

# Huntington Chapel Policy Procedures

## Nursery and Children's Ministry

\* Words in Red are currently unenforced, but may be implemented if/when the ministry grows.

### Current Ministry Leaders/Coordinators:

Nursery:

Sunday School: Erica Mercer

Children's Ministry Events: Erica Mercer

### Leadership Approval:

Anyone in a leadership position working with infants, children, and/or teens will be required to agree to read and follow the policy procedures for that ministry, fill out an application form, submit to a background check, and receive approval by the ministry head. No one is to be scheduled in a leadership position with minors until all of this has happened.

### Church Attendance

It is crucial to prioritize one's own personal walk, and we therefore require that anyone involved in ministry at the chapel be a regular attendee at the Sunday morning worship and services at the Huntington Chapel.

### Leader Attendance Policies:

-You are responsible to know the schedule of when you are expected to cover a class/event. The leader schedule for Sunday School is posted on the Children's ministry closet door, and for the nursery on the clipboard at the door.

-All leaders must set everything up before the kids arrive to the classroom so that when the kids arrive you will be able to immediately give them your full attention and be aware of what is going on in the classroom. For Sunday School it is recommended that you set everything up 10 minutes before church starts, and walk out with the kids when they are dismissed.

-Those involved in the Children's Ministry events (not Sunday School) are expected to be there 30 minutes early to pray, set up, and to be ready as the kids come in, unless prior permission to arrive later has been given.

-If you are unable to cover a shift due to illness or personal reasons, it is imperative that you find a substitute for yourself from the approved teacher list as soon as possible and update the coordinator of this change. Please do this by or before 2 days of being scheduled if possible.

-If you know of a schedule change in advance please make sure that the change is corrected/written on the schedule asap [ideally at least 1 week before] so that other teachers are made aware of it.

-If for some reason you are running late, you must call the coordinator so that he/she can provide coverage for that.

-If any leader is repeatedly late, or does not show up without calling the coordinator, they may be asked to step down from the ministry.

Note: Please notify the coordinator at least 3 weeks in advance when taking an extended period off (i.e. extended vacation, maternity leave, etc..)

### **Dress Code:**

All Leaders must dress in a way that sets a good example for the kids to follow. Therefore, it must be neat, comfortable, and modest.

-midriff, mini-skirts, spaghetti straps, exposed underwear, low cut blouses/tops, and shorts that are more than 5 inches above the knee, shirts with skulls and other dark pictures, logos, etc.. are inappropriate for working in the nursery and/or the children's ministry.

-If you are not sure about an outfit, don't wear it.

-if you are dressed inappropriately for the ministry, you will be asked to cover up or go home to change into appropriate clothing and return.

-Any questions or disagreements regarding what someone is wearing will be handled by the ministry leader.

### **Leader/Student Ratio:** Keep in mind the 2 person rule

-There should always be at least 2 (**non-related**) workers per room, preventing any leader from ever being alone with the children. Therefore 2 adults must be present **before children arrive** and stay with the kids until the last one is picked up.

-No teenager or child should ever be in or near the nursery or where the children's ministry meets unless they have gone through the training and have been put on the schedule to be there by the coordinator. Similarly, no other adults should be there unless they are a parent who wants to stay with his/her own child.

-All teens and children must be in either the sanctuary or with their class during service

-No child should ever walk off by him/herself for any reason. They must always be with the group or escorted by an adult for a specific reason (i.e. medical emergency, bathroom, etc..)

-Bathroom/Medical emergencies: If a child needs to go to the bathroom or has a medical emergency, the following protocol must be followed based on the meeting location:

Trailer/Field: An adult of the same gender must bring the child in to Kellogg Hall, and if going to the bathroom leave the door open between Kellogg Hall and the hallway and allow him/her to go to the bathroom. It is recommended that teachers ask others in the classroom if they need to go at that time and go as a group (in mixed groups the gender of the adult leader would not matter). If there is a medical emergency, the child may be attended to by a leader of the same gender in Kellogg Hall, the kitchen, or the bathroom based on the need.

Kellogg Hall: the same steps will be followed above, with the exception that an adult leader is not needed to escort the child. The door between Kellogg Hall and the hallway will be left open until the child returns.

Chamberlin House: There is a bathroom right next to that room, so the children may go as needed and do not need an escort. If a medical emergency requiring help is needed, bring the child in to Kellogg Hall, the sanctuary kitchen, or bathroom and have the helper seek out extra help from anyone with medical training

\*In the event that a child needs medical attention beyond the teacher's ability the teacher's helper can go in to the sanctuary and get the help of people who have had medical

training. [Those who have been medically certified are the following: Pam Nitsche, Jane Bauch, Jill Isselee, **who else???**]

### **Handling Medical Emergencies**

-In the event that a medical emergency occurs, isolate the child from the other kids by either bringing the child to a different location if possible (The other side of the trailer, Kellogg Hall, Kitchen, bathroom), or by removing the kids from the person (keep all the other kids together in one location). In any case, stay calm as it helps the other kids stay calm as well. If extra help is needed, an adult leader may call for an usher or go direct to someone who has medical training. Leaders should have no hesitation in calling 911 if there is any question of whether this is an incident that we can handle or not.

