

One generation
commends your
works to
another; they
tell of your
mighty acts.
Psalm 145:4



"Growing Together" Volunteer Training

1. Child Protection Policy
2. Classroom Management Policy
3. Incident Reports
4. Christian Education Worker's Application



Child Protection Policy

The Gospel of Mark records that when people brought little children to Jesus, He took them in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them. It is our desire to bring children to Jesus, too.

We recognize that we are a reflection of God's love to those in our care; therefore, we seriously take our responsibility for them. These guidelines are set forth to provide a safe and nurturing environment for the children entrusted to us.

We view ourselves as **partners** with parents, seeking to provide quality care and instruction in our children's ministries. All of our guidelines are designed to protect and promote growth in God for each child and adult.

Everyone who teaches, helps, or cares for children under the sponsorship of LMBC must follow these policies and procedures. Individual programs may impose additional guidelines as appropriate to their ministry setting. "Christian Education Workers" are individuals who regularly supervise or have custody of minors, whether through pastoral ministry, in the nursery, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, camps, or other youth activities.

Child Protection Policy

I. Child Protection Policy

A. **All Christian Education Workers must read this policy statement.** This policy statement shall be made readily available to all Christian Education Workers.

B. All Christian Education Workers should **pray regularly for the children in our church**, thanking God for the privilege of ministering to them and asking Him to protect them from any kind of harm. Workers should also **pray that God would give them wisdom and discernment** so that they will be sensitive to help and protect the children.

Child Protection Policy

C. Staffing Guidelines for 0-12th grades:

- At least **one approved adult** (at least 18+ years old) should be in each room at all times.
- An **approved adult or teen** (14-18 years of age) can work as a second teacher.
- A **12 year old** may work in the classroom as a **helper** if they have completed and passed **Youth In Training Level 1**.
- Unless a special exception is made, a **teen teacher** needs to be at least **five years older than the students** they are working with.
- **Teen teachers** should be left in charge only in an **emergency** situation.
- It is preferred that each classroom has **two teachers** and that they are in the room at all times.

Child Protection Policy

1. However, we realize that two adult staffing may not always be available to make this possible. In that case, we will take the following steps:

- a. **Utilization of Approved Individuals:** Try to **find an approved volunteer** to fill in. If you cannot, please **let the Department Head** know and they will help you find a substitute.
- b. **Approved Volunteer Checker:** If an approved volunteer cannot be found that is willing to help for the full class session, **try to find an approved volunteer or church staff member to check on your classroom at random times throughout the class session if you are comfortable teaching alone.** This could be your Department Head, the Christian Education Director, non-teaching Pastor, or another adult. Let your Department Head know who you used as a checker in case any questions were to arise. Also, check to see if there is someone already assigned to be a weekly checker, if so, let them know about your class needs. An assigned checker is the person we call our "Walk About."
- c. **Combining Classes:** Two classes may be combined, if practical, to meet staffing requirements. **A notice will be posted for parents** telling them where to pick up their children.

Child Protection Policy

- d. **Utilization of Parent Helpers:** Parent Helpers that are not approved volunteers can be used if needed as last minute staff. **However, they should be well known to the teacher.** They **cannot be used as a Head Teacher** without the knowledge and approval of the Christian Education Director or Department Head.
- e. **Cancellation of Class:** If an approved adult cannot be found to be the Head Teacher, and the class cannot be combined with another class, as a last resort, the class can be **anceled.** **Elementary students and older should be sent to the Worship Service and younger aged children need to be returned to their parents**

