



FAIRVIEW
BAPTIST CHURCH

Children's Ministry Leadership Handbook

If anyone serves, let it be from the strength God provides, so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ in everything. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 4:11

Welcome and thank you so much for your interest in serving Fairview's children!

At Fairview Baptist Church, our vision for the children's ministry is no different than that of the church.

"We exist to make disciples of Jesus Christ."

As such, our core values for our children's ministry simply model those that we set forth for all disciples of Jesus Christ at Fairview. We desire to be a church that exhibits *Gospel Transformation, Loving Community, and Missional Living* as described in Acts 2:41-47. This greatly impacts the way that we approach our children's ministry efforts.

Gospel Transformation: Because we are a church family that focuses on heart transformation and character growth by applying the gospel to all of life, we avoid heaping behavioral modification on the young souls in our care. Rather, we seek to put Christ and His gospel at the center of everything we do in children's ministry at Fairview.

Loving Community: Because we are a church family that loves one another in a way that reflects the power of the gospel, we hope to lovingly partner with parents in bringing up a generation of culture-shaping children, rather than children who are shaped by the culture.

Missional Living: Because we are a church family that defines our lives by mission in all that we do both here and worldwide, we aspire to see a children's ministry that is Kingdom-expanding, and not simply ministry-building.

As you partner with us to invest in the littlest ones in our church, let me stop and say this - what you do is important, whether it's once a week or once a month. From infants and toddlers to elementary and beyond, you are working to lay a foundation of biblical truth that will support a theological framework and worldview in the future. With the sure foundation of the gospel, the Holy Spirit can work in children so that they experience a genuine relationship with God and share the joy of that relationship with others. For that, I thank you!

Finally, we desire to provide a safe and secure environment for the children who participate in our programs and activities. What follows are practices that are widely accepted and recommended within the greater church community. By implementing the following practices, our goal is to protect the children of Fairview Baptist Church from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting those that serve our children.



In Christ,
Joshua Johnston
Pastor for Family Discipleship

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

Fairview Baptist Church is committed to partnering with parents to raise godly children. We therefore expect a high level of personal responsibility from our Fairview Kids volunteers.

- All volunteers must be covenant members of Fairview Baptist Church.
- All volunteers must demonstrate, through their lifestyle and teaching, a commitment to serving Jesus Christ.
- All volunteers must regularly attend church services at Fairview Baptist Church.
- All volunteers must wear appropriate name tags when they serve.
 - **Purple name tag:** Signifies clear background check and completion of required training, as a result, they have the opportunity for full-service.
 - **White name tag:** Signifies that a volunteer has been screened, but is still completing training or they are a student volunteer.
- All volunteers must consistently arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of their class.
- All volunteers must notify children's coordinators of upcoming absences.
- All volunteers must treat children equally, regardless of sex, race, or culture.
- All volunteers must commit to speaking positively to parents, children, and other leaders.
- All volunteers must follow the curriculum provided while incorporating their own creative ideas.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS

We desire to protect children and volunteers involved in our ministry; therefore, Fairview Baptist Church requires all children's ministry volunteers to complete **FOUR SAFETY STEPS** before ministry work or placement begins.

STEP ONE: Screening Process

Volunteers working with children are required to complete the Fairview Baptist Church Screening Process, which includes:

- Attending Fairview Baptist Church for 6 months before being eligible to serve.
- Attending the Starting Point membership class and becoming covenant members.
- Contacting the volunteer's previous church to discuss prior church membership.
- Conducting an interview with the Pastor for Family Discipleship.

STEP TWO: Criminal Background Check

Fairview Baptist Church requires that all volunteers leading or assisting in children's activities undergo a criminal background check.

STEP THREE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

Fairview Baptist Church policies and procedures require that volunteers avoid abusive behavior of any kind. Volunteers are required to report any policy violations to the children's program director, the Pastor for Family Discipleship, or another pastor or deacon. Volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in "grooming" a child for sexual abuse. ("Grooming" is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust, manipulate the child into an inappropriate activity, and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.)

To equip leaders with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, Fairview Baptist requires all leaders to complete sexual abuse awareness training. The training is to be renewed every three years.

STEP FOUR: Policies & Procedures

Volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page, indicating that he or she has read and understands the material and agrees to comply with the policy requirements.

