



SAFETY GUIDE

Interacting with Children

One on One Interactions

We recognize that meeting the emotional needs of children may occasionally require team members to minister to them on an individual basis. Team members should conduct one on one meetings with an individual child at a time when other adults are present and where interactions can be easily observed. These times with children should never interfere with classroom management; the safety of all children should take priority.

Verbal Interactions

Verbal interactions between team members and children should be positive and up-lifting. All team members should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and be mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of their children. To this end, staff and team members should not talk to children in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, staff and team members are expected not to swear in the presence of children and students.

Physical Contact

We are committed to protecting the children. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by all team members:

- Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between team members and children are important for children development and are generally suitable in the church setting.
- Physical affection should be appropriate to the child's age. For example, it is generally appropriate for a two-year-old to sit in a nursery worker's lap, but it is not appropriate for an elementary child and team member to behave this way. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden.
- Physical contact should be initiated by the child and should be in response to the child's need for comforting, encouragement, or affection. It should not be based upon the team member's emotional needs.
- Physical contact and affection should only be given when in the presence of other adults. It is much less likely that touches will be inappropriate or misinterpreted as such when two adults are present and the physical contact is open to observation.
- Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of team members must foster trust at all times – personal conduct must be above reproach. Do not force any physical contact, touch or affection upon a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.
- Team members are responsible for protecting children under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.
- Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by team members must be reported immediately to the Children's Pastor or another staff member.

General Policies

Situational Awareness

When choosing what to do in any situation, consider these questions:

- Am I prioritizing the safety of all children?
- Could this situation put me or any child in a physically dangerous or vulnerable position?
- Could this situation in any way give the appearance of being inappropriate?
- Would this situation make parents comfortable and at ease?
- If someone were to make an accusation of abuse against a team member, would the team be able to confidently say that there is no possibility of it?

Multiple Adults

No adult should ever be alone with children. **There should always be two or more adults present in a classroom or within visual range.** If there are only two adults in a class and you need additional assistance, contact the person at the check in desk or Children's Pastor for help.

Head Counts

Every team member should know how many children are under their supervision at all times. When you leave the classroom for a restroom break or for combined worship, count children as you line up, after the restroom break and when you re-enter a classroom.

Designated Kids Areas and Escorting to Worship

Children should never be taken outdoors, or out of the designated Kids Ministry area (inside the glass doors on the first floor, and the entire second floor) except to escort elementary children to the sanctuary for worship.

When escorting elementary children to worship, both team members must walk with them and keep a head count. If a children arrive late, the Security Team member will escort them to the sanctuary.

First Aid

If there is a minor injury, there are basic first aid supplies located in each classroom or in the Kids Area lobby. Team members may only give band-aids or ice to an injured child. **Do not administer any medications - only parents are allowed to do this.**

Emergency Contact / Crying Children

If a child becomes inconsolable after 10 minutes, becomes ill, is injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem, please have the Check In Desk contact the parents using the Planning Center app. The parents will be sent a text message and will come to pick up their child.

Cell Phone Use

All Kids Team Members should refrain from cell phone use while serving. Exceptions are made for teachers who want to use their personal devices to play music or set a timer for a game, or in case of an emergency situation.

Serving with Spouses or Immediate Family Members

Spouses and immediate family members are not allowed to serve in a classroom together if they are the only two adults present. This should only happen if there is a third non-related person serving with them.

Parent Participation

Parents or guardians have an open invitation to observe all programs in which their children are involved. Parents can do this up to two times. However, if a parent or guardian wants to continue to be in the classroom, he or she must complete Citadel Square's Kids Ministry Team application and background check process.

Parent Pick Up

Team members or staff are responsible for releasing children in their care only to parents, guardians, or other persons designated by parents at the close of service.

