

CAPITAL KIDS

# PARENT HANDBOOK

& CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



[www.capitalchurch.com](http://www.capitalchurch.com)



# PARENT HANDBOOK

## Welcome to Kids Ministry at Capital Church.

It is our goal to create a safe and loving environment in which the children entrusted to our care are able to learn about the character of God, discover Biblical truth, and learn what it means to follow Jesus Christ.

This handbook is designed to familiarize guardians and/or caregivers with our childcare procedures and our child protection policy. The specifications contained in this handbook apply to official Kids Ministry occurring during the weekend services or other Kids Ministry events. "Kids Ministry" refers to classes and programs for children aged newborn through 5th grade.



# CORE VALUES

## Safe

We commit to being a safe place for children. We understand that safety and security are two of the child's highest needs.

As children arrive at Capital, we want them to feel a genuine warmth and immediate comfort level with the adults who are responsible for them. We will assure parents and children alike that we have their best interests as our top priority at all times. We see three aspects of safety that are crucial to Capital Kids:

**Spiritually safe environment:** Where adults understand that children are in different places spiritually. Children are not coerced into making decisions they are not ready to make and are allowed to move in their spiritual journey one step at a time. All children need to have a safe place where they know that it is ok to ask hard questions about faith.

**Emotional safety:** Leaders who are positive, welcoming, and sincere surround children. Children are accepted and affirmed for who they are. They are nurtured through kind words and actions by all volunteers.

**Physical safety:** Reflected through having room environments with age-appropriate equipment, thorough screening & training of all adults ministering to children, name tags on all children, computerized registration processes, and the enforcement of check-in and checkout procedures.



## Christ-Centered

We commit to teaching children that God has a plan for their life through lessons and activities grounded in Scripture. Our goal is for children to be so captivated with God and His written Word that they desire to learn more. We have chosen curriculum that will fuel spiritual desire in children by exalting the greatness and worth of God and His glorious work through Christ.

## Kid-Targeted

We commit to teach the Bible to our children in an age appropriate and relevant way so that our children can apply God's Word in their lives at home, at school, and at church.

## Relational

We commit to lavish children with grace so that they'll experience unconditional love. We provide a place for children to know and be known, love and be loved, and serve and be served. We accomplish this by providing a community in which our children can build relationships with their peers and leaders.

## Fun

We commit to being creative, fun and imaginative in all that we do and teach. We hope to motivate and inspire kids so that they can grow and learn.



# MISSION

The Kids Ministry of Capital Church exists to glorify God by:

Supporting and encouraging parents who are primarily responsible for teaching Biblical truths to their children (**Ephesians 6:4**).

Making the whole counsel of Scripture known to children with special emphasis on the Gospel (**Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Romans 1:16-17**).

Praying for the children and relying on the Holy Spirit to regenerate their hearts through the faithful teaching of His Word (**Romans 10:17; Ephesians 2:4-10**).

Living faithfully before the children and modeling for them how Christians are called to respond to God, interact with each other, and with the world around us (**Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 11:1**).

## Caregiver Expectations

All Kids Ministry volunteers share a particular responsibility for:

*Ensuring the children's safety while they are in our care.*

*Loving the children as Christ loves them.*

*Setting an example of proper Christian conduct in the way we live our lives.*



# Ministering to the Children

Understanding that the care of children is not a right, but a privilege; and this privilege embodies responsibilities to God for ministering to and caring for the children.

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Our first concern is that the children are safe while they are in our care. To this end we:

*Require criminal background check on all Kids Ministry volunteers.*

*Offer continuous training for all Kids Ministry volunteers.*

*Use a parent authentication identification system (the use of verifying parent and child match by the three-digit security code on check-in label).*

*Employ scheduling procedures and caregiver/child ratios that optimize safety.*

*Equip each room with a first aid kit and emergency backpack.*

*Educate our volunteers about recognizing child abuse and encourage them to report any known or suspected abuse to church staff and/or to appropriate governmental authorities consistent with applicable laws.*

*Adhere to a healthy child policy for admittance to Kids Ministry.*

*Ensure that emergency response procedures are in place.*



# PROTECTING THE CHILDREN BEFORE THEY ARRIVE

Ensuring a safe environment begins long before the weekend. Every applicant who wishes to serve in Kids Ministry is required to undergo a criminal background check and is invited to attend childcare training.

