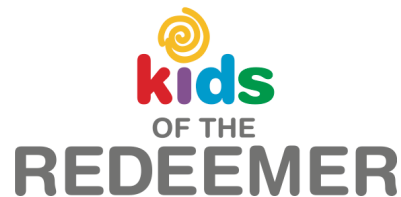




MINISTRYSAFE

Church of the Redeemer
CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

POLICIES AND
PROCEDURES
MANUAL



Dear Children's Volunteer or Staff Member,

Children are a valued part of our church family and we treasure their presence as Christ did. We welcome the children and seek to lead them, through worship, teaching and example to experience the love of God in such a way that inspires them to follow after Him and share their faith with others.

Church of the Redeemer is committed to assuring that every child in our care is treated with dignity and respect. The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for volunteers and staff members. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for children, protecting children, you, and the mission of Church of the Redeemer.

After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.

Sincerely,

Rev. Elizabeth Stewart
Pastor of Discipleship and Formation
Church of the Redeemer
www.oftheredeemer.org
elizabeth@oftheredeemer.org

Church of the Redeemer Policies & Procedures for Children’s Ministries

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Overview of Church of the Redeemer Safety System

Church of the Redeemer requires **clergy, staff, vestry, paid workers** and all **volunteers 16 years and older** working with children to complete the **SAFETY STEPS** below before ministry work or volunteer placements begin.

**A volunteer must attend Church of the Redeemer for a minimum of six months before being eligible to serve in positions providing access to children.*

STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

To equip Church of the Redeemer leaders with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, Church of the Redeemer requires all clergy, staff, vestry, paid workers and volunteers to complete MinistrySafe sexual abuse awareness training (live or online at www.MinistrySafe.com). This training will be renewed every three years.

STEP TWO: Policies & Procedures

Clergy, staff, vestry, paid workers and volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page indicating that he or she has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

STEP THREE: Criminal Background Check

Church of the Redeemer requires that all clergy, staff, vestry, paid workers and volunteers serving regularly in children's activities undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required.

STEP FOUR: Screening Process

Staff members and paid workers are required to complete the Church of the Redeemer Screening Process, which requires a staff member to:

- complete an application for ministry
- complete a face-to-face interview
- provide references

STEP FIVE: Response to Abuse Awareness

In order to understand the importance of responding quickly and appropriately in situations of abuse in the church, clergy, staff, vestry, paid workers and volunteers 16 years and older will view the presentation: The Lion and the Lamb: How the Gospel Informs our Responses to Abuse
www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQPk5pA0zuo

Child Safety Policy

ABUSE TOLERANCE

Church of the Redeemer has a **zero tolerance for abuse** in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff and vestry member and volunteer at Church of the Redeemer to act in the best interest of all children in every program.

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS on the part of any Child Care Worker

Church of the Redeemer is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. An element of the safe environment includes the fostering of a culture of reporting relevant information to a supervisor. In the event that staff, vestry or volunteers observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, "grooming" behaviors, etc.) it is their responsibility to report their observations to Elizabeth Stewart, the Children's Pastor, or Paul Calvin, Senior Pastor.

Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination of employment of a staff member or employee. Volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any activities involving children at Church of the Redeemer.

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION

Violations of these policies could be grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from Children's Ministry positions for both volunteers and staff members. Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by the church to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participation in Children's Ministries. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective agencies.

ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES

Church of the Redeemer staff members and volunteers who supervise other staff members or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all Church of the Redeemer policies.

REPORTING ABUSE OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

If a child has spoken to you about abuse at home or at church, or if you see unusual evidence of it, you do not need to substantiate your suspicions. Do not discuss the problem with the child's parents, or speak to the child at length about it - speak to the Children's Pastor or Senior Pastor.

Staff members, paid workers and volunteers are required to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect, or any inappropriate behavior of a colleague or co-worker, to the immediate supervisor of the area, the Children's Pastor, or the Senior Pastor.

Minnesota state law requires that any person having cause to believe a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect must make a report to the appropriate law enforcement agency. A staff or vestry member, paid worker or volunteer *may*

report to an immediate supervisor, the Children's Pastor or the Senior Pastor and allow supervisory personnel to make the appropriate report to law enforcement agencies.

Clergy, staff, vestry, paid workers and volunteers are required to verbally report an incident to supervisory staff as soon as possible after the incident. After receiving a report the Children's Pastor or Senior Pastor will speak with the person or volunteer to whom the child spoke in order to get detailed information about the entire conversation. The Senior Pastor will be notified as soon as reasonably possible.

