



Child Protection Policy

Revised August 2012

Welcome!

Welcome to children's ministry at Capitol Hill Baptist Church (CHBC). 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 parents and caregivers with our childcare procedures and our child protection policy. The specifications contained in this handbook apply to official children's ministry occurring during the three regularly scheduled weekly meetings of the church (Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening). "Children's ministry" refers to classes and programs for children aged newborn to and including Sr. High.

**If you have any questions or comments, please call the Children's Ministry Administrator.
(202) 543-6111**

Mission

The children's ministry of Capitol Hill Baptist 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 children's ministry volunteers share a particular responsibility for:

- 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 be safe while they are in our care.

To this end we:

- Screen all children's ministry volunteers
- Require training for all children's ministry volunteers
- Use parent authentication identification system
- Employ scheduling procedures and caregiver/child ratios that optimize safety
- Equip each room with a first aid kit
- Educate our volunteers about recognizing child abuse and encourage them to report any known or suspected abuse to church officials and/or to appropriate governmental authorities consistent with applicable laws
- Adhere to a healthy child policy for admittance to children's ministry

Protecting the Children Before They Arrive

Ensuring a safe environment begins long before Sunday morning. Every applicant who wishes to serve in children's ministry is required to go through a screening process and attend childcare training.

Screening Procedure

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

- All caregivers must be members in good standing of CHBC for at least six months.
- All caregivers 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 and direction of the Director of Children's Ministry), but they are always in addition to the adult caregivers.
- All caregivers must have completed childcare training.
- All caregivers must have completed the caregiver application and been recommended by or in consultation with the pastor responsible for children's ministry.
- All reference checks must be satisfactorily completed. Criminal records checks and other appropriate screening checks may be completed, subject to the discretion of the pastor overseeing children's ministry.
- All completed records of screening procedures will be kept securely along with the original application.
- Caregivers are to be approved by the Director of Children's Ministry in consultation with one of the pastors.

Training

All caregivers must attend childcare training before they are allowed to work with the children. Additional training sessions will be scheduled for existing caregivers to update them on policies and procedures. Parents with questions about childcare training are welcome to attend these sessions.

Protecting the Children As They Arrive and Depart

Arrival and Departure Times

Caregivers should be ready to accept children 15 minutes prior to the start of any session, so that parents have enough time to transition their children before the session begins.

Parents are encouraged to pick up their children immediately after the conclusion of the session. In the event that a child is not picked up within 15 minutes of the end of the session, caregivers will ask the Hall Monitor or Deaconess of Childcare to locate the parents.

Signing a Child in to Children's Ministry

Any parent who would like his/her child to participate in a children's ministry program will sign the child in to the appropriate classroom, nursery, or activity when he/she arrives, granting permission for the child to participate in that CHBC event or program. This will authorize CHBC

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 below.

Parental Authentication Identification System

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

1. The parent/guardian will sign the child out.
2. The children’s ministry volunteer will bring the child to the door and remove the child’s label. If the child or parent is unknown to the volunteer, the volunteer will check the numbers on the parent’s ID card and child’s labels to ensure that they match.
3. Caregivers will REMOVE & DESTROY child labels before children leave their room. This will prevent strangers from referring to the child by name and potentially luring them away from their parents.

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

1. In the event of an emergency that would result in neither parent/guardian being available to sign out the child at the end of a session, the child will be released to the care of an elder of CHBC.
2. A parent may make prior arrangements with the Director of Children's Ministry or her designate to allow for someone other than him/herself or his/her spouse to pick up the child at the end of a session.
3. Members of the church who sign in their children will have the option to initial a column on the sign in sheet that will grant permission to their spouse (and only their spouse) to pick up their child in the event that the parent/guardian who signs in the child is unable to sign the child out.

Protecting the Children While They Are In Our Care

Two Caregiver Rule

At least two qualified, adult caregivers must be present in each classroom at all times. We consider adults to be age eighteen and older. Youth that are at least eleven years of age are welcome to assist (subject to the approval and direction of the Children's Ministry Administrator), but they are always in addition to and supervised by the two adults.

Two male caregivers may not serve together without a female caregiver also being present. The only exception to this rule is when a Hall Monitor temporarily substitutes for a female caregiver.

Hall Monitors

The Hall Monitor is a qualified male caregiver whose duties are not limited to any one classroom. Hall Monitors generally move about the hallways and buildings during scheduled session times to observe any unusual activity and be of service to the other caregivers (e.g., locating parents or substituting temporarily for another caregiver.) The Hall Monitor and each classroom are equipped with a walkie-talkie to facilitate communication. A Hall Monitor is on duty during the three regularly scheduled weekly meetings of the church (Sunday morning, Sunday evening, Wednesday evening Bible study.)

Child-to-Caregiver Ratios

In addition to always having two caregivers present, the following ratios are maintained during the three regularly scheduled weekly meetings of the church:

- 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 6-12 One adult for every twelve children

Deacon(s)/Deaconess(es) of Childcare, Children's Ministry Administrator or the Hall Monitor should be notified if more caregivers are needed in order to maintain these ratios.

Rest Room Procedure

Parents are asked to take their children to the restroom prior to signing them into a class.

2 Year Olds through Pre-K

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

Other Classes

For all other classes up to (but not including) Junior High, any child needing to use the rest room shall go with another child of the same age and sex. A female caregiver will accompany the pair to the rest room and wait outside the closed bathroom door until the children are finished. The children must wash their hands with soap and water and return with the caregiver to their classroom. The Hall Monitor will be available to step into a classroom temporarily if necessary to maintain appropriate child to caregiver ratios.

