



VBC KIDS VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO THE VBC KIDS TEAM!

2023/ 2024

WELCOME TO THE TEAM!

We are so excited to have you join the Kids' Ministry Team! Thank you for saying, "yes!" to our kids and to this ministry! We can't wait to see how God uses you to grow our kids' faith and help them feel welcomed and valued.

Kids' Ministry is so fun! The time you spend both in preparation and with the kids on Sunday playing games, building relationships, and talking with them about the lesson will quickly become the highlight of your week!

We want to do everything we can to make sure that you are prepared and equipped to be as successful as possible

Please read this handbook and keep it somewhere where you can go back and reference it. We hope this will be a very useful tool for you!.

Let us know if you need anything, we're here to help YOU!

-The VBC Kids Team

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VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

BE READY

- Arrive on time
 - Sunday Volunteers: meet in the entryway of the MPR at **10:25am** for the Pre-Service Huddle (9:40am for Single Service Sundays)
 - Rock Volunteers: meet in the Cove at **6:40pm**
- Read the lesson plan and the scripture passage ahead of time. Be familiar with the lesson activities and games before Sunday morning
 - If children ask a really hard question that you don't know how to answer, either tell them you don't know and look in the Bible for the answers together, or ask a Children's Ministry staff member for help.
- Sick? Going on vacation? Unable to serve one week?
 - Let a Children's Ministry staff member know as soon as possible so they can arrange for a swap or find a replacement
- Be in the classroom before children arrive and make sure everything is set up and ready to go (Pro tip: have music playing, it sets the tone for a fun morning).

BE ATTENTIVE

- Greet the children by name at the door. Welcome them and invite them to participate in whatever you are doing. Take time to ask them about their morning or their weekend. Check in with them, how are they doing? Learn about them.
- Assess the kids in your class: How are they doing? Do they need extra help, encouragement, or attention today?

VBC KIDS VOLUNTEER ONBOARDING:

All VBC Kids Volunteers must

- Complete a Background Check
- Sign and return Agreement to Teach in Accordance with the Voyagers Statement of Faith
- Read and be familiar with the Volunteer Handbook
- Complete Teacher Training or meet with Children's Ministry staff member

CLASSROOM INFORMATION

RECOMMENDED RATIOS

One teacher is never to be alone with a child. If necessary, a teacher can stand in the hallway with the child, or the teacher can stand in the doorway where they are visible while the child is in the classroom.

Recommended ratios are as follows:

- Infants: 3 children to 1 volunteer
- Toddlers: 4 children to 1 volunteer
- 2/3 Year-Olds: 5 children to 1 volunteer
- 4/5 Year-Olds: 7 children to 1 volunteer
- Elementary: 7 children to 1 volunteer

There should always be a minimum of 2 volunteers in each classroom; we will always do our best to stay within recommended ratios.

CELL PHONES:

PLEASE NOTE: Cell phones should be put away and not be used around children unless it is to contact a Children's staff member, or to use it as a ministry tool.

Please do NOT take photos of the children or post pictures on Social Media of the Children

WALKIE-TALKIES

Walkie talkies are in every classroom and will be turned on before class begins

All Children's Ministry staff and members of the Security team all have walkie-talkies tuned to the same channel.

If a leader needs to contact a Children's Ministry staff member or a member of the Security Team, they should use the walkie-talkie.

- Directions:
 - Press the side button and speak clearly
 - Release the side button and wait for a response

KIDS' CHECK-IN

Every child who attends on Sunday mornings is checked in using our computer system located in the entryway to the MPR.

After being checked in, children receive a sticker tag with the following information:

- First and last name
- Service and class/grade information
- **Allergies or important medical information** (in grey highlight)

If a child arrives in your class without a name tag, please send the parents to the check-in station or to the late check-in station in front of the Beach House to obtain one.

KIDS' CHECK-OUT

All children must be picked up by an adult, they may not be released on their own or to an underage sibling.

Check the child's tag to make sure the alpha-numeric security code matches the parent's tag.

If a parent does not have their Security Tag:

- Remove the child's tag, and write the adult's driver's license number onto the child's tag. Give this to a Children's Ministry staff member.
- No exceptions, sometimes there may be custody issues we are unaware of.
- If the child is missing their sticker, write down the child's name and the name and driver's license number of the person picking them up on the attendance sheet.