RESPONSE TO REPORT OF ABUSE

Church of the Redeemer is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behavior or suspicions of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and MN state law, to Child Protective Services or criminal law enforcement.

Because sexual abusers 'groom' children for abuse, it is possible that a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to groom a child for sexual abuse. Please report 'grooming' behavior, policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to an immediate supervisor, such that the church may take appropriate action to safeguard children in the program.

We report all suspected or alleged abuse or neglect of children to Ramsey County Child Protective Services <https://www.ramseycounty.us/residents/assistance-support/protection-crisis-resources/child-protection/child-protection-reporting-process>
Child protective services

Phone: 651-266-4500

Fax: 651-266-3911

Email: CHS-CPIntake@ramseycounty.us

Child Protection Intake

160 East Kellogg Boulevard, Suite 6000
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Because many adults are unfamiliar with Minnesota reporting requirements and may be fearful of the process, Church of the Redeemer will utilize a 'tandem or dual report' model, where permitted. A 'dual report' occurs when a Church of the Redeemer supervisor reports the suspicion or allegation *together* with the individual who saw, heard or received information causing him or her to suspect abuse or neglect.

THIS PRACTICE IS NOT REQUIRED, OR INTENDED TO INHIBIT ANY STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER FROM REPORTING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT, CPS OR THE ABUSE HOTLINE DIRECTLY. Instead, it is meant to facilitate reporting, protect children and support individuals who may not feel able or willing to report alone.

NO PERMISSION IS NEEDED from Church of the Redeemer before reporting to law enforcement personnel or the Child Abuse Hotline.

While not required by state law, please report all suspicions of child abuse or neglect (or any inappropriate or 'grooming' behaviors of a colleague or coworker) to an immediate supervisor. This request is intended to assist the church in properly protecting children involved in Church of the Redeemer programs.

When in doubt, report.

SUPERVISION

Staff members, paid workers and volunteers in Children's Ministries are expected to provide adequate supervision for children in their care while working in church programs. At any time that a child has been entrusted to staff members, paid workers or volunteers, the Church incurs responsibility for the safety and well-being of the child. Staff members and volunteers must act to ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of children in their charge.

No child will ever be left unattended during children's ministry programming or classes. **Children's workers are prohibited from being alone with an individual child in any room or building.** In the event a children's worker finds himself/herself alone with a single child, that children's worker will take the child to a room occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others. (Example: if a child is the last in a class to be picked up by a parent, if possible, move to an adjoining room where other staff members or volunteers are present.)

After every programming event, Children's Ministries staff members and volunteers must ensure every room and restroom is checked prior to leaving.

Any two children together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Children's Ministries staff members or volunteers are responsible for releasing children in their care only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians at the close of services or activities.

It is presumed a person who drops off a child has authority to pick up the child.

In the event that staff members, paid workers or volunteers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they should immediately locate or contact their immediate supervisor or the Children's Pastor before releasing the child.

WORKER TO CHILD RATIOS

Church of the Redeemer is committed to providing adequate supervision in all Children's Ministries programs. Accordingly, the following worker to child ratios will be observed:

Program	Workers	Children
Nursery - Infants	2	8
Nursery - Toddlers	2	12
Preschool	2	16
Elementary	2	20

If a worker is 'out of ratio' it is his or her responsibility to immediately notify the program supervisor or the Children's Pastor. Supervisors will make diligent efforts to find substitute workers to immediately bring worker to children ratios into compliance with Church policy.

BATHROOM SUPERVISION AND ASSISTANCE GUIDELINE

Nursery and Preschool children

Because preschool children may require complete assistance with their bathroom activities, all staff members, paid workers and volunteers will observe the following policies:

Diapering

- 1) Only female nursery workers or the child's parent or legal guardian will undertake the diapering of children of either sex.
- 2) Changing of diapers should be done in plain sight of other nursery workers.
- 3) Children will never be left unattended on changing tables.
- 4) Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in nursery will be recorded on the registration sticker (placed on the child's back).
- 5) Children should be re-diapered and re-clothed immediately upon the completion of changing their soiled diaper.
- 6) Children should be changed on changing stations only.

Bathroom use

- 1) All children entering the preschool class at age 3 should be potty trained.
- 2) When children are taken into bathrooms the bathroom door will be left open.
- 3) Young children will never be left unattended in bathrooms.
- 4) Children may be assisted in straightening their clothing before returning to the room with other children.
- 5) "Accidents" should be handled by reassuring the child, and asking another child-care giver to notify parents if a change of clothing is needed.

School age children

School age children may be accompanied to the restroom for supervision and assistance when needed. (However, children should receive the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities.) Staff members and volunteers should avoid taking a lone child to the restroom.