-Possible scenarios to be prepared for:

**Choking:**

**Faint/seizure:**

**Allergy requiring an epi-pen:**

**Hit unconscious:**

**See sheet with these and other possible scenarios to be prepared for... (make sheet)**

### **Sign in and out process:**

Sunday School:      **Erica Mercer**

-All Parents/Guardians of the children are required to sign their kids in and out from Sunday School each week. An attendance sheet will be made available and the parents are asked to initial the sheet both when they drop-off and pick up their child. There will also be a question which asks whether some other person will pick up the child that week beside a parent or previously approved adult. If a family brings a friend whose parent will not be there that week, that family will be responsible for the child.

-**Note:** Currently while we still have a small number of students and the families are known to us, we do not require parents to sign their kids in and out, but it is important that attendance is taken at the start of class, and that we have all regular student registration forms which are required for various procedures. One-time friends can just be added on the attendance sheet, but if anyone is (or intends) to be a regular student, a form must be filled out. The teacher must always know where this attendance list is, which would be needed in various emergency procedures. This will be kept in a bin in Kellogg Hall on the Sunday school shelf in the closet.

### Nursery: (Sundays)      **Who?**

-All nursery children are to be signed in/out every week.

-The sign in/out sheet asks for the children's name, parent's name who is dropping off the child, and whether someone else will pick up the child.

-We recommend that everyone who will use the nursery regularly sign a registration sheet which gathers more information on the child. If anyone is a visitor we will simply ask them to add if there are any allergies/medical conditions that we need to be aware of.

-When a parent picks up their child, I.D. must be presented, unless the person is known or is the same person who dropped off the child. Inform the visitor that if someone else is picking up the child, he/she will be required to show I.D.

-The Children must stay in the nursery until they are signed out by their parents. If a parent is late in picking up his/her child, someone may send for the parent, or the leaders may go to the parent to hand off the person's child. For no reason should a child be left unattended in the nursery or let out of the nursery without the child's parents signing them out.

#### Children's Events:

- Children should not be dropped off more than 10 minutes before the event begins unless special permission and arrangements have been made with the coordinator. If a child comes earlier, the parent must stay until the sign in starts. The correct leader/student ratio and proper sign in must still be abided by. The same sign in policy as the nursery is to be followed.
- Children must not be left alone. If a leader is delayed, the parent must remain until **2 leaders** are present.
- Children must be picked up within 10 minutes after the end of the meeting or event for safety concerns. If a parent/adult is late on more than one occasion the child may lose the privilege to be a part of the children's ministry events
- No child may take part in an off campus activity without a permission slip. The only exception to this is when a parent drives the child to and from the activity.
- All parents must sign the necessary release form for regular activities which is good for the entire school year
- The correct age range must be followed. Children of nursery age are not permitted to be dropped off unless provisions for the nursery have been made or the parent/guardian stays with the child.

#### **Safety measures:**

- All electrical outlets must be covered by a child protective device.
- All cleaning supplies/sharp objects must be out of reach of children at all times and placed in childproof or locked cabinets/closets
- Escape routes must always be clear
- Remove and discard broken or dangerous objects
- The Chapel has very hard floors, so leaders must always minimize activities that may cause hard falls.
- Be familiar with efficient procedures for Handling Medical Emergencies
- The following must have CPR and First Aid training
  - Nursery Coordinator
  - Sunday school and Children's Ministry Coordinator
  - Youth Pastor
- Be familiar with fire and evacuation procedures
- In an emergency call 911 (**To use church phone: Hit "Line 1" then press 9..1..1..**)

#### **Appropriate touch:**

- Full frontal hugs are not appropriate. If a child approaches for a hug tactfully direct the embrace to be a side to side hug.
- Children should NEVER be touched anywhere that a bathing suit would cover.

- It may be permissible to swing a child around but that must only be done by holding them under their arms (NEVER by the arms which could cause dislocation).
- Tickling is inappropriate for the children's ministry and is not permitted. If a child attempts to initiate it, the leader can redirect their focus to the activity at hand, or if it is free time, can change it to a game of tag.
- It is never appropriate to have a child sit on a leader's lap or another child's lap.
- Riding on someone's back, "piggy back", is not permitted. It can be dangerous and may be considered inappropriate by some people.

