

Children's Ministry Safety and Security Policies
Revised 8/11/11

Eligibility to Volunteer

1. Those who serve as a volunteer in a teaching capacity (ie...Sunday School, Wednesday night teachers, Children's Church, etc.) should meet the following requirements:
 - a. Be at least 18 years of age.
 - b. Be an active participant in the life of the congregation for a period of at least one year or, in the case of a transfer of membership from another congregation, a period of at least six months if they regularly attended their previous church.
 - c. Identify him or herself as a Christian and be actively growing in his or her faith.
 - d. Meet standards required by the church for volunteers who will work with minors.

2. Those who serve as a volunteer in a non-teaching capacity (ie...nursery workers, trip chaperones, etc.) should meet the following requirements:
 - a. Be at least 16 years of age. Youth assistants younger than 16 may be approved when appropriately paired with an adult, but are not counted as one of the two volunteers required.
 - b. Be an active participant in the life of the congregation for a period of at least one year or, in the case of a transfer of membership from another congregation, a period of at least six months if they regularly attended their previous church.
 - c. Meet the standards required by the church for volunteers who will work with minors.

3. The pastoral staff and the Nominating Committee retain the responsibility of recruiting and recommending volunteers to the congregation for approval. The above guidelines will guide their decisions, but other factors may also affect a person's eligibility to volunteer at the discretion of these two bodies.

Guidelines for Volunteers

1. There must be at least **two** approved volunteers age 16 or older within a reasonable distance present at all times whenever a child is present. A reasonable distance is such that they are able to **clearly see and hear** what is going on and are available to assist in case of an emergency. A person who does not meet the above criteria for volunteers cannot be considered one of the two volunteers.
2. Appropriate ratios of children to adults should be maintained. If the group exceeds these suggested ratios, the Children's Minister or Nursery Director should be informed so adjustments can be made if necessary.

	On-Site Ratios	Off-Site Ratios
Babies-2's	2 adults per 6 children	1:1 ratio strongly recommended
3's-Kindergarten	2 adults per 8 children	2 adults per 5 children
1st-5th Grade	2 adults per 12 children	2 adults per 6 children

Expectations of Volunteers

In addition to the above qualifications, volunteers should:

1. Receive a copy of a description of the position in which they will serve and agree to the specific expectations of the position.
2. Participate in training and planning events relevant to their position.
3. Contact the appropriate person when they are unable to fulfill their obligations.
4. Adequately prepare for their time with the children.
5. Communicate any concerns, suggestions, or problems to the Children's Minister or Children's Ministry Council without delay.
6. Demonstrate Christ honoring behavior that enriches the opportunities children will have to experience and respond to God's love and set a positive example for children to follow.

Expectations of Parents/Guardians of Children

1. An adult (or teen sibling) should physically walk the child between buildings on the church campus.
2. Children should not be left in a classroom if two volunteers are not present to receive them. The parent should wait for another volunteer to arrive or find the Children's Minister or Nursery Director for assistance.
3. Parents should pick up their children in a timely manner at the conclusion of scheduled activities.
4. Children who are sick (fever, vomiting/diarrhea, or otherwise known to be contagious) should not be brought to church activities.
5. Parents should complete a Child Information Card for each child and update the information annually or as needed.
6. Parents should read church bulletins, emails, newsletters, and other notices for information regarding children's activities.
7. Parents should discuss any concerns or suggestions they have regarding their child or our programs with the Children's Minister as soon as possible.
8. Parents should complete requested permission/release forms as needed for activities.
9. Children in the infant/toddler and 2-3 year olds rooms should be signed in and out by a parent, grandparent, or legal guardian each day. Parents should inform the teacher where they will be during the event so they may be easily reached if they are needed to assist with their child.

Emergency Preparedness

In order to be prepared to adequately handle emergencies that may arise involving children at MBC, the following precautions should be observed.

1. Emergency contact information should be kept on file for all children. This information should include notations about medical needs such as allergies and medications.
2. First Aid kits should be accessible in each building on the church campus.
3. First Aid and CPR training should be offered annually and is advised for those who volunteer with children.
4. If a child is injured during an activity, the volunteer should complete an injury report form. Appropriate first aid should be administered. The injury should be discussed with the parent in a timely manner and the form should be retained on file.
5. Children with known life-threatening health conditions should have an emergency action plan on file. Volunteers should be aware of these needs and know how to respond if an emergency develops.
6. Parents should annually complete a permission form for participation in church activities, which includes a medical release and a photo release. Parents may opt to complete permission forms for each individual off-campus event rather than an annual form if they prefer to do so.
7. Suspected mistreatment of children should be reported to the church staff immediately.
8. Staff and volunteers should regularly inspect classrooms, playgrounds, etc. for safety concerns. Hazardous situations should be reported to the church staff and measures taken to insure safety in a timely fashion.
9. Medication should only be given to a child with parental consent and according to the parent's directions and label instructions. Medication should be stored out of the children's reach, except for emergency response medications such as asthma inhalers and epi-pens, which may be in the child's possession if the parents have advised this as necessary. Medications will only be given if 1) they must be given at a certain time per the prescription, 2) if the parent is not able to administer the medication, and/or 3) if the medication is given in response to an emergency such as an allergic reaction or asthma attack.
10. Activity within a classroom should be clearly visible from the hallway.
11. Children should be supervised at all times. Parents are responsible for the supervision of their child before and after scheduled events.
12. Attendance records should be accurately maintained for all events. Volunteers should insure that only the appropriate person picks up a child during or after an event.