



Children's Ministry Policies and Procedures

The first goal of Harvest Kids ministry is, **“to provide a safe, secure and loving environment where children can participate and where parents feel comfortable leaving their children.”** Therefore, we have policies and procedures to ensure the protection of the children from any situation that may be abusive. Please bear in mind that these policies are also in place for the leader's protection.

Our first line of defense in preventing child abuse is the application, screening and interview process that all leaders in our ministry must complete prior to being placed permanently in a classroom. All people who work with children, regardless of their area of ministry, are expected to adhere to the following policies. Failure to do so may result in the removal from their ministry position.

1. Worker approval and identification:

- All workers must have a complete and approved application on file in the church office.
- All workers must wear an approved identification nametag when on duty.
- All workers should spend if possible one rotation shadowing an experienced leader to better understand the program and children they will be ministering to.
- Any adult or children in the Children's Ministry area during service time **without** an appropriate name tag or reason to be there should be reported to Ministry Supervisor, the Safety Team, or HBC Staff Members.

2. Restroom Procedures:

- When in the classroom you should use the attached bathroom whenever possible.
- A child should use the restroom with as little assistance as possible. If help is asked for by the child, the adult volunteer should attend to the child with the door open and another adult volunteer within eye site of the restroom.
- Whenever possible a volunteer adult of the same gender should attend to the child in the restroom when requested.

- For grades 3rd-6th a child will need to use a restroom outside of the classroom at times. You should send the child with another student. The volunteer should remain outside of the restroom and prop the door only if needed for behavior concerns.
- When attending large group please have the child use the restroom located inside the kindergarten room within clear eyesight to other adults attending the large group session.
- When in doubt always take another adult with you when assisting in the restroom of a child and never close any doors behind you and the child.
- Diapering should be handled in the open area of the toddler or infant room. Whenever possible an adult female should handle all diapering needs.

3. Classroom Procedures:

- Physical contact with children should be minimal and only in the presence of other adults. Appropriate touching should be limited to handshakes, “high fives”, or a brief touch of the shoulder.
- At least two volunteers should be present whenever possible. No child should be alone with a volunteer. If a child arrives before other members of your teaching team arrive, prop open the door.
- Window blinds are to be kept open at all times, unless it is necessary to darken the room for proper showing of videos or projected audiovisual equipment and then opened again after use.
- Volunteers may not have children sit on their lap while the room is darkened or when other workers are not present.

4. Approved Activities:

- Activities or outings outside of the regularly scheduled classes or childcare must be pre-approved by the Children’s Pastor. Please also obtain a permission slip to be filled out for the activity or outing through the Children’s Ministry Office.
- Volunteers are never to take a child to the child’s home without another adult accompanying them and having consent from the child’s parent to do so.