## Background Check Procedure

To ensure safe and quality care, Capital has established several criteria that all caregivers must meet in order to work with our children:

*All volunteers must be attendees in good standing with Capital.*

*All volunteers must be eighteen years of age or older. Youth who are at least eleven years of age are welcome to assist (subject to the approval of the Director of Kids Ministry), but they are always in addition to the adult caregivers.*

*All volunteers must have completed the caregiver application and been recommended by or in consultation with the Director of Kids Ministry.*

*All completed applications will be kept secure.*

# Training

All caregivers are invited to attend volunteer training/orientation sessions offered throughout the year. Additional training sessions will be scheduled for existing volunteers to update them on policies and procedures. Parents with questions about childcare training are welcome to attend these trainings.



# PROTECTING THE CHILDREN AS THEY ARRIVE AND DEPART

## Arrival and Departure Times

Volunteers should be ready to welcome children 20 minutes prior to the start of any service, so that parents have enough time to transition their children before the service begins.

Parents are encouraged to pick up their children immediately following the conclusion of the service. In the event that a child is not picked up within 15 minutes of the end of the service, volunteers will ask the Hall Monitor or Director of Kids Ministry to locate the parents.







## Signing a Child into Kids Ministry

Any parent who would like their child to participate in a Kids Ministry program will sign in the child into the appropriate classroom, nursery, or activity when they arrive, granting permission for the child to participate in that Capital event or program. This will allow Capital to secure medical services for the child in the event of accident or injury if the parents or legal guardians are unavailable. The parent should also use this opportunity to note any allergies or special needs the child may have. For more details on our procedures for caring for children with allergies, please see the "Snacks and Food" section.

# Parental Authentication Identification System

## The Use of Electronic Check-In

In order to protect the children in our care, each child must be signed into their class by a parent or guardian using the electronic check-in system. Upon signing the child in, the parent/guardian and the child will receive a label with a family-specific identification code. This number is used to match parent to child.

At the end of the service when the parent comes to pick up the child:

- 1. The parent will display the identification code to the Kids Ministry volunteer in order to verify a match.*
- 2. Volunteers will REMOVE & DESTROY the child's sticker before they leave the room. This will prevent strangers from referring to the child by name and potentially luring them away from their parents.*



Ordinarily, only the parent who signed the child into the class is authorized to pick up the child. There are two exceptions to this rule:

- 1. In the event of an emergency that would result in neither parent/guardian being available to claim the child at the end of a service, the child will be released to the care of the Director of Kids Ministry and/or a Capital staff member.*
- 2. A parent may make prior arrangements with the Director of Kids Ministry to designate someone other than themselves to pick up the child at the end of a service.*





# PROTECTING THE CHILDREN WHILE THEY ARE IN OUR CARE

## One Teacher One Helper Rule

Our goal at Capital is to have at least two qualified volunteers in each classroom at all times. We consider adults to be age eighteen and older. Youth that are least eleven years of age are welcome to assist (subject to the approval and direction of the Kids Ministry Director), but they are always in addition to and supervised by the adult.

## Hall Monitors

The Hall Monitor is a qualified volunteer whose duties are not limited to any one classroom. Hall Monitors generally move about the hallways and building during scheduled service times to observe any unusual activity and be of service to the other volunteers (e.g., locating parents or substituting temporarily for another volunteers).

## Child-to-Teacher Ratios

In addition to always having one volunteer present, the following ratios are maintained during the weekend services:

**Children ages 0-2** *One adult for every two-four children, depending on their ages.*

**Children ages 3-5** *One adult for every eight children.*

**Children ages 6-11** *One adult for every twelve children.*

*Director of Kid's Ministries or the Hall Monitor should be notified if more volunteers are needed in order to maintain these ratios.*

## Child Safety Gate

In classrooms where a safety gate has been installed, parents will be asked to pass their child and their belongings over the gate to the caregiver. We ask parents to remain in the hallway when checking in or checking out their child. This reduces the risk of a child leaving the classroom unattended as well as allows the caregiver to assist children as they enter and exit the classroom.