Child Protection Policy

2. In the event that a **teacher is alone** with the students before class starts, it is OK to **have the door shut as long as parents are coming and going, or you have a volunteer random checker.** (This may be needed in the nursery with small children that need to be kept in the room). In classrooms with older students, the door should be propped open if there is not a window available for anyone passing to look into the room. *Parents are welcome to stay in the room with their child if they would like to for a couple of weeks if needed; but shorter visits will be encouraged as the child adjusts to the classroom.*
3. **Parents are welcome** to drop in and visit any classroom at any time during any day of the week. (For security reasons, **nursery is not a parent drop in area;** but they can look in the window frequently.)
4. When the occasion arises that babysitting is required for a **one-time church sponsored event** not defined as children's ministry, (example: annual meeting, Women's Bible Study, etc.) and the church facilities are used, the following is required:
 - a. **An approved adult** must be present to ensure that child protection policies relevant to the situation are followed.
 - b. **Two adult leadership is requested if at all possible.** Strict adherence to the staffing guidelines listed above needs to be followed at all times.

Security Policy

D. Child Security Policies

1. **Drop off Policy (0-6th grade)** Children are never to be **dropped off in a classroom without the teachers present.** Generally, supervision will be provided **15 minutes before** a program starts.

2. **Registration Policy (0-6th grade)** **Parents must register** any child who attends a program regularly, from the first visit.

3. **Pick up Policy (0-5 years of age)**
 - a. 0-5 years of age – **Children in these classes will be released to responsible family members only or approved adult based on check-in information.**
 - b. All children should be **picked up within 10 minutes of the class ending** so that teachers can be where they may need to be.

Bathroom Policy

4. **Bathroom Policy (4 years old – 6th grade)** We strongly encourage parents and their children to visit the bathroom prior to each class. If a younger child needs assistance in the bathroom, a teacher may enter to assist observing the following guidelines:
- Avoid taking children to the bathroom alone.** Take them in pairs if possible.
 - If one child must go to the bathroom, the adult should escort the child to the bathroom, **check to see that the room is vacant, and then remain outside the bathroom in the hallway** (or prop open the door).
 - Never go into a bathroom with a child and shut the door.** If you need to enter a stall to help a child, leave the stall door open!
5. **Bathroom Policy (older students)** If they really need to go to the bathroom, **send them in pairs to a restroom** that is well used (e.g. don't use the office restroom unless you have a class in that building).

Overnight Policy

E. **Overnight Policy:** There **will not** be overnight activities for children **younger than third grade** unless it is specifically a parent/child outing.

1. All overnight activities should be **pre-approved** by the Christian Education Director or Pastor.
2. All overnight activities should have a ratio of **two leaders for every ten children**. The two leaders will have an assigned group of children that they will be responsible for during the duration of the overnight event.
3. All **supervising adults** need to go through the **approval process**, including application.

Proper Affection Policy

F. **Proper Display of Affection (0-12th grade)** Touch is an essential responsibility in nurturing lives. **Physical contact with children should be age and developmentally appropriate.** Be aware of and sensitive to differences in sexual development, cultural differences, family backgrounds, individual personalities, and special needs. The following guidelines are to be promoted for pure, genuine, and positive displays of God's love:

1. **Hugs** – one arm **side hugs or hand-to-arm hugs** are positive contact. Avoid initiating full contact, body-to-body hugs or kisses.
2. **Lap Sitting** – Appropriate sitting on laps may occur with children **5 years old and younger**. Encourage all others to sit next to you.
3. **Causal Touch** – **Gentle** contact during activities may be on children's heads, shoulders, arms, and hands. **Physical discipline should never be used on children or students.**
4. **Back-rubs** – Anyone working with our children should **refrain** from giving back-rubs.

Discipline Policy

G. Discipline Policy (1-12th grade) - All interaction regarding discipline needs to be carefully considered in light of a child's dignity and fragile life. **Gentleness**, **respect**, and **understanding** must guide all actions and words. Discipline will be carried out through **instruction**, **training**, and **correction**. Physical punishment will **not** be used. For additional information, see the *Classroom Management Policy*.

