

Nursery Volunteer Guide

Heartland Evangelical Free Church

Philosophy of Nursery Ministry

The nursery ministry at Heartland Evangelical Free Church has two purposes:

To serve the church body by enabling parents of young children to attend worship services, attend Sunday school, and take part in various ministries. Additionally, the nursery ministry serves young children by providing a Christ-centered, safe, nurturing, and loving environment.

Basic Nursery Operations

Nursery Ages:

- Children aged 0 through 3-years-old are welcome to be part of the nursery.
- Once children reach 4-years-old they should attend the worship service with their parents.

Volunteer Times:

- First Service - 8:15-9:45
- Second Service - 9:45-11:00

Arrival and Dismissal:

Arrival -

- 1.) Greet the family with a smile. Introduce yourself!
- 2.) Check the child off on the paper roster. Please put a "1" for the first service and a "2" for the second service. If the child is new, please have parents complete a registration form and give them the quick reference guide.
- 3.) Have parents complete a nametag for the child. Place the nametag on his or her back.
- 4.) Inform parents that if there are any issues they will be notified by text.
- 5.) Take the child to play in the nursery area.

Dismissal-

- 1.) Greet parents (or those authorized to pick children up) as they arrive to pick-up their children. Tell them how their child did during the time they were away. Children should only leave the nursery with parents. If needed, you can verify that the sticker numbers match. If you have any questions or concerns about who is picking up a child please text Emily Flood.
- 2.) Bring the child over to the parent and help them collect their diaper bag, coat, etc.
- 3.) Tell the child you hope to see them again soon!
- 4.) Mark child off of the roster after they leave by highlighting the number service.

Note: Parents can authorize other adults (over 13-years-old) to pick their children up from the nursery in their place. These names can be found on the back of the registration sheets in the binder.

Snacks:

- Snacks will be provided by the nursery (usually Goldfish crackers or animal crackers). However, if a child has a food allergy we will also have allergen-free snacks available.
- Please distribute snacks and water during each service to children who are able to stand on their own.
- Please review food allergies before distributing snacks
- For parents of babies, please ask parents if they would like for you to feed a bottle or if they would like to nurse while the baby is in the nursery.
- Please label bottles with the child's name.
- Mothers are allowed to nurse babies in the nursery.

Sunday School:

- Older nursery children will attend Sunday School.
- Nursery volunteers will help older nursery children move to the Sunday School classroom when it is time.

Bathroom Procedures:

- Adult volunteers (aged 18 and older) can assist children in the bathroom and change diapers. Teenage volunteers (aged 13-18) should not assist in the bathroom or change diapers.
- When assisting a child in the bathroom please leave the door open and stand in the doorway if needed. Some children are able to use the restroom on their own.
- If a child needs assistance cleaning up after using the bathroom, you may assist them with the door open. If you are more comfortable, you may ask another volunteer to come over to the bathroom as well.
- Adult volunteers should change diapers on the changing table in the nursery room with other volunteers present.
- Please make sure the child washes their hands and you wash your hands after helping them in the restroom or changing a diaper.

When to call a parent:

Please send parents a text message and ask them to return to the nursery in the following events:

- If the child continues to cry and efforts to comfort them fail beyond ten minutes or if the child is crying inconsolably.
- In the rare case of an accident or injury
- If the child becomes ill while in the nursery
- If a behavior problem develops that requires the parent's attention or immediate action.
- If the parent has indicated that they would like to be contacted for feeding purposes.

Health Policy:

Heartland desires to maintain a healthy environment for all children and adults. It is important for the children and the volunteers in the nursery to keep the threat of illness to a minimum. Please use your discretion when deciding whether or not to volunteer.

If you develop an infectious illness (strep throat, chicken pox, etc.) after you have been in the nursery, please contact the nursery coordinator so that we may notify other parents and volunteers of exposure.

Dirty toys and linens:

Toys - If a child places a toy in their mouth and/or sneezes on it please put it in the “dirty toys” bin so that it can be sanitized. Please use your discretion and if a toy appears dirty to you please just place it in the bin. We don’t want kids putting dirty items in their mouths!

Linens - If a linen becomes dirty please place it in the “dirty linens” bin. If a child has used a blanket during nursery time it’s a good idea to wash it before the next child uses it even if it isn’t visibly soiled.

Discipline:

Volunteers in the nursery should utilize positive disciplinary measures. Spanking or use of physical force/restraining are not acceptable. If a child exhibits an unexpected/unwanted behavior, volunteers should redirect children gently. If the child is a danger to himself or others it is important to alert the security team as quickly as possible via the Walkie Talkie provided in the room.

Incident Reports:

In the event of an injury, accident, or significant behavioral event, please complete the incident report and inform the Childcare Coordinator and the Children’s Ministry Director immediately.

Children of Volunteers:

If you have older children who are in need of supervision while you are volunteering in the nursery they are welcome to come along and help out. However, please monitor their behavior so that it isn’t overwhelming for the little ones.

Thank you so much for ministering to our children! Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns!

Nursery Coordinator