In order to pick up a child:

- Parents will receive a sticker when checking in a child. This sticker has a number on it that corresponds to all of their children.
- In order to pick up a child, parents need to keep the sticker and show it to the team member in the child's classroom.
- **The team member should match the number on the receipt ticket to the number on the child's name tag and take the sticker off of the child before release.**

If a tag is lost, a child will only be released to someone listed in their household on Planning Center. This can be confirmed at the check-in desk or by using the Planning Center Check-Ins website.

In the event that team members are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they should immediately contact the Children's Pastor before releasing the child.

Missing Child Procedure

Possible reasons for a missing child:

- The child left the room or a parent without permission.
- The child traveled to another class/environment and is now missing
- A child is taken. Take action immediately. Get anyone around you to help stop the person.

In any instance, notify the Security desk and the Children's Pastor immediately.

Before assuming the worst, stay calm and begin the following procedure (for the first five minutes):

- Check any logical locations where the child could be.
 - Bathrooms
 - Other Classrooms
 - Hallways
 - Check-in Desk
- Alert all team members and have them check each possible exit.
- Page the parents and have a team member stay with them until the child is found.

If the child is not found after five minutes:

- Search the logical locations again, divide into teams led by staff to search different sections of the building and outside grounds.
- If the child is still missing, the Children's Pastor or another staff will speak with the Police Officer about when to call for additional Police help.

Sickness Policy

Children with any signs of contagious illness or symptoms listed below may NOT be admitted into the classroom, or if a child has had symptoms within 24 hours.

- Fever greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Severe sore throat
- Any substantial unexplained rash (excluding diaper rash)
- Croup, severe cough, or shortness of breath
- Childhood illness or virus such as Chicken Pox, Fifth disease, Measles, Mumps, Flu, Hand Foot and Mouth.
- Lice or Scabies

If a team member is unsure about the wellness of a child, they should consult the child's parents and the Children's Pastor or another staff member.

Bathroom Policies

Changing Diapers

- Only female team members or the child's parent may change diapers of either gender.
- Changing of diapers should only be done in plain sight of other team members.

- Children will never be left unattended on changing tables.
- All diapers should be checked and changed (if necessary) before pick-up.
- Team members are not allowed to give any kind of medicine or diaper ointment.
- Children should be re-diapered and re-clothed immediately upon the completion of changing their soiled diaper.
- Team members must use a clean disposable changing pad with each diaper change and must wear provided plastic gloves. Team members must change gloves for each diaper change and sanitize their hands before and after each diaper change.

Toddlers & Preschool Aged Children

- Team members should check the restrooms before the children enter and wait at the entrance of the restroom. Children should never be left unattended in bathrooms.
- In the event a child needs assistance, **two female team members must be present in the bathroom**. Only female team members or the child's parent may assist children of either gender while in the restroom.
- Team members should only help a child use the restroom if the child is three years or younger or if a disability dictates help. If a team member is unsure of a child's ability in the restroom, parents should be consulted before leaving the child with team members. If a child is over three years of age, the team member should check the restroom before the child enters and wait outside until the child exits.
- Parents are encouraged to take their potty trained children to the restroom before check-in.
- No child will be forced to potty train.
- Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in class should be recorded on the registration name tag ("Rachel Adams is in the beginning of toilet training, so special assistance will be needed.) This can be done by adding a note to the child's daily information before printing out their name tag or manually writing this on their tag.
- Children should be assisted in straightening their clothing before returning to the room with other children but in plain sight of an adult other than the person assisting them.
- If the child is five years or older, diaper changing will be limited to the child's parent or legal guardian.

Accidents

- "Accidents" should be handled by reassuring the child and completing changing of diapers or underwear and clothing.
- If the child does not have replacement clothing in the classroom, the child should remain clothed and someone should notify their parents immediately. Allow the child to wait in the bathroom where the adult has one leg in the bathroom but their body is outside the bathroom door.
- If the team members in the classroom need extra assistance, they should call the Children's Pastor or another available team member immediately.

Elementary Children

- Children should **never be in the bathroom alone with an adult**. The adult should check the restroom before the child enters and wait at the entrance of the restroom for the child.
- A child should request help in the restroom if they need it. Elementary aged children should receive the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities. **There should always be two female adults present in this situation**. If assistance is needed ask another team member to be present or contact the Children's Pastor to help.