Special Youth Policy

H. Special Concerns for Youth Ministry

- 2. Driving** – When a staff member (volunteer or paid) is driving students home, they should **never be alone**, one-on-one, with a student of the **opposite sex** in the car if possible. **Written permission should be given by the parents** in the event any volunteer staff might have to drive a student home alone. If driving home several students, **keep a student of the same sex with you until the last**, if possible. Additionally, the driver must have a **valid driver's license** and current **automobile insurance**. The number of persons per car should not exceed the number of **seatbelts**.
- 3. Lunches** – One-on-one lunch appointments with the opposite sex may be made if **separate transportation** is used. Eat in public places. Be sure parents are aware of the appointment and approve of it.
- 4. Dating** – At **no** time shall anyone working with youth pursue a dating relationship with a student. Staff should always be sensitive to students with “crushes.”
- 5. Open-Door Policy** – At no time should volunteer staff working with youth have a one-on-one meeting behind **closed** doors. For your protection, keep the door at least partially open.
- 6. A Youth Mentoring Policy** has been approved by the Elders for specific approved leaders. Permission for one on one mentoring has to be worked out with the CE Director or Youth Director. **Policy training** and **monthly reports** are also required to participate as a leader in this program.

Reporting Policy

III. Responsibility of Christian Education Workers to admonish or report inappropriate behavior.

A. There are two problems that Christian Education Workers should watch for:

1. **Behavior by anyone in this church**, especially a Christian Education Worker, that indicates he or she may be inclined to abuse, molest, or otherwise harm any child, especially one under the care of this church.
2. Indications that a **child** under the **care** of this church is **being abused, molested, neglected**, or otherwise **harmed**, whether by someone in this church or outside this church.

Reporting Policy

B. Admonishing and **reporting inappropriate behavior** by a Christian Education Worker:

1. If you observe a Christian Education worker (or another member of the church) talking or acting in a manner that seems to be innocent but might appear to others to be inappropriate, **privately admonish that person** and encourage him or her to exercise greater care in words and actions (see Matt. 18:15).
2. If you observe a Christian Education worker (or another member of the church) talking or acting in a manner that gives rise to reasonable suspicion or has the **potential of improper involvement with a child**, you should **promptly report** your concern to the Christian Education Director or to the Senior Pastor, who will look into the matter and take appropriate corrective measures.
3. Behaviors to watch for in leaders working with children:
 - a. **Inappropriate comments** about sexual matters, especially about or in the presence of children.
 - b. **Use of pornography**, including inclination toward sexually explicit television shows, movies, books, or magazines.
 - c. **Excessive and inappropriate attention** to a particular child, especially if it involves an effort to be alone with the child.

Reporting Policy

IV. Reporting actual or suspected abuse or neglect of a child

A. Our understanding of Alaska State Law is that volunteer Christian Education Workers in a church are **not required to report** actual or suspected child abuse or neglect, unless child care is provided for compensation (AS §§ 47.17.020, 47.17.290[3]). Should a Christian Education Worker voluntarily make a report to civil authorities, the law provides that he or she will be immune to civil or criminal liability, provided the report was made in good faith and without malicious purposes (AS § 47.17.050).

B. No single indicator of abuse or neglect is necessarily cause for alarm, but it may be cause to observe a given person or situation more closely. When **multiple indicators** appear together; however, it is appropriate to **discuss the situation with the Senior Pastor or the Director of Christian Education** or, in urgent cases, to make an actual report to the authorities. (The nearest office of the Division of Family & Youth Services (DFYS) is located at 268 Fireweed in Palmer. The phone number is 745-1701. The nearest State Trooper Office is located at 453 South Valley in Palmer. The phone number is 745-2131.).