Junior High and Senior High

Students in the Junior High or Senior High class shall use the appropriate restroom on their own. No caregiver or other child should accompany him/her.

Appropriate Discipline

All children's 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 his behavior is endangering or upsetting other children).

Children's 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 discipline measures above, ask the Hall Monitor to call the parents.

For further information regarding discipline please speak with the Director of Children's Ministry.

Accidents and First Aid

All classrooms are equipped with basic first aid kits. Caregivers should be familiar with their contents and uses. 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. Caregivers will complete an Accident Report Form for all injuries, whether major or minor.

Food & Drink

The primary mission of Children's Ministry at CHBC is to provide a safe and loving environment for the children entrusted to our care so that their parents may be fed spiritually without undue concern.

One of the ways we protect children is to limit the food & drink allowed in classrooms.

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

Caregivers will not provide any other 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 caregivers 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 Kix cereal and water, that parent may come and check out their child, feed him outside the room then return him 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 story-related snacks as part of the curriculum).

We covenant with parents to protect & nurture their children while they are in our care & so our vigilance is in proportion to the degree of the trust given us. We desire to be faithful to that charge.

Administering Snacks and Food

Ages 0-11 Month-Olds

No food will be served to children while they are in the care of our Infant and Crawler nurseries. If a parent desires to feed their child at a certain time during the services, we ask that they come up and administer the food personally to their individual child.

Parents who would like to feed their children while they are in our care should alert the Team Leader that they are temporarily checking their child out of class. Parents are welcome to make use of the Nursing Moms Room or the high chairs in the 2nd floor kitchen to feed their children.

12-17 Month –Olds

No food will be served to children while they are signed in under our care. If a parent desires to feed their child at a certain time during the services, we ask that they come up 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.

18 - 23 Month-Olds to Pre-K

Kix cereal and water will be offered to the children in pre-kindergarten (4s/5s classroom) and below.

If a child should not be given a snack of this nature, the parent should do the following:

- Verbally notify the team leader on duty
- Place a red Allergy Alert wristband on the child's ankle or wrist.
- Note the nature of the allergy and how to respond to an allergic reaction in the appropriate spot in the sign in book

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

Ongoing Care for Children with Allergies

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

No food except for the church-supplied cereal and water will be permitted to be eaten anywhere in the classrooms.

If a parent desires to feed their child anything other than the provided snack at any time during the services, we ask that they come up and administer the food personally to their individual child in designated locations such as the 2nd floor kitchenette.

Serving Snacks

Caregivers should always check each child's wristband before serving a snack. If the child is wearing a red Allergy Alert wristband, the caregiver **MUST** check with both the team leader and the sign in book 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/guardian. The caregiver should send a hall monitor to clarify with the child's parent or guardian.

Sunday School (Grades K and above)

Normally, no snacks will be offered to the children in our K-4 Sunday School classes.

Praise Factory and Sunday Evening (Grades K and above)

Snacks of various kinds WILL regularly be offered as part of Praise Factory and the Sunday evening children's classes. Parents should verbally notify teachers upon check-in about the nature of any allergy or food limitations and note the information in the sign in book.

Child Protection Committee

The Child Protection Committee (CPC) consists of the pastor overseeing children's ministry, the Children's Ministry Administrator, and the Deacons of Childcare. All members of the CPC stand ready to receive information related to suspected child neglect, abuse, or molestation. They are committed to addressing all allegations in accordance with the principles of Matthew 18 and in harmony with the CHBC church covenant and the laws of the District of Columbia. Any children's ministry volunteer or staff member, who witnesses a violation of the Child Protection Policy short of abuse, should first notify the person violating the policy and encourage compliance. If the person violating the policy refuses to comply, a member of the Child Protection Committee should be notified immediately. Any children's ministry volunteer or staff member who witnesses or suspects neglect, abuse, or molestation should report their concerns immediately to a member of the Child Protection Committee.

Healthy Child Policy

Communicable Disease Policy

In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases among the children, four rules are in place concerning disease. Both parents and 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 Caregivers.
4. Toys and equipment are washed and disinfected regularly. CHBC is dedicated to preventing the spread of disease among the children. Team Leaders and the Deacon/Deaconess 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 should not participate in a class if and when any of the following exist:

- Fever (Note: Children should be free of a fever for 24 hours after a contagious disease 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 infection
- Thick green, yellow or constant nasal discharge
- Any communicable disease

Children who appear ill during a class will be kept at the nursery sign-in desk with a caregiver while the Hall Monitor locates the parents.

Please inform the Children's Ministry Administrator if your child appears to have contracted an illness while attending a CHBC event so that other parents may be notified if necessary.

Neither caregivers nor church staff is allowed to give any medication to any child.

Parents of children with special needs are encouraged to contact the Children's Ministry Administrator before signing the child into class.

Universal Precautions

Universal precautions are employed such that all human bodily fluids are treated as if they carried 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, including 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) as potential infectious agents.
- Remove toys that children have mouthed from the general play area. Set them in the container by the sink and wash.
- At the end of the session, disinfect the room with Lysol disinfectant spray.

General Information

Lost and Found

Lost and Found is located on the 1st Floor by the Members' Mailboxes. All lost items will be placed there after services. Please check there if an item is left behind in one of the classrooms.