



## Welcome to the Community Kids Team!

We're so excited that you want to volunteer in kids' ministry! It's fun and crazy, and it's so much more than just childcare! It's an opportunity to point kids to God and make a difference in their lives. We get to show kids how amazing God is. But most importantly, we get to reflect God's love to them, pray for them, and speak His truths to them. Kids need people in their lives who will show up to hang out with them, love them (and like them too), and show them what it looks like to follow Jesus.

Our vision is to partner with families as we guide our children to love Jesus, share the Good News, and serve others, **BECAUSE** we desire the next generation to make authentic, personal decisions to become Christ followers. When we talk about helping kids begin to own their faith, we're really just talking about discipleship. We believe that God has called us to walk alongside parents in discipling the next generation of Christ followers through building intergenerational relationships within our church family. This is why your investment is so valuable in making a lasting impact in the lives and faith of kids.

Thanks for being willing to serve. Thanks for caring about kids and families. And thanks for letting God use you. We are honored to partner with you in ministry to impact the lives of kids and parents.

There are four kinds of environments for kids in our ministry: Nursery (0-1), Toddlers (2-3), Preschool (4-5), and Elementary (K-5th). Each one is designed to strategically invite kids and families on a journey into deeper relationships with their peers, our adult volunteers, and Jesus, and each one is designed with every kid in mind — the kids who've grown up in church and the first-time visitors too.



## Elementary (K-5th):

During our Elementary gathering, the kids will participate in large group and small group settings. We have four small groups, divided by age: Kindergarten-1st, 2nd grade, 3rd-5th girls, and 3rd-5th boys. As a small group leader, you will meet with the same small group each Sunday that you are serving.

**Elementary volunteers win when they engage kids, build relationships with kids, and help them build relationships with each other.** Without a relationship, it's impossible to influence a kid's faith in a significant way. That's why it's so important for leaders to build strong relationships with the kids they lead. You can't make a kid own their faith, but you can build a relationship with that child that allows you to love them and influence their faith. So a leader wins when they choose to love and embrace the kids God has entrusted to them. They win when they leverage their relationship to lead kids, rather than relying on their position. They win when a kid sees their leader not as just an authority figure they have to obey, but someone they trust and want to follow.

As important as a kid's relationship with a leader is, it's not the only relationship that matters. Leaders win when they help kids build relationships with each other because (remember) discipleship happens best in community. A leader isn't the only person a kid needs to influence their faith. They need each other, too!

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### Schedule for Elementary Program:

- Welcome/Free Choice (9:45-10:10)
- Large Group (10:10 -10:40)
  - Worship, Teaching Video, Bible, Game/Activity
- Small Group Teaching (10:40-11:10)
  - Bible, Discussion, Memory Verse, Activity
- Large Group (11:10-11:20)
  - Worship, Game, Review



## Expectations for Community Kids Volunteers

### Before serving:

- Because we love children and desire to protect them, Christ Community Church requires all staff members and volunteers working with children or students to complete the following safety steps before serving in Community Kids.
  - **Sexual Abuse Awareness Training** - This training will be sent through email and completed online. Staff members and volunteers are required to report any policy violations to a supervisor or a member of the CCC Ministry Safe Admin or Safety Committee.
  - **Screening Process** - Includes application, interview, and references
  - **Policies & Procedures** - Review all policies and procedures in this document and indicate understanding and compliance on application.
  - **Background Check** - All staff members and volunteers must undergo a criminal background check.

### When serving:

- Look over your curriculum ahead of time.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes before our gathering begins on your scheduled Sunday. This will provide time for any last minute preparations or briefings and you will be able to welcome and greet kids and families as they arrive!
- Participate in the entire children's ministry service and lead with lots of energy, engagement, and control.
- Build relationships with the kids in your group.
- Engage in all volunteer forms of communication, including reading monthly newsletters, watching video trainings, and responding to scheduling requests.
- Attend the adult worship services on a regular basis. Make an effort to be involved with a community group and/or discipleship group. In order to disciple the next generation, we need to be growing in our own faith and relationship with Jesus!
- Follow our **Code of Conduct**:
  - **WORK HARD:** You are so important to our ministry! We need you! So please, show up on time, give it your all, and be faithful with the responsibilities entrusted to you. *"Do your best... Keep in mind always that the ultimate Master you're serving is Christ."* (Colossians 3:23)
  - **BE KIND:** Ministry is all about people, so to be effective in ministry, you'll need to reflect God's heart for people. With kids, parents, other volunteers, and our staff, treat people with gentleness, forgiveness, patience, kindness, and love. *"Get along amongst yourselves... And be careful that when you get on each other's nerves you don't snap at each other. Look for the best in each other, and always do your best to bring it out."* (1 Thessalonians 5:13-15)
  - **BE LIKE JESUS:** More than any other volunteer role, small group leaders have the most responsibility because they have the most influence in the lives of kids. While we don't expect anyone to be perfect, we do expect every small group leader to be striving to make wise decisions, to glorify God with their lives, and to strive to look more like Jesus every day - especially in key areas like their treatment of others on our team, social media presence, drug or alcohol use, and sexual behavior. *"Watch what God does, and then do it."* (Ephesians 5:1)



## Safety Guidelines

In Community Kids, we take our responsibility to care for children very seriously. As a member of our ministry team, it is absolutely essential that you practice healthy boundaries with kids at all times, for their safety and yours. These guidelines exist to protect kids from harm and to protect you from false allegations.