Reporting Policy

- C. **Indications of physical abuse:** A child reports injury by others; **unexplained bruises, welts, lacerations, burns, fractures, abdominal injuries, or human bites;** child is unusually wary of physical contact with adults, demonstrates **extremes in behavior,** or seems **frightened of parents or caretakers.**
- D. **Indications of sexual abuse:** A child reports abuse by others; has **difficulty walking or sitting; torn, stained or bloody underclothing;** complaints of **pain or itching in genital area; bruises or bleeding in external genitalia, vaginal, or anal area;** unusual interest in or **knowledge of sexual matters;** or other unusual and excessive behaviors inappropriate for a child of that age.
- E. **Reporting abuse** can precipitate severe consequences to a family, so it **should never be done casually** or thoughtlessly, and certainly not for malicious purposes. At the same time, failing to report abuse can have severe consequences to a child at risk. Therefore, if you have reasonable cause to suspect abuse, talk first with the Children Education Director or the Senior Pastor, who will help you decide what steps are appropriate and, if necessary, who else to contact.

Reporting Policy

V. Guidelines for church leadership to follow should an allegation occur.

- A. **Document** all efforts at handling the incident.
- B. **Report** the incident immediately to the church attorney and insurance company.
- C. **Contact** the proper state **authorities** following the guidance of the church insurance company and attorney.
- D. **Notify** the **parents**.
- E. **Do not confront the accused** until the safety of the child or youth member is secured.
- F. **Do not prejudge the situation**, but take the allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and the victim's family. Care and safety of the victim is the first priority.
- G. **Treat the accused with dignity and support**. If the accused is a church worker, that person should be relieved temporarily of his or her duties until the investigation is finished. If the person is a paid employee, arrangements should be made to either maintain or suspend his or her income until the allegations are cleared or substantiated.
- H. Use a **prepared public statement** to answer the press and to convey news to the congregation. Be careful to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.

Classroom Management



Classroom Management Policy

PURPOSE: To communicate to teachers and parents the procedures that will be followed for classroom situations requiring administered discipline. The following policy is recommended to be followed for **grade 1 through high school**; a separate sheet is included pertaining to discipline for preschoolers. It is understood that **all teachers will be required** to subscribe to this policy before being allowed to work in the Christian Education ministries.

General Guidelines:

(Grade 1 through High School)

It is important for the students to **learn Bible truths** in a **controlled environment**. Classroom control is essential for consistent learning to occur. Listed below are a few simple ways to help the teacher better prepare for the class and help avoid discipline problems.



Classroom Management Policy

1. Establish classroom **rules** setting reasonable limits **considering the children's ages** and needs. Make the rules and the consequences of breaking those rules known to your students.
2. Be fair, courteous, **loving**, and encouraging toward students.
3. Be **consistent** at all times.
4. Prepare ahead and determine your **goals** for the lesson.
5. Avoid boredom and listlessness by checking your lesson plan for **variety**.
6. Arrive a minimum of 10 minutes ahead of the starting time.
7. Have all materials ready and available for use.
8. Be patient. Keeping your composure sets a good example.
9. Recognize and **praise** good behavior. State what should be done ("walk quietly"), not what should not be done ("don't run"). **Students respond to a positive approach.**

Classroom Management Policy

10. **Avoid** ridicule and sarcasm.
11. Use **common sense** and keep your **sense of humor**. Not all problems are tragedies. Ignoring certain behaviors may be the most appropriate action, especially for younger children.
12. Enforce the established rules.
13. **Never leave your class unattended.**
14. A younger student leaving the classroom must have proper adult **supervision**.
15. Give students responsibilities appropriate to their age level.
16. **Plan times together** (class party, outing, etc.) outside the classroom, keeping in mind the Child Protection Policy guidelines regarding outings.
17. If a student fails to respond to these **positive** methods, follow the accepted Christian Education Management Policy that follows.

Classroom Discipline

(Grade 1 through High School)

The Christian Education program desires to encourage, stimulate, and foster the Christian growth of all participants. Because of this, students will not be allowed to disrupt the classroom and/or hinder the growth and learning of others. **The purpose of discipline is not punishment for wrongdoing, but assistance in doing what is right.** The following policy is provided in the event that corrective measures need to be taken.

