

CHILD & YOUTH SAFETY PROCEDURES & COVENANT

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Grace Chapel
CHURCH OF CHRIST

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GC KIDS MINISTRY PROCEDURES

CHECK-IN & DISMISSAL

Kids should have a name tag printed at one of the designated kiosks in the lobby and Kids Hallway. Guests will come to Kate Hazlewood at the nursery desk to check in, register, receive a name tag sticker and a welcome bag.

RESTROOMS

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take their children to the restroom prior to drop off. If possible, take children as a group to restrooms. Leaders should check the bathroom first to make sure that it is empty and then allow the children inside. The restroom door will remain open and leaders will remain in the hallway. If a child requires assistance, the leaders should leave the stall door open as they assist the child and/or bring another adult to assist the child. Never go into the bathroom alone with a child. Assist children with hand washing when they are finished.

ALLERGIES

Be aware of the allergies of your few. Happy Belly/Gerber Puffs will be the only snack permitted in the Nursery. Leaders in other areas should pay close attention to any allergies in the room when serving snacks. During group times, if you are giving out a snack, double check with each student to make sure they are not allergic to anything that might be given.

GC KIDS MINISTRY PROCEDURES

DISCIPLINE

If you have a child who is not following the guidelines that have been put in place:

1. Try redirecting the child's behavior.
2. Leaders should contact the children's minister if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues. The child may be removed from the classroom, taken on a walk, etc.
3. If behavior continues, the children's minister will contact a parent/guardian to either take the child with them to class or for the parent to join them in the classroom.

SICKNESS POLICY

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all children at Grace Chapel. Parents/guardians are encouraged to be considerate of other children when deciding whether to place a child under our care. In general, children with the following symptoms should NOT be dropped off:

- Fever, diarrhea, or vomiting within the last 24 hours
- Green or yellow runny nose
- Eye or skin infections
- Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease

Children who are ill, as observed by our nursery volunteers,, will be separated from other children and a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up their child.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION & RESPONSE

Please refer to GC Family Ministry Child Safety Policy (Section 4, page 10).

MANDATORY REPORTING

If you suspect any form of abuse or neglect of a young person, follow these procedures:

- In the case of emergency and/or life-threatening situations, call 9-1-1.
- If it is not an emergency, either make a report directly to GA Division of Family & Children Services by calling (855) 422-4453, or to local authorities (the reporter can remain anonymous), **OR...**
- Contact a staff member of the GC Family Ministry Team, who will work with you to ensure a report is made. Even if you make a report directly with DFCS, you must also report the incident to GC leaders.

FIRE EVACUATION PLAN

Move quickly but calmly and carefully to the nearest safe exit or as otherwise directed by a staff member. Gather your Small Group together and count that all children are there. Do not reenter the building until an “all clear” is issued by a staff member.

DIAPER CHANGING POLICIES

Parents/guardians are encouraged to change diapers prior to drop off. Confirm with parent/guardian if they would like to be notified and administer diaper changes themselves, or if they give permission to the GC Nursery Team to change diapers.

Be sure to wear gloves and sanitize the changing area. Never leave a child unattended on a changing table. Make sure other adults are around during the process. Let the parent/guardian know at pick up that their child has been changed.

TOY CLEANING

After all children have left, wipe down tables with Clorox wipes (available in under-sink cabinet). If necessary, spray toys with antibacterial spray and allow them to air-dry. Return toys to designated shelves and containers.

ACCIDENTAL INJURIES TO CHILDREN

In the event that a child sustains an injury while under our care, the following steps should be taken:

1. For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, leaders will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent/guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care.
2. For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First Aid, the parent/guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the children's minister. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
3. In the event of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional, an incident report will be completed by the children's minister once the child has received appropriate medical attention.