### **Nursery Specific** (Sundays)

- Arrive at church by 9:50. Put your picture and name on the board so everyone knows you are here and that you have arrived. **Wear your ID badge.**
- Make sure the nursery area is safe, check the floor for small objects that may have been left during the week.
- Come back to the nursery by 10:25 and plan to stay in the nursery until every child has been picked up.
- To increase the nursery babies' feeling of security, and to reduce the attention to the door, we want to **avoid using the door**. Therefore, plan to stay in the nursery for the whole time, unless it is absolutely necessary to leave. For the same reason, we want to avoid people coming to the door to socialize during the service.
- No one except nursery workers and parents are permitted in the nursery.
- Any small toys that are used can go in the toy basket and washed after the children leave.
- Put ID badge and your picture back in the drawer and erase the board.

### CLEANING RESPONSIBILITIES

- Wash all the small toys that were used and are in the small toy bin and put away.
- Wipe down the large toys with disinfectant. Disinfect the baby changing station if it was used.
- Wipe the dust off the floor trim, windows and door frames, and cabinets, and wash sinks and counter
- In order to keep the nursery safe, it is only permitted to be used during church service when leaders are present. At no time throughout the week should children or adults go in there unless it has been scheduled with an administrator or access is required for a specific purpose.

### **Discipline Policy**

#### Nursery

Our staff is equipped to calm children who are distressed or may have a detachment problem. However, on the rare occasion when a child displays behavior that is injurious to the child or other children, the parent will be contacted and asked to stay with the child until the behavior has been corrected. The nursery leader is to remain in the nursery with the child and request an usher to notify the parent.

#### Sunday School

- 1: When a child misbehaves, the teacher will give a gentle warning with eye contact. Make sure to stop the student, get eye contact, and let the student know that this is his/her warning.
  - 2: If the behavior continues, the child will be brought aside and spoken to about how to correct the behavior. Tell the child that this is his/her last warning before their parent will be contacted. **Do not skip this step, communication with parents is a must.**
  - 3: If the behavior persists, the parent/s will be contacted to discuss the problem. The helper may bring the parent to the class if needed (or a teacher may go direct to the parent), or the conversation can wait until after the class time.
  - 4: If there is no improvement, the parent/s might be asked to sit with the child in class until such time as the child is prepared to be assimilated back into the group.
- In any case when a leader needs to communicate with a parent, the Sunday School Coordinator should also be made aware of the situation, and may need to make a decision regarding what is to be done about that situation.

#### Other Children's Ministry Events

- 1: When a child misbehaves, the leader will give a gentle warning with eye contact. Make sure to stop the student, get eye contact, and let the student know that this is his/her warning.
  - 2: If the behavior continues, the child will be brought aside and spoken to about how to correct the behavior.
  - 3: If there is no improvement, the child will be asked to sit aside for a given amount of time and the parents will be contacted and the child may miss the next group time.
  - 4: Upon the return, if there is no improvement, the child may be dismissed from all Children's Ministry events until a time agreed upon between the parent and coordinator.
- In any case when a leader needs to communicate with a parent, the Coordinator should also be made aware of the situation, and may need to make a decision regarding what is to be done about that situation.

**Important:** While physical restraint may be used on a child who is in danger to himself or others, The Huntington Chapel forbids the use of corporal punishment for any reason. Therefore, discipline of children should NEVER include any sort of negative physical touching (i.e. spanking, slapping, swatting, tapping, shaking, pulling, biting back, etc..) It also NEVER includes any sort of verbal ridicule, sarcasm, threats, or withholding any type of care for the child.

#### **Confidentiality**

All teacher profile forms will be reviewed and kept in a locked cabinet by the Elder board and Children's Ministry Coordinators who will have access to these files. Anyone who wants to work with the children must have a background check and go through our Safety and Policy Training.

#### **Emergency Evacuation Plan**

- 1: Review with all teachers, helpers, and students **the evacuation route** that is posted in your classroom.

2: Every classroom must have a set place for the classroom attendance. The attendance must be kept near the exit door of your room and easily accessible to the teacher. At the start of class attendance is to be taken.

3: In the event of an emergency, the teacher must take the class attendance as they exit the class.

4: A helper or secondary teacher will lead the students to the designated location.

5: The teacher must be the last person to leave, making sure that everyone has left the room, and that no kids are in the bathrooms.

6: Everyone must assemble at the designated location. PARENTS MUST COLLECT THEIR CHILDREN FROM THE DESIGNATED LOCATION, NOT FROM THE CLASSROOM OR ENROUTE TO THE LOCATION. The parents must wait for the attendance to be taken verbally to ensure that all kids are accounted for and then they may sign their kids out.

The location is the following-If evacuating from:

- The Sanctuary building: go to the blue room of the farmhouse

- Anywhere other than the sanctuary: bring the kids to Kellogg Hall and take attendance near the table/chair storage closet

- If all buildings are in danger: go to the clothes shed in the parking lot

7: Once you have arrived at the designated location, the teacher must check off the names of all present to make sure that everyone signed into the class is present at the designated location. If someone is missing, ask a helper to notify an Emergency Service Person, a pastor, or elder. No one is to be released from the group without a teacher's permission.

8: No one is allowed to return to their classroom without the approval of an Emergency Service Person, ministry supervisor, pastor, or elders.