If a staff member or volunteer must go into the restroom to check on an individual child, he or she should seek out another worker to accompany him/her. If another worker is not available to accompany, he/she should go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance. If the child requires assistance, the worker should leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child in completing their activities, while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall.

Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another staff member or volunteer.

Special needs

Parents will offer instruction to staff members, paid workers or volunteers to change the diapers of special needs individuals. After the age of 4, parents or legal guardians will change all special needs individuals.

DISCIPLINE

It is the policy at Church of the Redeemer that staff members, paid workers and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children.

No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children. Children are to be disciplined using non-physical methods of behavior management.

The following guidelines should be observed:

- 1) STEP ONE: 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 who is hitting another). For older elementary children, a hand on the shoulder is a cue for them to self-correct.
- 2) STEP TWO: 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).
- 3) Provide the child with a simple, understandable reason for why they have been separated from the group, and provide the child with clear explanation of your expectations. (“Jamie, you didn’t stop hitting Chris when I asked you to, so you need to sit quietly in the chair until you are ready to return and play well with others.”) In addition, be verbally reassuring, as being removed from the group may upset the child.
- 4) Provide the child with a chair to sit in or a “spot” to sit on until they are ready to return to the group. The leader should sit with the child during this time. The child should be encouraged to give their attention to the activity from where they are sitting.
- 5) If a leader believes a child has understood the reason for the time-out, the child may say when they are ready to rejoin the group after answering the question, "What do I want you to do differently?"
- 6) Praise the child and tell her she may rejoin the group. Remind her that repeating the initial behavior may result in being removed from activities for that day and returned to the care of a parent or guardian (STEP THREE).

Uncooperativeness following STEP THREE or uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to parents and the Children’s Pastor.

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If a child is distressed due to separation anxiety for longer than ten minutes, a parent or guardian should be called.

All children's workers are to respect the dignity and privacy of the children in their care **and not discuss any child's negative behavior with others while they are serving or anytime after - even if to do so seems harmless.**

PHYSICAL CONTACT

Church of the Redeemer is committed to protecting children in its care. To this end, Church of the Redeemer has implemented a 'physical contact policy' which promotes a positive, nurturing environment for our Children's Ministries while protecting children. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in Children's Ministries programs:

1. Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members or volunteers and children are important for children's development, and are generally suitable in the church setting.
2. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to an immediate supervisor, the Children's Pastor or the Senior Pastor.
3. Physical contact should be for the benefit of the child, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.
4. Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other children or children's staff members and volunteers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation.
5. Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of staff members or volunteers in Children's Ministries must foster trust at all times. Personal conduct must be above reproach.
6. Do not force physical contact, touch or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.
7. Children's staff members and volunteers are responsible for protecting children under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.
8. Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by a staff member or volunteer must be reported immediately to an immediate supervisor, the Children's Pastor or the Senior Pastor.

VERBAL INTERACTIONS

Verbal interactions between care-givers and children should be positive and uplifting. Staff members, paid workers and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children.

To this end, staff members and volunteers 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 members, paid workers and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children.

TRANSPORTATION

Staff members, paid workers and volunteers may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for children. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of children:

1. Children should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one child in transport.
2. Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.
3. No cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving.
4. No drivers under age 25 may drive children on Kids of the Redeemer Activities.

PARENTAL CONTACT

Parents who leave a child in the care of Church of the Redeemer staff members, paid workers and volunteers during church services or activities will be contacted if their child becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in Kids of the Redeemer ministries.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to visit any and all services and programs in which their child is involved at Church of the Redeemer. Parents have an open invitation to observe all activities in which their child is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their children's programs will be required to complete the volunteer application and screening process.

Policies and Procedures
Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement

I have received and read a copy of Church of the Redeemer's Children's Ministries Policies and Procedures and understand the importance of the material in the manual.

I agree to abide by these guidelines while serving or working at Church of the Redeemer.

I understand the manual may be modified, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated by Church of the Redeemer.

I have reviewed the duties listed in my ministry position description, and I agree to fulfill these duties.

I understand it is my responsibility to review any new guidelines that may be created and distributed.

- | |
|---|
| <p><input type="checkbox"/> up to date on vaccinations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> behind on the following vaccinations:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> not vaccinated - I claim a medical, religious or philosophical exemption</p> |
|---|

Staff Member, Paid Worker or Volunteer's name (please print)

Staff Member, Paid Worker or Volunteer's signature

Date: _____

volunteer, clergy, staff, vestry, or paid worker copy

Policies and Procedures
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Staff Member, Paid Worker or Volunteer's name (please print)

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Date: _____

Church of the Redeemer copy