### Building Safety and Supervision

All volunteers are responsible for ensuring that the ministry program area is monitored during programming when serving children. No child will be left unattended in a ministry area during regular programming, classes, or activities. Only parents (dropping off children), screened volunteers, church staff, and children are allowed in areas where ministry to children is occurring. All other adults should be immediately escorted out of the area. If any questions or concerns arise related to any person in the area, a ministry coordinator, staff member, or security team member should be notified immediately.

### Walkie Talkies

Each area/classroom in the ministry program is equipped with a walkie-talkie that is connected to the security team. The walkie talkies are used for important notifications and emergency situations that arise during the program time. They are located on the shelf under the soundboard.

### Never Be Alone with a Child

No volunteer should ever be alone with a child. There should be a minimum of two volunteers (who have been screened) assigned to a room. If a married couple or family members are serving together, the door must remain open at all times OR another unrelated volunteer must be present in the room. If there are brief periods of time when only one volunteer is in the room, the door must be open and another volunteer should be monitoring the hallway. You may use the walkie talkie to request a hallway monitor if necessary. *See restroom policies for more.*

### Restroom Policies

Only *adult* female workers will assist children in the restroom, unless a parent is assisting their own child. **You may not enter a bathroom alone with a child or allow more than one child to enter a bathroom.** If you must check on an individual child, go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance. Do not enter the restroom. If a child requires immediate assistance, leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child in completing his or her toileting 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. If they need assistance wiping or have an accident, parents must be paged.

#### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

*Parents will offer instruction to volunteers to change the diapers of individuals with special needs. After the age of 3, parents or legal guardians will change the diapers of all individuals with special needs. If someone with special needs requires assistance using the restroom, a parent may be called to assist them in the restroom.*



## Drop-off and Pick-up Policies

Kids are under the care and supervision of their parents until they are checked in to our children's ministry. We require all kids 5th grade and under to be checked in by a parent or guardian.

- A child may not be picked up by anyone under the age of 16 years old.
- If a child has a special need or medical issue or allergy, parents should alert the host team and the child's teacher.
- ALL first time visitors must fill out a Welcome Form.

**Children in the Elementary program** are signed in at the check-in table. Parents will be given an ID card with their children's name(s) and ID number. If it is a first-time visitor, the parents will get a visitor ID. The following steps are taken . . .

- When signed in, the children will walk through doors to the elementary room.
- Parents must return their ID card AND sign out their children in order to pick them up.
- Parents will wait in the check in area for their children to be called out.
- Children may not return to the elementary room after they are checked out.

## Discipline

Discipline should always be done in a positive, patient and grace-filled way that focuses on helping the kids instead of enforcing punishments. When discipline is necessary to keep a safe and effective environment for everyone, here are three steps to take:

- **Redirect**
  - Get on the child's level and look them in the eye.
  - Give a verbal warning, explaining why the behavior is not acceptable.
  - Give a suggestion for the right way to act or behave and help them do it.
- **Remove**
  - If the child does not follow directions when you give them a redirection, it may be necessary to remove them from the situation or activity so they can calm down and prepare to rejoin the service.
  - Place them in an area away from the other kids for no more than one minute per year of age.
- **Refer**
  - If the child is still not obeying, refer the child to your ministry leader for assistance.

*Never attempt to physically discipline a child, belittle a child, or administer corporal punishment.*

## Document All Incidents

If a child in your care is injured or falls ill, or an incident occurs, an incident report must be filled out and signed by you, our staff, and the child's parents. Folder with blank incident reports is located under the next gen computer.



## Be Aware of Allergies

Parents should let the child's leader or a host team member know if their child has a medical need or allergy. **We cannot administer any medications.** When food and drink are used in our children's ministry rooms, an allergy alert sign will be posted at check in tables.

## Know When to Call Parents

If you need to get ahold of parents at any point during the service, there is a contact database for each age-group located in the small group binders. If the child is a new attender/visitor, contact information is located alphabetically in the registration binder at the check in table. Parents should be contacted if children exhibit symptoms of illness, are crying inconsolably for more than 10 minutes, if a child behaves in a violent manner, or needs assistance in the restroom.

## Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to visit or observe any and all programs and activities in which their child is involved at CCC. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their children's program will be required to complete the Community Kids volunteer application and screening process.

## Physical Contact

The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in Children's Ministries programs in order to promote a positive, nurturing environment while protecting children:

- 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.
- 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, staff member, or the Safety Committee.
- 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.
- 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.
- Do not force physical contact, touch or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.
- Physical contact should be for the benefit of the child, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.
- Children's staff members and volunteers are responsible for protecting children under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.
- Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by a staff member or volunteer must be reported immediately to an immediate supervisor, staff member, or Safety Committee.



## Reporting Suspicious Or Inappropriate Behaviors

We are committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to the Safety Committee and the Police Department, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency.

An element of the safe environment referenced above includes the fostering of a culture of reporting relevant information to a supervisor or a member of the Safety Committee. Because sexual abusers 'groom' children for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to 'groom' a child for sexual abuse. Staff members and volunteers are asked to report 'grooming' behavior, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to a supervisor or a member of the Safety Committee. 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 the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS).** Reports may also be made to a local police department, Kentucky State Police, or any legal prosecutor. Non-emergency reports may also be made using the Kentucky Child/Adult Protective Services Online Reporting System.

**Abuse Hotline: 1-877-597-2331**

Kentucky law indicates that it is the duty of **anyone** who has reasonable cause to believe that a child is dependent, abused, or neglected to report this information. Because many adults are unfamiliar with reporting requirements and may be fearful of the process, we are able to utilize a 'tandem or dual report' model, where permitted. A 'dual report' occurs when a CCC 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 My Church 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 or a member of the CCC Safety Committee. This request is intended to assist the church in properly protecting children involved in Community Kids programs.

***When in doubt, report.***