Situations Requiring Discipline:

1. **Direct disobedience** to a request for the teacher or belligerent defiance.
2. Disruption by noise, actions, or attitude that **interferes with the learning process** in their own classroom or other classrooms in the area.
3. **Damage** to the church or another individual's property.
4. Situations that are considered to be **dangerous** to the safety of the individual or of those around them.

Classroom Discipline

Discipline Steps to be Taken:

1. The teacher observing the misbehavior will **address the offending student**, stating the offense, the desired behavior, and the consequences to follow if the behavior isn't corrected.
2. If the behavior **continues**, one of the teachers should **take the student just outside the classroom** and talk to him about the offense and the desired behavior. A warning should be given that if the behavior continues, parents (or the adult responsible for him/her) will be contacted.
3. If after returning to class the student continues to misbehave, every effort should be made to **locate a parent** or the adult responsible for him/her and request that they deal with the misbehavior. It may be appropriate to ask the parent to sit with their child in a class to ensure corrected behavior.
4. If the behavior continues the **following week, repeat the steps.** (Remember, children have short memories from week to week.)

Classroom Discipline

5. However, if it becomes apparent that the student has no intention of changing his/her behavior, a **conference** should be called between the **child, parents (or adult responsible for him), teacher and department head**. At this meeting, the teacher should be the primary spokesperson, explaining why the meeting was called and stating specific instances of unacceptable behavior. The parents, along with the teacher and department head should find a corrective course of action.
6. If after pursuing the agreed upon course of action, the **misbehavior still continues**, it is recommended that the **pastor** be advised to be brought in as a counselor.

*In all cases, **correct unacceptable behavior immediately**. Do not let it continue for an extended period of time because correction only becomes more difficult when the behavior becomes a habit.*

Management for Preschools

Ways to Help Avoid Classroom Discipline Problems:

Set **Limits**

- Use short, simple sentences.
- Be consistent.
- Expect obedience. Children often live up to expectations.
- Establish boundaries and consequences of not staying within those boundaries.
- Follow through is essential.

Avoid **Clashes**

- Anticipate clashes of the will.
- Have a diversion ready.
- Do not make an issue out of the unimportant.
- Do not offer a choice when no choice is intended.
- Have a sense of humor.

Positive Language

- Instead of “no,” try rephrasing in a positive way.
- Reinforce with an action if possible.

Management for Preschools

Ways to Help Avoid Classroom Discipline Problems:

Avoid **Boredom**/Restlessness

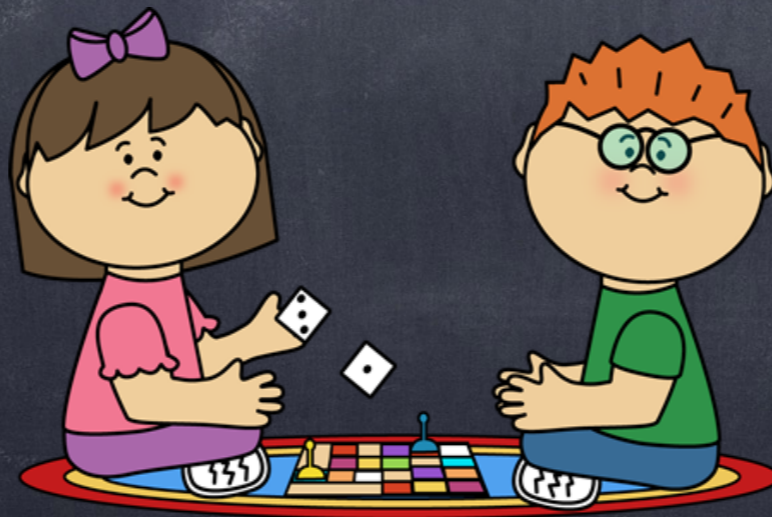
- Be prepared - room readiness - teacher readiness.
Have a written lesson plan.
- Over-plan.
- Check lesson plan for variety.
- Allow children to move around.
- Plan transition times.
- Maintain control.