GUARDIANS IN THE CLASSROOM

Guardians are allowed to be in the classroom with their child to observe and help their child get adjusted.

Any guardian or adult who is in the classroom for more than 3 weeks will be required to have a Background Check completed

If there are any questions or concerns, please talk with a Children's Ministry staff member

BATHROOM PROCEDURES

An adult volunteer should walk the child to the bathroom and check the bathroom before the child enters to make sure there are no other adults inside.

Keep the outside main bathroom door open.

Volunteers should NEVER be alone with a child in the bathroom. Adult volunteers should wait outside the open bathroom door or in the doorway.

Have the child bring a "buddy" with them and the volunteer can accompany both of them to the bathroom, or go as a whole class

Early Childhood-

- keep the classroom that opens to the bathroom open so there is additional adult supervision
- If children need help with snaps or buttons on pants, have them come to the doorway and help them there
- Only female adults may change diapers

- Change diapers in the classroom using the changing pads (extra diapers and wipes are in the classroom drawers)

Please contact a Children's Ministry staff member if you need assistance or if you have questions

BITING PROCEDURES

Interrupt the biting with a firm, "No, we do not bite people."

Comfort the child that was bit

Remove the child that bit from the situation and redirect to something else

Volunteers should remain calm, and not overreact

Fill out an Illness/Injury Report for the child that was bitten and give it to a Children's Ministry staff member

Notify a Children's Ministry staff member of the incident as soon as the situation is calm. The staff member will talk with the guardians of BOTH parties

If the incident occurs again, a Children's Ministry staff member will decide the next steps

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

LOCKDOWN

If you hear the words, "LOCK DOWN, LOCK DOWN, LOCK DOWN!" on the walkie-talkie:

- Lock the doors
- Cover all windows
- Turn off the lights

- Silence cell phones
- Remain Quiet and out of sight with the children
- Have cell phones and walkie-talkies with you
- Stay in Lock Down until notified by the Security Team

*Nursery- Take babies into the adult bathroom inside the Nursery- use a crib (all cribs have wheels) or carry the babies.

*Snacks and stories can be helpful to keep younger children quiet

EARTHQUAKE

Drop, Cover, and Hold On:

DROP to the ground. Take COVER under or nearby a sturdy piece of furniture, doorway, or inside corner of the building. HOLD ON until the shaking stops

Evacuate:

Follow the evacuation maps posted in the classrooms. DO NOT use the Elevator

Return to class only after given approval by a Security Team member or by a Children's Ministry staff member

FIRE

When you hear the fire alarm sound or if you see fire in your room:

- **Evacuate**
 - Walk in an orderly manner to your designated area outside of the building (evacuation maps are posted on the wall in every classroom)
 - Take Rosters or Sign-In Sheets with you.
 - Count your children before and after
 - DO NOT use the Elevator
 - **Nursery:** the cribs have wheels, place babies in the cribs and wheel them out the door

- **Walker Room:** use the red stroller to evacuate

Do not re-enter classrooms until notified by a Security Team member or a Children's Ministry staff member

If necessary, children can be picked up outside.

MISSING CHILD

It is VERY important that Volunteers count the children in their classroom, especially BEFORE and AFTER any type of transition or change in location (going to the whole group teaching time, going to the playground, coming inside, bathroom breaks, etc.)

In the event that a child does go missing:

- Use the Walkie-Talkie to notify the Security Team.
- Clearly state:
 - your name
 - the child's name
 - a description of the child
 - their age

The Security Team will begin the protocol for search.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES:

FIRST-AID FOR MINOR INJURIES

First Aid kits are mounted on the wall in every room

If a child sustains a MINOR injury, please:

- Clean the wound if needed
- Apply a cold compress if needed (ice packs are located in the freezer in the kitchen)
- Apply a bandage if needed
- Fill out an **Illness/Injury Report** detailing the incident and the actions taken by the volunteers

Please note, we are not authorized to dispense any over the counter or prescription medications, ointments, or creams.

FIRST-AID FOR MAJOR INJURIES

Remain calm and call 911

Have someone use the walkie-talkie to contact the Security Team

Have someone else contact a Children's Ministry staff member. They will contact the child's guardian

Do not move the injured child, and do not leave them unattended, wait for Emergency Personnel to arrive

Comfort the child as much as you can

Move the other children into a surrounding area, away from the injured child, with supervision

After, document your actions and the incident in an **Illness/Injury Report**. Make sure to include:

- the date
- time

- symptoms
- actions taken
- your signature
- include as many details as possible

Give the **Illness/Injury Report** to a Children's Ministry staff member.