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

Fairview Baptist Church has a zero tolerance policy for abuse in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every volunteer serving our children to act in the best interest of all children.

Abuse may consist of:

- **Emotional abuse**, which conveys a message that the child is worthless and undeserving of love and care. It can take the form of threats, critical words, demeaning terms or names, deprivation of affection, or similar emotional cruelty, spoken or unspoken.
- **Sexual abuse**, which can be defined by any form of sexual contact between a child and an adult or older youth. This could include showing or talking about sexually explicit material.
- **Physical abuse**, which is intentional, deliberate behavior that causes bodily harm to a child. It can take several forms, including assault, shaking, kicking, or choking.
- **Neglect**, which is failing to meet a child's needs, such as nutritional, physical, emotional, educational, and safety.

In the event that a volunteer observes any inappropriate behaviors, or suspected abuse or neglect, it is the individual's responsibility to immediately report their observations to the children's program director, the Pastor for Family Discipleship, or another pastor or deacon.

Fairview 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 or neglect will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to Child Protective Services or another appropriate agency.**

GENERAL POLICIES

TWO ADULT POLICY

A minimum of two adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during our programs and activities. Students (12 to 18 years of age) may serve under the direct supervision of their parent or an adult, who commits to provide oversight and instruction on how to properly care for the children in their care. Students will not be considered as one of the two required adults in the room.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Unless there is an unobstructed window in the door or a side window at the door, the door to any room where children are being supervised will remain open.

LABELING THE CHILDREN'S ITEMS

Parents must label their children's personal items, such as cups, snacks, toys, diaper bags, etc. Teachers/volunteers in each classroom need to make sure that items are properly labeled.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Volunteers must use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement. If discipline is needed, Fairview Kids uses the "time-out" technique. "Time-out" is the removal of a child for a short period of time from the situation in which the child is misbehaving and has not responded to the above techniques.

- To determine the amount of time a child sits in time-out, we recommend up to one minute per year of age. For example, a two-year-old can be in time-out for two minutes at a time.
- The "time-out" space, usually a chair, is to be located away from the play activity but within sight of a volunteer.
- After a brief interval of no more than five minutes, the leader should discuss the incident and inappropriate behavior with the child.
- When the child returns to the group, the incident is over and the child is treated with the same affection and attention shown to the other children.
- If a child continues to misbehave after utilizing time-out two times, the volunteer will inform the appropriate children's coordinator of the situation and the parents will be notified if necessary.
- Physical restraint is used only when necessary to protect the child or other children from harm.

If a child bites another child, please inform the children's coordinator. The coordinator will notify both sets of parents at this time. The aggressor must be removed from the classroom for the remainder of the class. An incident report must be written, regardless if the skin is broken or not. If biting continues consistently, parents may choose to attend class with their child or the child should be removed from the classroom until the behavior has subsided.

DIAPERING PROCEDURES

- Only female volunteers or the child's parent or guardian will undertake the diapering of children of either sex. Changing diapers should be done in plain sight of other volunteers.
- Children should be changed on changing stations only. Children will never be left unattended on changing tables.
- Children should be diapered immediately after removing the soiled diaper.
- Gloves should be worn when changing diapers and should be replaced for every diaper change.
- The changing table should be sanitized with disinfectant after each use.
- If assistance is needed, volunteers will notify the children's coordinator or another volunteer.

TOILET TRAINING PROCEDURES

- No child will be forced to toilet train.
- Only female volunteers or the child's parent or guardian will participate in toilet training efforts with children of either sex.
- When children are taken into bathrooms, the door will be left partially open.
- "Accidents" should be handled by reassuring the child and completing the changing of diapers or underwear and clothing. Extra clothing and diapers are available at the check-in desk, if the parent has not furnished a clean set of clothes.
- Parents should be notified of all "Accidents".

RESTROOM PROCEDURES

- Children five years of age and younger should use a classroom bathroom if one is available.
- If a classroom bathroom is not available, volunteers should escort a group of children to the hallway bathroom.
- Volunteers must check the bathroom to make sure that other adults are not in the bathroom before the children enter.
- Leaders should remain outside of the bathroom/stall door and escort the children back to the classroom.
- If the child needs assistance, the leader should be accompanied by another adult and leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area. First offer

verbal assistance to the child. Only assist the child by touching if necessary for his/her safety.

- Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another leader.