Discipline Steps to be Taken:

- Isolation from the group.
- Allowing the child to suffer the natural consequences of his action.
- The depriving of a privilege.

Management for Preschools

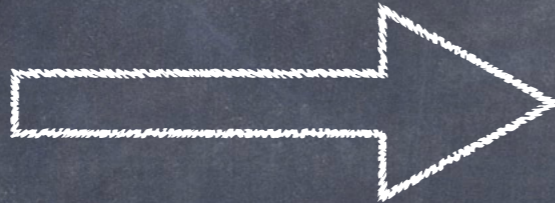
- Open **defiance** or **aggressive behavior** calls for firm and immediate action. **Isolate** the child from the group. Get down on the child's level and make eye contact. State the unacceptable behavior and the reason that it is unacceptable (for instance: "I can't let you bite because biting hurts.") **Be firm**. If behavior **persists**, **contact a parent or adult responsible** for the student and ask them to sit with their child in the class until the misbehavior is corrected. Take the child and the misbehavior to God in prayer. If the problem persists, the teacher and Department Head should discuss with the parents the next course of action.



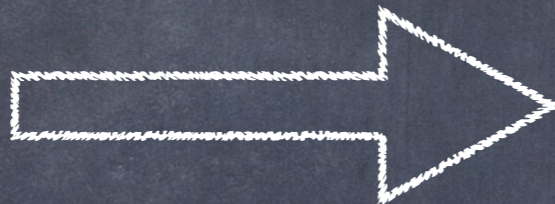
Incident
Reports



Person
Involved



Incident



INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Use this form to report accidents, injuries, medical situations, student behavior, or criminal activities. Reports should be completed within 24 hours of the event.

Date of Report: _____

1. PERSON INVOLVED

Full Name: _____ Gender (circle): Male Female

Date of Birth or Age: _____ Phone: _____

2. THE INCIDENT

Type of Incident (circle): Physical Injury Medical Behavior Criminal Activities

Date of Incident: _____ Time: _____ AM PM

Location (circle): Class Room Hallway Bathroom Lawn Parking Lot Sanctuary
Other _____

Name of Program: _____

Describe the Incident: _____

Action Taken:

Was medical treatment provided? Yes No Refused

If yes, where was medical treatment provided? On site Hospital Other: _____

Was the person taken to the hospital? Yes No What Time: _____ AM PM

Transportation (circle): Ambulance Church Vehicle Private Vehicle Other: _____

Notes: _____

Injury



Notification



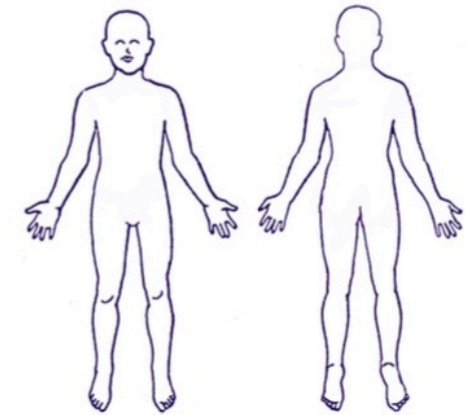
Your Info



3. INJURIES

Was anyone injured? Yes No

If yes, describe the injuries (circle on diagram):



4. WITNESSES

Names and phone numbers of witnesses: _____

5. NOTIFICATIONS

Program Coordinator Notified? Yes No Name: _____

Parents Notified? Yes No If yes, relationship to child and name: _____

Police Notified? Yes No If yes, was a report filed? Yes No

6. PERSON FILING REPORT

Signature: _____ Print Name: _____

OFFICE USE ONLY

Report received by: _____ Date: _____

Follow-up action taken:

Application

- Where would you like to serve?
- Tell us about your experience working with children.
- References