SICK CHILD

If a child in your classroom becomes ill, keep the child away from close contact with other children and staff

Contact a Children's Ministry staff member- they will contact the guardians and remove the child from the classroom

While waiting, continue to observe the child for new or worsening symptoms.

If the child does not respond to you, is having trouble breathing, or is having a seizure, call 911 and contact the Security Team using the Walkie-Talkie in the classroom

Wash hands- both yours and the children's

Document the incident and your actions in an Illness/Injury Report. Make sure to include the date, time, symptoms, actions taken by whom, and be sure to add your signature.

Sanitize toys the sick child might have touched by spraying them with the cleaning spray in the classroom and wash your hands again.

VOMIT & URINE

Do not touch bodily fluids

Move children out of the area

Contact a Children's Ministry staff member, they will contact the guardian and arrange for clean-up of the area

ALLERGIES

Allergies can be life-threatening. Please be alert to possible allergies or allergic reactions while children are in your class

Known allergies will be listed on the child's check-in sticker. When a child in your classroom arrives, please check their tag for allergies and ask their parents for additional information if necessary.

When food or materials being used or eaten can possibly be allergens, there will be an allergy alert tag posted in front of the door to notify guardians.

EPI PEN

If a child should require the use of an EpiPen, and one has been provided, ask the parent for instructions on how to use it and when it could be needed

If a child has a severe allergic reaction:

- Administer the EpiPen
- Leave it in
- Have someone else call 911
- Have someone else call a Children's Ministry staff member

Fill out an "Incident Report". Document as many details as possible, and have the guardian sign it.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

Clearly state expected behaviors and attitudes

- Every time a new activity is introduced
- Every time a transition is made

Be detailed and thorough- think through possible scenarios and address them ahead of time before beginning an activity

Check for understanding and role-play if necessary

Maintain eye contact with the children- stop everything so they can listen and focus

PRAISE & AFFIRM

Always be on the lookout to affirm children's behavior, attitudes, or participation.

Find something a child is doing right and publicly or privately praise them for it

IF A CHILD IS NOT LISTENING OR FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

Find someone who is and affirm them and the behavior or attitude- this sends a message to the child who is not listening or following directions about the type of expected and desired behavior and attitudes

Look for something that the misbehaving child IS doing well, and affirm it

Address the issue:

- Redirect the child, and repeat expectations: For example, instead of saying, "Stop", try saying, "Right now, we're _____. I need you to _____."
- Give options when possible: For example, if a child is rolling on the floor or walking around the classroom when you are in a small group, you can say, "We're all sitting

down and talking about something right now. Would you like to sit next to me or would you like to sit in that spot?”

Pull the child aside to discuss the behavior or attitude:

- Volunteers may step into the hallway to talk with the child.
- Please keep it brief (Under 1 minute) and make sure you are close to the classroom.
- Explain expectations again
- Describe their behavior or attitude
- Ask them about it. For example: I noticed that you were (describe behavior)? What’s going on? Is everything okay?
- Repeat expectations, and consequences if necessary
- Return to the group

If the behavior or attitude persists, call a Children’s Ministry staff member and they will determine the next steps.

CHILD ABUSE

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

Under the new California Assemble Bill, AB506, all regular Children’s Ministry volunteers who work with children more than 16 hours in one month or 32 cumulative hours in one year are required to complete a child abuse and neglect reporting training (aka Mandated Reporter Training).

Under AB506 all volunteers must complete a Background Check. All volunteers will be emailed a link to complete the background check by the Children’s Ministry staff.

All volunteers who have reasonable suspicion of child abuse should report the suspected abuse directly to:

Orange County Child Protective Services

**714-940-1000 or 800-207-4464
(24-hour hotline, 7 days a week)**

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR A SAFE CLASSROOM

Men are not permitted to change diapers.

Classroom doors are to remain unlocked and windows are not to be covered.

Use good judgment when having physical contact with a child. Fist bumps and high-fives are encouraged and a gentle hand on the top of their shoulder is acceptable. Avoid tickling.

No piggy-back rides. Lap-sitting is only permissible in preschool and with female volunteers. Only adults may pick up or hold babies.