

GOSPEL GRACE



KIDS

MISSION, PROCEDURES AND SAFETY

OUR MISSION

Gospel Grace Kids exists to glorify God by supporting and encouraging parents in making the next generation into gospel-centered, grace-saturated disciples of Jesus Christ in a safe and secure environment.

We will... tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done... that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments. Psalm 78:4-7

PERSONNEL TERMS & DEFINITIONS

- Staff** Paid employees of the church. Required to complete a background check regardless of whether or not they have direct contact with children.
- Volunteers** Those who work with children and are not in the employment of the church. All volunteers are required to complete both the children’s ministry training and screening processes before they serve.
- Adult** Anyone 18 years of age or older.
- Youth** Must be at least 12 years old. Volunteers who are 12 or 13 years old may be scheduled as a third helper along with two adults. A 14-year-old volunteer who has served for at least one year as a third helper may be scheduled as a second helper. No one under 16 years old will be scheduled in the infant room.

PARAMETERS FOR THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This policy applies to children (from birth to 18 years old) who are voluntarily placed by parents under the responsibility of the church for the church’s public worship services or for specific children’s ministry-related, church-sponsored activities.

EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

In dependence upon the Holy Spirit and by God's grace, children's workers are expected to faithfully and dependably serve and support the parents of Gospel Grace Church by praying for the children under their care, pursuing personal spiritual growth, arriving and serving on time as they are scheduled, and knowing and following the Child Protection Policy.

Training and Screening Procedures

Volunteers must be members or active participants pursuing membership at Gospel Grace Church. Non-members may serve after regularly attending GGC for six months. They may be scheduled for one quarter while pursuing membership, but must join before being rescheduled. The minimum age to volunteer is 12 years old.

All persons—both staff and volunteer—seeking to serve are required to:

- Complete and sign the **volunteer application**
- Complete and sign the **background check authorization**
- Undergo a **background check** (re-assessed every five years)
- Complete the **Child Protection Policy training** online or in person

Any staff childcare worker, volunteer, or prospective worker who has disclosed or been convicted of sexual misconduct or child abuse will not be allowed to serve in any capacity in the children's ministry at Gospel Grace Church and/or where they would have unsupervised contact with minors.

Only the pastors and the one designated by them to serve as the background check coordinator will have access to the criminal background check report. This individual will give recommendations to the nursery coordinator regarding the qualification of applicants.

The church will make appropriate efforts through the staff to respond to any internal grievance asserted by an applicant.

Gospel Grace Church reserves the right to reject any applicant for volunteer service or dismiss an existing staff childcare worker or volunteer for any reason, including, but not limited to: refusing or failing to complete screening; failing to provide requested information; providing information that is

subsequently determined as false or misleading; any sin or suffering issues that compromise the staff childcare worker's, volunteer's, or prospective worker's ability to care for children; any criminal report or charge; or information from references or criminal record checks that suggests that the staff childcare worker, volunteer, or prospective worker is not suitable to help with children.

Any childcare worker, volunteer, helper, deacon, staff, elder, or any member of Gospel Grace Church who learns of or has knowledge of misconduct by any staff childcare worker, volunteer, or prospective worker **must** report that knowledge to the pastor who oversees children's ministry. He or she must also be **personally responsible** for any legal obligation that he or she may have to disclose such information to the appropriate governing authority.

Expectations for Classroom Settings

There must always be two adults, one of whom must be female, present in any children's classroom or nursery for Sunday morning gatherings. In the infant nursery, no one under the age of 16 is allowed to serve. This includes the children of volunteers.

We strive to maintain the following **adult-to-child ratios** as suggested by the Utah state requirements for daycares:

Infant Room – 1:4

Toddler Room – 1:7

Children's Church – 1:15

All staff and volunteers must maintain an "open door" policy in the classroom. This means that personnel and parents have a right to observe any activity if they are able to do so without disrupting. Children's and youth classrooms in the church facilities will have sufficient visibility for observation, and such visibility will remain unobstructed at all times.

Food and drinks are allowed in children's ministries according to the following:

- Volunteers may bring water, tea, or coffee to the room in a lidded container in order to minimize spills. Volunteers should not bring food to the classrooms.

- Water will be provided for the children to drink in the toddler room. Toddlers should not bring other beverages to the room.
- The following snacks may be provided by Gospel Grace Church for children:

Infants: Cheerios

Toddlers: Chex Cereal

- Staff and volunteers will feed infants according to parent/guardian directions with bottles or formula provided by the parent or guardian.

The parent or guardian of a child with food allergies must indicate the allergies and necessary steps for staff/volunteers to follow to ensure safety on the sign-in sheet each time the child is given into the children's ministry care.

Maintaining Order

If a child misbehaves, staff or volunteers are to first give a warning in a manner that should not cause embarrassment. If the misbehavior continues, staff and volunteers are to address the child directly pointing out the inappropriate behavior, provide instruction to correct behavior, and direct him or her to a new activity.

Examples of misbehavior and appropriate time out procedure can be found in the behavior expectations appendix on page 10.

If a child is out of control, likely to harm other children or themselves, or unresponsive to the directions above for correction of misbehavior, the staff and/or volunteer will contact the parent to come remove the child.

Time-outs are permitted for nursery-age children under the following guidelines:

- One minute per year of age of the child up to a total of five minutes, without belittling the child or causing undue distress.
- If a child will not cooperate with the time-out restriction, or behavior does not improve, the parents should be contacted to come remove the child.

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from using corporal punishment with children.

PROTECTIVE RULES AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

Sickness and Wellness

Staff and volunteers are to sanitize hands at the beginning of service.

