs of abuse of reporting you may visit <https://www2.illinois.gov/dcf/safekids/reporting/Pages/index.aspx>.

Bathroom Policy

The following procedures are to be followed for infants through 5th grade to minimize the potential for harm to children.

FOR ALL AGE GROUPS: No worker may enter a bathroom alone with a child. If a child needs assistance, a second worker must be present for help to be administered at the entrance of the bathroom (not inside the bathroom) or a parent must be called.

Nursery through Age 4

- Workers may not change diapers. Parents must be paged from service.
- Workers may assist potty-trained children to the bathroom, but if the child needs assistance, a worker may not go into the bathroom. Please refer to policy above.
- It is recommended that potty-trained children be given a bathroom break at the beginning of class in order to minimize later class interruptions.

Kindergarten through 5th Grade

- All children are encouraged to use the bathroom before coming to class, while still under their parent's supervision.
- Since we are not able to secure the school building during our meeting times, all children must have another child accompany them to the restroom.

Parents may request to be the sole providers of care for their child/ren regarding any bathroom issues. This will be noted on the child's/children's identifications sticker and on the class roster. Teachers are to call the point person to have the parents paged if necessary.

Infection Control and Medical Emergencies

We desire to serve parents and children by reducing the possibility of transmitting communicable illnesses from one child to another, and by appropriately handling medical emergencies.

Children's Eligibility for Participation

For the well-being of the children and volunteers serving in our children's ministry, we ask that you not check in a child who has exhibited any of the following symptoms within the last 24 hours:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Illness-related diarrhea
- Nose secretions that are colored or persistent*
- Unexplained rash**
- Skin infections such as impetigo and ringworm
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Persistent coughing
- Active chicken pox, measles or mumps
- Any other communicable disease

If your child is being treated with antibiotics for sickness, he or she should be on medication for 24 hours before participating in class.

* Children with clear persistent nose secretions due to allergies or teething are welcome to attend. Please inform the teacher of his or her condition.

** Children with a rash due to allergies are welcome to attend.

When there is uncertainty about a child's eligibility, the Children's Ministry Point Person will make the final determination regarding participation.

Medications

Children's Ministry workers are **not** permitted under any circumstances to administer medication of any kind including over the counter medications such as Tylenol, aspirin, etc., even with parental permission. Only the parent or legal guardian of a child may administer medication.

Parents are asked to notify the Children's Ministry Director if their child suffers from medical conditions that may require medical attention.

Allergies

Parents are asked to notify the Children's Ministry Director if their child suffers from allergies, food or otherwise.

Prior to attending class we ask that all children wash their hands to prevent cross-contamination reactions for children with severe allergies.

Accidents and Medical Emergencies

Minor cuts and scrapes can be cared for in the classroom. Every classroom is equipped with a first aid kit. At the end of the class, parents will be informed of any accident, however minor, which occurred during the class via an accident report form. The accident should also be reported to the point person and Children's Ministry Director.

If a serious accident or medical emergency arises, the parent or guardian will be called to the classroom using the paging system. The child should be kept still and comfortable until the parents arrive.

A report of the accident will be taken from those who witnessed it or were involved, and given to the point person and Children's Ministry Director. The information will then be given to the pastor in charge of Children's Ministry.

Security System

Registration/Check-In

1. On Sunday morning before service, the parent and child go to the Children's Ministry Check-In table. There the child's attendance is recorded, and the child and adult receive stickers with matching identification numbers. Sticker should be worn by child and the identification number will be used to page a parent in the meeting if necessary.
2. The parent keeps his or her sticker with matching identification number in order to claim their child after the meeting.
3. Children ages 4 and under will go directly to class following check-in. School age children will remain with their parents until being dismissed after worship. Visitors are encouraged to escort their children to class if they so desire.

Dismissal

1. Children WILL NOT be released to anyone without a matching identification sticker.
2. The teacher must verify that the person picking up a child from children's ministry has the correct sticker that matches the child's. Once verified, the child may be released.
3. In the event of a lost identification sticker, the child will not be released to the person seeking to pick up the child without the following additional processing:

The persons identity must be verified by two children's ministry workers either by showing legal identification or because they are readily known to both workers.

4. In the event a parent does not retrieve their child/ren 10 minutes after service ends, the teachers may walk the student/s to their parents in the worship area.