## Emergency Response Procedure

In the unlikely event that there is an emergency, volunteers have been trained to: gather the children, exit the building, and meet at a designated Assembly Area. Parents are asked to leave the building using the upstairs exits where they will be reunited with their child.

## Rest Room Procedure

Parents are asked to take their children to the restroom prior to signing them into a class. Parents of infants and/or toddlers are asked to change their diaper prior to signing them into a class. If during the service an infant/toddler needs their diaper to be changed, parents will be paged via their family-specific identification code to their child's class to change their diaper.



# Nursery and Toddler Diapering Procedure

## During Weekday Scheduled Activities

Special care is taken with diaper changing and disposal. The following steps are to be taken in the event a diaper needs to be changed:

- 1. Have two adults present in the room during diaper changes.*
- 2. Wash your hands & put on gloves.*
- 3. Place a clean disposable diaper on the changing surface.*
- 4. Remove the soiled diaper and wipe child's bottom from front to back with diaper wipes until clean. Do this in order to minimize urinary tract infections. (Pay particular attention to and cleanse the skin creases).*
- 5. When removing the soiled diaper, fold it inward, wrapping the diaper in its own plastic liner.*
- 6. Place the soiled diaper in a plastic bag along with your gloves. Close and knot the bag and throw it in the trash after finishing with the diaper change.*
- 7. Put the clean diaper on the child and remove child from the changing area.*
- 8. Disinfect the changing area.*
- 9. Wash your hands (soap and water)!!! If you are changing more than one child's diaper (one right after the other) you may use the sanitizing wipes.*



### 3 year olds through Kindergarten

In the event that a child needs to use the restroom, the volunteers will call the Hall Monitor who will step into the classroom (to maintain appropriate child-to-teacher ratios) while a volunteer takes the child and one other child to the rest room. The volunteer should wait outside the closed restroom stall door unless the child needs assistance. The child and the volunteer must wash their hands with soap and water before returning to the classroom.

*Restroom door should be propped open while in use.*

### Other Classes

For all other classes, any child needing to use the restroom shall go with another child of the same age and sex. A volunteer will accompany the pair to the restroom and wait outside the propped open restroom door until the children are finished. The children must wash their hands with soap and water and return with the volunteer to their classroom. The Hall Monitor will be available to step into a classroom temporarily if necessary to maintain appropriate child-to-teacher ratios.

## Appropriate Discipline

All Kids Ministry volunteers are responsible for providing a loving, respectful, and orderly atmosphere in which children can learn, play, and interact with others. This atmosphere should be maintained by preparing beforehand, proactively directing children towards acceptable activities, verbally encouraging positive behavior, and when necessary, correcting or redirecting inappropriate behavior.

Acceptable means of redirecting inappropriate behavior include: correcting the child verbally, withholding a certain privilege or activity for a brief time, or separating a child from the group for a brief time (particularly if their behavior is endangering or upsetting other children).

Kids Ministry volunteers and staff members should never yell, spank, or hit a child. If behavior is uncontrollable or the child does not respond to the correction measures above, the Hall Monitor will be asked to page parents or locate parents to return to the Kids Ministry area to check on their child.

For further information regarding discipline please speak with the

Director of Kids Ministry.

## Accidents and First Aid

All classrooms are equipped with basic first aid kits. Kits are located in classroom supply cupboards. Volunteers should be familiar with their contents and uses. Basic First Aid training will be provided on a periodic basis. In the event of life-threatening injury or illness, emergency medical services will be called first and the Hall Monitor will locate and inform the parents immediately. Volunteers will complete an Incident Report Form for all injuries, whether major or minor.





# Food and Drink

The primary mission of Kids Ministry at Capital is to provide a safe and loving environment for children entrusted to our care.

One of the ways we protect children is to limit the food and drink allowed in the classroom.