CHECK-IN AND CHECK-OUT

For children below fifth (5th) grade and below, a security check-in/check-out procedure will be followed.

- The child will be signed in by a parent or guardian at the check-in desk.
- They will then receive a "Parent's Tag" for the child, similar to a claim check.
- The parent or guardian must present their tag in order to pick the child up from our care. Please remember to remove the child's tag from their clothing before they leave the classroom with a parent/guardian. This signifies to other volunteers and safety team members that the child is now under their parent's supervision.
- In the event that a parent or guardian is unable to present their tag, they must show appropriate photo identification that corresponds with the parent information on the tag or a children's ministry leader should be notified to assist, if needed.

WELLNESS POLICY

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all of the children at Fairview. Parents are encouraged to be considerate of other children when deciding whether to place a child in a classroom. In general, children with the following symptoms should not be brought to a classroom:

- Fever within the last 24 hours
- Diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Vomiting within the last 24 hours
- Green or yellow runny nose
- Eye or skin infections
- Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease

Should a child have a non-communicable, yet noticeable illness or rash (i.e. allergic reaction, eczema, etc.) the parent/guardian will be asked to provide notice of this to the volunteer(s) who can share the basics of this information as necessary and appropriate with other volunteers, parents, etc. It is the policy of Fairview not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children under our care. Medications should be administered by a parent at home. Exceptions to the medications policy may be granted to parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions). Parents of such children should address their situation with the Pastor of Family Discipleship or appropriate children's coordinator to develop a plan of action.

In the event that a child or youth is injured while under our care, the following steps should be taken: For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent or guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care. The minor injury will be recorded on an appropriate "Minor Injury Documentation" sheet and initialed by the parent(s)/guardian. This documentation will be maintained by the Pastor for Family Discipleship.

For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First Aid (First Aid kits are located in each classroom), the parent and/or guardian will immediately be notified and asked to come to their child's classroom. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called. Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed in the case of injuries requiring treatment beyond minor First-Aid (i.e. Band-Aid, ice, etc.).

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

In the event of an emergency situation during a regularly scheduled church event/activity, the following procedures will be followed:

- Make sure that all children are accounted for within the room you are working in.
- If it is safe to do so, take the children through the hallway to the closest outside door, exit the building with the children between the adults and walk to the "safe area," (back corner of the parking lot where the driveway circles around the light pole). If you are with babies, you can place more than one baby in a rolling crib and roll them.
- If it is not safe to go into the hallway, then a classroom exterior window should be opened and used as an exit; one adult needs to go out of the window and the two adults then assist all of the children out of the window. Make sure that all children have exited through the window, close the window as much as possible, and walk together to the "safe area."
- Make sure that all children are accounted for when you reach the "safe area."
- It may be a chaotic and somewhat exciting time for the children so make sure to watch them carefully until their parents arrive.
- If parents come out to meet their child on the way to the "safe area," let the parent know that they need to accompany the entire group to the "safe area" before you can release their child to them.
- Once in the "safe area," children may be released to their parents if they have the proper pick-up tag.

DANGEROUS PERSON IN THE BUILDING

Outside doors near children will be locked when children are in classrooms. The hallways of the church will be regularly monitored by assigned adults. In the event that an unknown person enters the building and appears to be dangerous:

- The hall monitor will alert the classroom workers.
- All children need to be accounted for and brought together in a group.
- The group needs to move to the most protected area in the classroom (bathroom, corner away from hall door, etc.) and wait as quietly as possible.
- Teachers need to stay in this place with the children until the hall monitor indicates that there is no danger.
- If the hall monitor indicates, or if in the teacher's best judgment, it is not safe to remain in the building, the exterior window should be opened and used as an exit; one adult will exit first and the two adults then assist all the children out of the window. Make sure that all children have exited through the window, close the window as much as possible, and walk together to the "safe area."
- If a parent attempts to take a child from the group while they are moving toward the "safe area," let the parent know that they need to accompany the entire group to the "safe area" before you can release their child.

- Once in the “safe area,” make sure that all children are accounted for. Children may only be released from the “safe area” to a parent with the proper pick-up tag.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY LEADERSHIP HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read the entirety of the Children's Ministry Leadership Handbook and will take effort to adhere to all prescribed policies, addressing concerns with appropriately.

Signature of Children's Volunteer

Date