GC YOUTH MINISTRY PROCEDURES

DISCIPLINARY ACTION PLAN

If youth are not following the guidelines that have been put in place, follow these steps:

- **Step #1:** Initial breaking of the guidelines results in the youth having a conversation with an adult leader who has influence to redirect inappropriate behavior.
- **Step #2:** Continued disobedience will result in the youth and adult leader(s) contacting parents/guardians to have a conversation regarding a plan of action.
- **Step #3:** Consistent disregard of the guidelines and leaders' instructions will require the youth to be sent home. In this case, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to provide transportation home for the youth. Participation in future GC Youth events will be discussed with parents/guardians and GC leaders as soon as possible following the incident.

Report any illegal activity, possession/use of drugs, alcohol, or weapons, sexual activity, or relentless disrespect for authority to the youth minister immediately. These are causes for dismissal (see Step #3). Adult volunteers should never administer corporal punishment of any kind--no grabbing, hitting, or other physical discipline of youth or children.

ACCIDENTAL INJURIES TO YOUTH

In the event that a young person sustains an injury while under our care, the following steps should be taken:

- For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, adult leaders will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, ice pack, etc.) as appropriate and will notify a parent/guardian of the injury.
- For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple first aid, the parent/guardian will immediately be contacted. If a parent/guardian is not present, leaders will make

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arrangements to seek immediate care from medical professionals. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.

- In the case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional, an incident report will be completed by the youth minister once the young person has received appropriate medical attention.

SICKNESS POLICY

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all youth and volunteers. Parents/guardians are encouraged to be considerate of others when deciding whether to place youth under our care. In general, youth and volunteers with the following symptoms should NOT participate in GC environments:

- Fever, diarrhea, or vomiting within the last 24 hours
- Green or yellow runny nose
- Eye or skin infections
- Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease

FIRE EVACUATION PLAN

If the fire alarms sound, move quickly but calmly and carefully to the nearest safe exit, or as otherwise directed by a staff member. Gather your Small Group together and ensure that all youth are present. Do not reenter the building until an “all clear” is issued by a staff member.

SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION

Do everything you can to ensure the safety of everyone around you by following these sexual abuse prevention practices:

- **“Three or More” Rule:** No one leader or youth should be alone with anyone who is not immediate family. There should always be a third person present or in view. This applies at all times while at GC, all GC sponsored events, in vehicles, and any other physical space. If you need to speak with one youth alone, make sure another GC adult is within view and/or you are in a space with open doors, around others, where you can be clearly seen. If a young person requests to meet with you to discuss something, you must receive permission from a parent AND notify the youth minister of where and when you will be meeting.
- **Digital Interactions:** The “three or more” rule applies to digital spaces as well. Any time you send a text or email, or engage on social media groups (GroupMe, direct messaging,

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etc.) with youth, include at least one additional adult in the group. Never make comments or remarks with sexual connotations, overtones, or innuendo directed to or about a minor.

- **Appropriate Touch:** People have autonomy over their bodies; therefore, any touch you give anyone else should be done with their permission and must never be any form of sexual advances or sexual activity, contact or behavior. Appropriate touch includes high-fives, fist bumps, short side hugs, arm around the shoulders, etc. Inappropriate touch is any touch that makes youth or peers feel uncomfortable--including massages, prolonged hugs, or any other unwanted physical touch.
- **Off-Limits:** The belongings and beds of youth are off-limits. Do not go through another person's belongings without their permission, and never share a bed with a young person who is not your own child, or a child related to you (with a parent's permission). Also off limits is secretive gift-giving to a minor, or any other secretive actions that could be interpreted as "grooming."

MANDATORY REPORTING

If you suspect any form of abuse or neglect of a young person, follow these procedures:

1. In the case of an emergency and/or life-threatening situation, call 9-1-1.
2. If it is not an emergency, either make a report directly to GA Division of Family & Children Services by calling (855) 422-4453, or to local authorities (the reporter can remain anonymous), OR...
3. Contact a staff member of the GC Family Ministry Team, who will work with you to ensure a report is made. Even if you make a report directly with DFCS, you must also report the incident to GC leaders.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In order to create a safe space, youth need to know that what is said in group discussions will stay within the group. Create an expectation that sensitive details and issues brought up in group discussions are not shared as part of gossip or outside conversations.