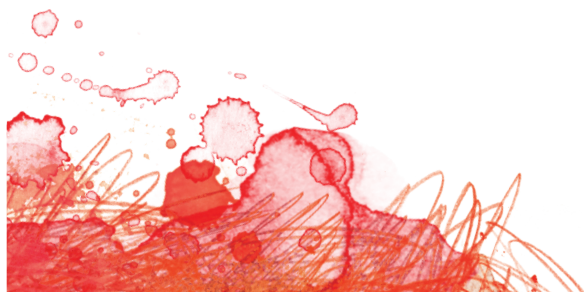
Volunteers may not bring food or drink with them when they serve.

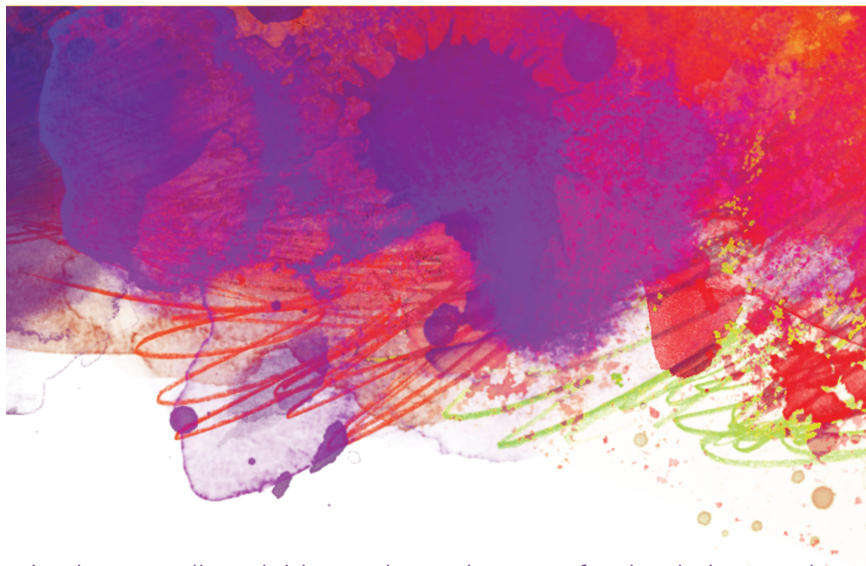
Volunteers will not provide any personal food to children even with parental consent.

## Why do we do this?

The nature of childcare is very hectic and dynamic so we cannot guarantee that:

- 1. A child's bag will be properly marked at all times.*
- 2. The childcare volunteer will reach into the correct bag.*
- 3. Another child won't grab food/drink and eat it.*
- 4. A child won't share his food/drink with other children.*





Why don't we allow children to bring their own food with them and feed themselves?

For the same reasons: We can't guarantee that volunteers will find/ give the right food to the right child or that a child won't grab and eat another child's food or that your child won't share his food with other children.

### **So what do we do?**

If a parent wants to feed their child something other than Goldfish/fruit snacks and water, that parent may come and check out their child, feed them outside the room then return them to the childcare room. This is the policy throughout the building (the only exception is in grade-level classes; we get parental consent to provide store-related snacks as part of the curriculum).

# Administering Snacks and Food

## Ages 0-11 Month-Olds

Only labeled bottles will be served to children while they are in the care of our Infant Nursery. If a parent desires to feed their child a specific snack (other than the child's bottle during the services), we ask that they come downstairs and administer the food personally to their child.

Parents who would like to feed their children while they are in our care should alert the Hall Monitor and/or Director of Kids Ministry that they are temporarily checking their child out of class.

## 12-23 Month-Olds

Gluten-free Puffs will be the only snack served to children while they are in the classroom. If a parent desires to feed their child at a certain time during the services, we ask that they come downstairs and administer the food personally to their individual child.

Caregivers may offer properly labeled sippy cups containing only water, as provided by the parents upon signing the child in.



## 24 Month-Olds to 3 Year-Olds

Goldfish crackers, all-natural fruit snacks, and water will only be offered to the children in the 2-year-olds and 3 year-olds classes.

If a child cannot eat these, the parent should do the following:

*Verbally notify the volunteer on duty.*

*Highlight with a highlighter/marker, the 'Allergy Alert' line on the child's check in label.*

*Verbally notify the Director of Kids Ministry and their child's caregiver the nature of the allergy and how to respond to an allergic reaction.*

Volunteers may offer properly labeled sippy cups containing only water, as provided by the parents upon signing the child in.