Discipline

One of the primary roles of a team member is to manage the classroom. When a child acts unpleasant or disrespectful, our aim is not to control their behavior or punish his/her poor choices. Instead, the goal is to keep the classroom a physically and emotionally safe place for all. This means addressing an individual child's behavior with a heart of love, for the good of everyone in the class.

Physical Discipline - Zero Tolerance

Team members are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for behavior management of children. **No form of physical discipline is acceptable.**

This prohibition includes: spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, and any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children.

Time Out

If a child is having trouble abiding by the classroom rules, team members may use time out in order to help the child understand the importance of the rules and encourage them to make good choices. In employing this procedure team members should observe the following guidelines:

- Verbally **redirect** the child before physically intervening. With younger children some physical redirection may be necessary (for example, removing a toy from the hands of a child that is hitting another)
- If the behavior does not cease, **remove** or direct the child away from the group to a corner of the room where the group is meeting (avoid being alone with the child).
- Provide the child with a simple, understandable reason for the time out and provide them with clear directions of your expectations. ("Jamie, you didn't stop hitting Chris when I asked you to, so you need to sit quietly in the blue chair for three minutes. In order to play with the group, each person must be respectful and follow the directions.") Team members should be careful not to use language that would produce feelings of shame in the child. In addition, be verbally reassuring, as being removed

- from the group will likely upset the child. Do not physically hold the child in time-out.
- Provide the child with a chair to sit in or a spot to sit on until their time out is complete.
 - Time out should last one minute for every year of the child's life (3 years old, 3 minutes).
 - The child may never leave the class during a time out. Monitor the child through the entire time-out. During time-outs give intermittent reassurance to the child and keep them on task. ("Jamie, you're doing a great job of sitting quietly – just two more minutes.")
 - Pray with the child once he or she has completed the time out and allow them to rejoin the group. Remind them of the behavior you want to see from them and that repeating their initial behavior will result in further time out.

Notifying Parents

Parents should be informed if their child needed correction during the class. This can be helpful to parents and reinforces the relationship we want team members and parents to have: a partnership in teaching and encouraging the children in our church family.

If a child continues to use aggressive behavior, contact the Children's Pastor or another staff member. The child's parents will be immediately contacted and the child will not be allowed to stay in class for the remainder of the day.

Prohibited and Suspicious Behavior

Sexually Oriented Conversations

Team members are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with children and students. In addition, team members are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating, or sexual activities with any child.

Sexually Oriented Materials & Nudity

Team members are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented printed materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, etc.) in the presence of children. Staff and team members in Citadel Square Kids should never be nude or partially nude in the presence of children in their care.

Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco

Team members are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco, or vaping products while on campus. If any illegal drugs are found, notify the Children's Pastor or another staff member immediately.

Abuse

Citadel Square has zero tolerance for abuse. It is the responsibility of every team member to act in the best interest of children.

The church is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported in accordance with this policy and state law to the Charleston Police Department or South Carolina Department of Child Protective Services.

Unhealthy Sexual Behavior Between Children

Team members should be conscientious of the way children are relating to one another. It is natural for children to be curious about their own body and gender differences. It is important to take note of healthy sexual behaviors and unhealthy sexual behaviors.

Normative (or expected) sexual behaviors are usually not overtly sexual, are more exploratory and playful in nature, do not show a preoccupation with sexual interactions, and are not hostile, aggressive, or hurtful to self or others.

If a team member witnesses a child showing unhealthy sexual behaviors involving another child, the team member should address the child's breach in personal boundaries, as well as comfort the other child to reassure both children of their right to their personal boundaries. **If a team member witnesses any child showing seemingly unhealthy sexual behaviors, they should report this to the Children's Pastor and it will be addressed to either parents– as this could be a sign that the child has been sexually abused.**

Reporting Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors

In the event that team members observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual), it is their personal responsibility to **immediately** report their observations to the Children's Pastor. If the event involves abuse, the reporter should not hesitate to contact the authorities themselves.