NOTE: This is an expectation, but not a rule. There are some situations where information cannot be kept confidential. You must report to the youth minister if you become aware of any of the "three harms:" youth harming themselves, youth harming others, or someone else harming youth.

In these cases, let youth know that you care about them and will do what is best so that they can get whatever help is needed.

FAMILY MINISTRY COVENANT

Thank you for your interest in serving in GC Family Ministry! It is a high calling to pass faith to the next generation. As disciples of Jesus, we take these volunteer roles very seriously, especially because of the tremendous influence we have on the young people who are watching us. We must leverage our positions of influence for the good of all kids and youth, prioritizing their safety and well-being. Our words, actions, and relationships will be carefully observed and replicated by the young people whom we influence.

While we realize that no one lives up to the standard of the perfection of Jesus, we do expect you to strive to make wise decisions. Let the Holy Spirit transform you to look more like Jesus every day so that you will glorify God with your life.

The guidelines in this Family Ministry covenant are intended to create a healthy atmosphere for kids, youth, families, and volunteers at Grace Chapel. Always feel free to have a conversation with Rocky Wyatt, Kate Hazlewood, or any other GC leader to discuss your thoughts, questions, and concerns.

REGARDING SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

We believe that sex was created by God as an expression of intimacy within the context of marriage between one man and one woman. Volunteers should live with sexual integrity by establishing healthy boundaries to honor God's design for sex and sexuality. Following are just a few specific boundaries we expect all Family Ministry volunteers to live by so that you continue to serve effectively in your role:

- Limit all sexual relationships only to the one person to whom you are married.

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- Never make any form of sexual advances or sexual activity, contact or behavior with a minor.
- Abstain from accessing, possessing or viewing obscene, pornographic or sexually suggestive material while in close proximity to minors or while participating in any GC activity, event or trip.

REGARDING SUBSTANCE BEHAVIOR

If you are a disciple of Jesus who has a history of alcohol or drug abuse, God can absolutely use your testimony in a powerful way to make a positive impact on the future of the next generation. We'd love to talk with you further about your story and how it can have a helpful influence on the young people at GC.

The following are a few specific boundaries that will affect your volunteer role within GC Family Ministry:

- Arrest for or conviction of an alcohol or drug-related offense within the past twelve months
- Current treatment for alcohol or drug abuse
- Use of Illegal substances within the past twelve months
- Consuming alcohol to the point of being unable to drive legally, as a regular part of your lifestyle
- Possession or use of illegal substances, or consuming alcohol at a GC event/activity or on the property of Grace Chapel Church, or providing any of these to a minor

REGARDING SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

The way you act and talk in person and online will say much more to young people and their families about what kind of person you are than anything you teach in kids and youth environments. Your language and behavior should reflect your love for God and for others.

The boundaries for how you behave online are just as important as in-person guidelines. Engaging with families, and even young people, in appropriate ways on social media can be a great way to strengthen your relational connections! At the same time, be aware that everyone who follows you online can see everything you post publicly. It's important to leverage your social media as a tool to be used in a positive, constructive way. The following

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are some specific boundaries that will ensure you are setting a great example with your speech, life, love, faith, and purity:

- Show respect for others by how you talk and act--including avoiding hurtful speech and unwanted or inappropriate touch.
- Dress in a modest way, so that inappropriate attention is not drawn to yourself.
- Honor the “three or more” rule in both physical and digital spaces: be in groups of three or more people at all times. Never be alone with a kid or youth who is not your own child.
- Avoid carrying/using any type of weapon that could be used to harm anyone or any property while in close proximity to a minor, or while participating in any GC activity, event, or trip.
- Never provide or encourage harmful pranks, illegal substances, or illegal behaviors.