## PreK-5th Grade

Goldfish, all-natural fruit snacks, and water will be the only snack served to children.

## Special Events for PreK-5th Grade

Snacks of various kinds WILL regularly be offered as part of our Special Events (Vacation Bible School) and in the Sunday School classroom. Parents should verbally notify volunteers upon check-in about the nature of any allergy or food limitations.





## Ongoing Care for Children with Allergies or Special Needs

Parents of children with allergies who attend regularly should speak with the Kids Ministry Director about how to handle any unexpected allergic reactions. Upon parental request, allergy information about children may be posted in the child's classroom.

No food except for the church-supplied goldfish, fruit snacks and water will be permitted to be eaten anywhere in the classrooms.

Parents of children with special needs are encouraged to contact the Director of Kids Ministry before checking their child into class.

## Serving Snacks

Volunteers should always check each child's check in label before serving a snack. If the child's label indicates an allergy, the volunteers MUST check with both the Hall Monitor and the Director of Kids Ministry to determine the nature of the allergy.

If instructions are not clear, no food should be given to the child without clarification from the parent. The volunteers should send a Hall Monitor to clarify with the child's parent.



# Healthy Child Policy

## Communicable Disease Policy

In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases among children, four rules are in place concerning disease. All parents/caregivers must be familiar with these policies.

- 1. Children with infectious diseases should be kept home until they are no longer contagious. If a child is exhibiting symptoms of illness such as fever, diarrhea, open skin lesions or blisters (as in chicken pox), or persistent nasal discharge, the parent should keep the child home.*
- 2. Caregivers will use latex gloves and proper hygiene procedures to change diapers, wipe noses, and handle blood spills.*
- 3. Hand washing or usage of anti-bacterial hand sanitizer must be a regular habit for both children and volunteers.*
- 4. Toys and equipment are washed and disinfected regularly. Capital Church is dedicated to preventing the spread of disease among children. Hall Monitors and the Director of Kids Ministry have the right to refuse a child on the basis of questionable symptoms. To prevent this, parents are asked to comply with the following guidelines:*



A child may not participate in a class if and when the following exist:

**Fever** (Note: Children should be free of a fever for 24 hours before coming back to church)

**Vomiting or diarrhea**

**Any symptom of childhood diseases** such as scarlet fever, German measles, mumps, chicken pox, or whooping cough.

**Common cold** – from onset through one week

**Sore throat**

**Croup**

**Any unexplained rash**

**Any skin infection** – boils, ringworm, impetigo

**Pink eye or other eye infections**

**Thick green, yellow, or constant nasal discharge**

**Any communicable disease**



Children who appear ill during a class will be kept in the Church Office with a volunteer while the Hall Monitor locates parents.

Please inform the Director of Kids Ministry if your child appears to have contracted an illness while attending a Capital event so that other parents may be notified if necessary.

No one is allowed to give any medication to any child.

# UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

Universal precautions are employed such that all human bodily fluids are treated as if they carry infectious diseases. Universal precautions are applicable in a nursery setting and should be utilized. The method is very effective for protecting both the children and caregivers in the nursery from illness. This is not to imply that any children or caregivers in the nursery are carrying infectious diseases. By treating all bodily fluids as if they are infected, any infections or contaminants can be avoided at all times, providing a safer and healthier environment for caregivers and children alike.

## Important Points of Universal Precautions:

Wash hands before and after any contact with bodily fluids. This includes wiping noses, changing diapers, cleaning vomit, and treating a blood spill.

Always wear disposable gloves when dealing with any bodily fluids.

Treat all soiled linen (i.e., sheets, clothing, blankets) as potential infectious agents.

Remove toys that children have mouthed from the general play area. Set them in the container separating them from the general play area.

At the end of the service, disinfect the room with disinfectant wipes.



# GENERAL INFORMATION

## Lost and Found

Lost and Found is located downstairs at the base of the steps in the closet underneath the stairwell. All lost items will be placed there after services. Please check there if an item is left behind in one of the classrooms. All unclaimed Lost and Found items will be donated.













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