Anyone who reports such behavior to the church or to the authorities can keep their report anonymous. Your suspicion of child abuse or neglect is enough to make a report. You are not required to provide proof. South Carolina law protects people who make good faith reports of child abuse.

Charleston County Child Protective Services - (843) 953-9422

Emergency Response Plan

In the case of any emergency, team members should not hesitate to call 911. **They should first call 911, then contact the Children's Pastor as soon as possible.**

For all emergency plans, team members should never release children to anyone other than the parent. Children's Pastor must complete a final head count first, and then the parent must sign out the child before releasing them.

Evacuation Procedures

In case of fire, a suspicious package, bomb threat, or earthquake, everyone on campus should **exit the building** and meet at the the **Henrietta Parking lot**. Kids Ministry Team members should follow these procedures:

- Make sure to do a head count and follow the evacuation plan (posted in each classroom).
- Once evacuated, make sure to count the children again. Assure the kids of their safety and keep them calm.

Fire: This procedure should be followed any time the alarm sounds. If there is a fire on campus, someone should sound the fire alarm and notify the fire department.

Suspicious Package: This is defined as any package that is found on campus and looks to be harmful. If a suspicious package is found never touch it leave it where you found it and notify the local authorities.

Gas Leak: Natural gas has an odor. A leak could cause an explosion in the building. If a gas leak is suspected/detected in or outside of the building evacuate and notify local authorities.

Designated Area for Assembly

Henrietta Parking lot. Across Henrietta Street from Citadel Square Baptist Church.



Lockdown Procedures

Severe Storm or Power Outage

In the case of a severe storm or power outage, remain in the classrooms and have all children sit in the center of the room). Remain calm and wait for direction from the Children's Pastor or another staff member.

Angry Parent, Guardian, or Other Persons

If an adult on the campus is showing aggressive or threatening behavior:

- Call a staff member, who will determine whether or not authorities need to be called.
- Be courteous and confident.
- Remain calm and do not touch them.
- Stay at a reasonable distance.
- Listen to them and allow them to talk.
- Stay in a neutral and protected location.

Intruder or Dangerous Individual

This is any person who has no legitimate business in the building or on the property.

- All team members should be notified of situation.
- Immediately notify the staff of the suspicious person(s).
- Lock the classroom door.

Fight

This is defined as individuals in a physical disturbance with each other. Proceed as follows:

- Notify a staff member.
- Never try to break up a physical disturbance by yourself.
- Separate both parties.
- Let staff make the call to notify authorities.

Disturbances or Demonstrations

This includes any assembly on campus by individuals whose purpose and conduct is antagonistic with the orderly conduct of the campus and the safety and welfare of members.

The handling of disturbances and demonstrations are to be handled by the staff and calling authorities is up to their judgment.

Active Shooter / Attack

This is an attack or active shooter that takes place on campus. Security Lock-down should go in effect:

- Exterior doors should be locked.
- All Classroom doors should be locked.
- Keep all students in the classroom.

- Stay away from doors and windows.
- Do not open doors for anyone, anyone that needs access should have a key. Individuals that are not in a classroom:
 - Find the nearest exit and exit the building,
 - If you cannot get to an exit find hard cover and stay low.

If an Active Shooter Attack should occur you have three options:

AVOID: Starts with your state of mind.

- Pay attention to your surroundings.
- Have an exit plan.
- Move away from source of threat as quick as possible.
- The more distance and barriers between you and the threat, the better.

DENY: When getting away is impossible.

- Keep distance between you and the threat.
- Create barriers to prevent or slow down threat.
- Turn the lights off.
- Remain out of sight and be quiet. Silence your cell phones.
- Hide behind large objects.

DEFEND: if you cannot Avoid and Deny

- Be aggressive and committed to your actions.
- Do not fight fair. This is about SURVIVAL.