If there remains any question about the identity of the individual claiming the child, the point person and/or the Children's Ministry Director should be called to help make the assessment.

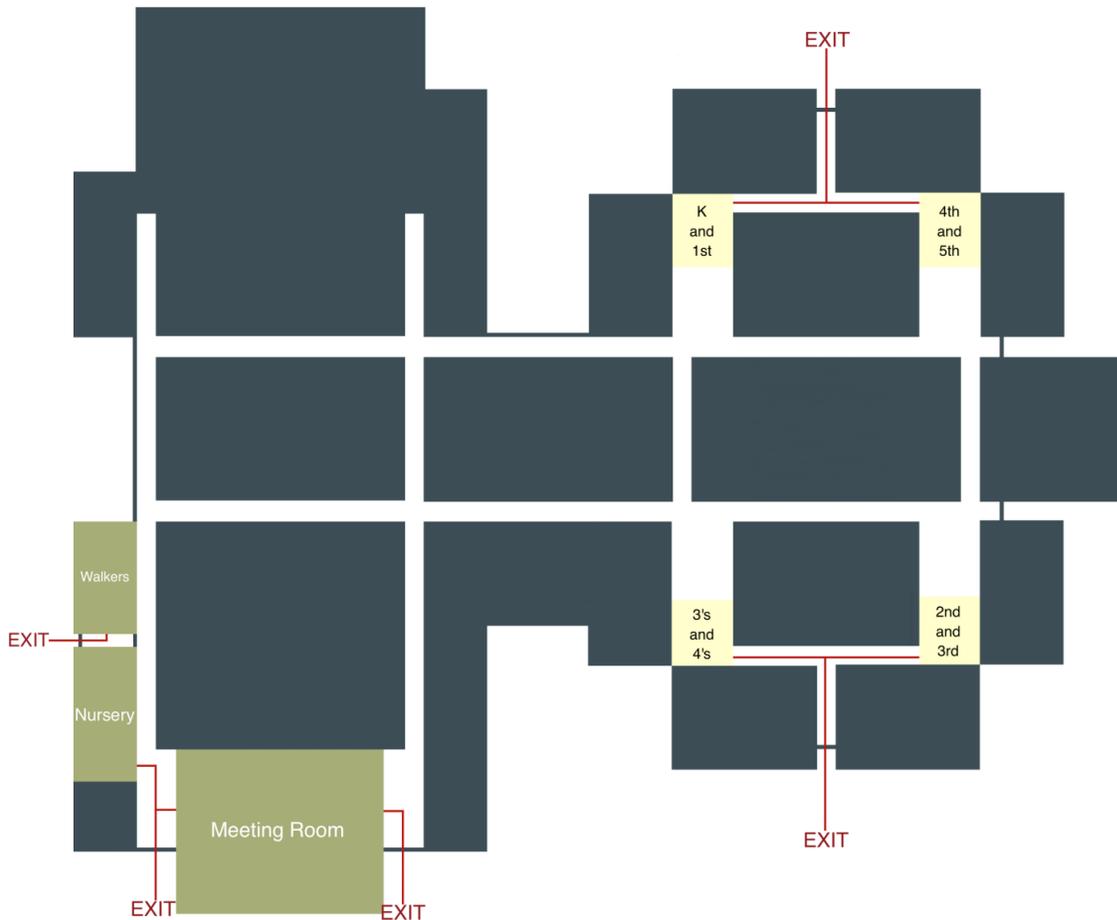
Emergency Evacuation Procedures

In the event of an emergency situation, the following procedures should be followed:

Fire Alarm

If the fire alarm sounds during Sunday morning worship service, all members of the church should make an orderly exit out of the building following the markings on the map below. All church members should be at least 500 feet away from the building. Parents should not run to their child's classroom. All children will be escorted out of the building by classroom workers. Teachers should make sure they have a roster and walkie-talkie with them. Attendance should be taken as soon as the classes are safely away from the building. If a child is missing, the point person should be notified immediately using the walkie-talkie.

Fire Drill Evacuation Routes



Tornado Drill

In the event a tornado alarm sounds during a Sunday morning worship service, all church members should move quickly and orderly to the nearest interior hallway free of windows and doors. (See map below) Once in position, all church members should face an interior wall, get on their knees and cover their heads. Again, parents should not make an attempt to run to find their children as this would cause panic and time is of the essence for the safety of all.

Tornado Drill