Staff and volunteers should not serve their scheduled shift if they are suffering from any contagious illness. Please find a substitute for your shift.

Parents should not bring children to nursery if they have a contagious illness or if they have had fever, diarrhea, or vomiting within the prior 24 hours. Children should be free of these symptoms for 24 hours before attending childcare.

Staff and volunteers are to be aware of the following at check-in:

- Fever
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Severe runny nose
- Contagious or unexplainable rash or condition (including pinkeye/conjunctivitis, chicken pox, scabies, head lice, etc.)

A child with any of the above symptoms should not participate in any classrooms. If symptoms are noticed during a service, parents should be contacted immediately to remove the child.

Staff and volunteers are to wash hands and use provided hand sanitizer before and after assisting with wiping noses, changing diapers, and or handling blood spills. Gloves are provided and are to be used when changing diapers and or handling blood spills.

Lysol wipes should be used to wipe mouthed toys, play mats, and any other surfaces as necessary.

Toys and equipment are to be sprayed and or wiped down with disinfectant after each use by volunteers and staff. Lysol spray should not be used in the presence of the children but should be used after all children have been picked up.

Nursery linens are to be collected and washed after each use by the nursery coordinator.

Check-in and Checkout Process

Children's ministry check-in and checkout applies to children from birth to age four. A parent or designated guardian must be in the church building at all times while their children are checked-in.

In order to protect the children in our care, each child must be signed into his/her class by a parent or guardian.

- The parent/guardian will receive a numbered bracelet.
- The child will receive a label with a corresponding number to the parent/guardian's bracelet. The intent is for the number to be used to match the parent with child.
- Only the parent/guardian who signed the child into the class is authorized to pick up the child unless otherwise noted in the check-in notebook.
- Parents must notify volunteers of any allergies the child has that would affect their care at check-in and provide necessary instruction. A red star will be drawn on the label placed on the child's back to signify an allergy.

When the parent/guardian comes to pick up the child:

- The children's ministry volunteer will bring the child to the door and remove the child's label before releasing the child to the parent. Parents must sign child out before taking the child out of the classroom.
- Volunteers must check the parent/guardian's bracelet and the child's label to ensure that the numbers match. If a parent/guardian does not have their bracelet, volunteers must ask to see the parent/guardian's driver's license or state ID and verify the name matches the check-in sheet.

Restroom & Diaper Changing Procedures

Volunteers will check and change (as needed) children in diapers at least once during each session. Volunteers should indicate the change time on the sign-in sheet. Only female volunteers may change diapers. The changing pad should be thoroughly wiped with Lysol wipes and allowed to dry between diaper changes.

A child needing any assistance to use the restroom will need to be taken by their parent/guardian. Potty-trained children should be taken to the restroom by parents before arriving at the classroom.

A designated female volunteer will escort fully potty-trained children to the restroom. The volunteer should check the bathroom for any other people, prop open the door, and wait for the children to use the bathroom. The volunteer should assist children only in washing and drying hands. If children need further assistance to use the restroom their parents will be contacted to come assist.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

Physical contact should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. Staff and volunteers must not allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form or make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child.

Staff and volunteers should always remain in open sight of other adults.

Appropriate contact:

- Appropriate touch is positive physical contact that nurtures children and develops a sense of emotional security and maturity in their interactions with adults.
- Appropriate touch is applied to meet the needs of children and not the adults. Children should only be touched in “safe” areas and for a brief time. Safe areas generally include hands, arms, shoulders, upper back, or gentle pats on the top of the head.

Inappropriate contact:

- Inappropriate touch involves, but is not limited to, coercion or other forms of physical contact which exploits the child’s lack of knowledge, satisfies adult physical needs at the expense of the child, violates laws against sexual or physical contact between adult and child, or attempts to modify child behavior with physical force.
- Volunteers should refrain from rough-housing, wrestling, shoulder or piggy-back rides, rubbing, massaging, or any physical activity that might make a child feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Never touch a child on or near any region that is private or personal, unless when necessary while assisting in a diaper change or restroom visit.
- Never touch a child out of frustration or anger.
- Children are not to physically interact with children other children by hitting, pushing, biting, grabbing, kicking, spitting, or the like.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

We seek to lovingly nurture a healthy and safe environment for the children and volunteers involved in Gospel Grace Kids, and our main tools in accomplishing that are love, affection, and encouragement through fun, individual attention, patience, positive reinforcement, and a reward system.

Each worker that serves in Gospel Grace Kids has an up-to-date background check on file and has been trained in proper safety policies and procedures.

Our children's programs are held in public areas with other non-GGC activities happening nearby, therefore control and safety are priorities to the program. For those times when a child's behavior becomes out of control or unsafe for themselves or others, the following guidelines are in place.

- When a child exhibits distracting, disturbing, disrespectful or defiant behaviors, a warning is given.

Distraction: Children blatantly distracting from the program and its leaders.

Disturbance: Children blatantly disturbing leaders or other children verbally or physically.

Disrespect: Children blatantly disrespecting leaders in their words or attitudes.

Defiance: Children blatantly defying direction given to them by a leader or established in the program.

- If three warnings are accumulated, the child will be separated from the program and given individual attention or a time-out appropriate to their age.
- Time-outs are permitted for nursery-age children under the following guidelines: one minute per year of age of the child up to a total of five minutes, without belittling the child or causing undue distress.
- If another warning is given during individual attention or a time-out, the child's parent will be contacted and will need to come pick them up before the event is over.

INCIDENT AND INJURY REPORT

Name of child _____ Date of injury _____

Time of injury _____

Injury description _____

Action taken _____

Name of parent/guardian notified _____

Person(s) who observed the accident _____

General comments _____
