



## **Five Points Community Church - Children's Ministry Policy & Procedures September 24th, 2019**

We don't have a program for kids. We have a vision. That vision is to see the next generation pursuing their joy in Christ alone such that they will worship him with us now and forever. Our Children's Ministry and those who volunteer with it are seeking to partner with parents and guardians in discipling their children. We can't accomplish this vision on our own—we need Spirit-filled parents, guardians, and volunteers to see to the care and instruction of the children of Five Points.

Consistent with Five Points' mission to remain a good testimony for the Lord and to abide by biblical principles, the following guidelines are established for the safety and protection of the children and members of Five Points Community Church. Because Five Points relies exclusively on volunteers to staff its Children's Ministry, it is understood that some flexibility is required to meet ministry needs in emergencies, unusual circumstances, and needs outside of our primary ministry times on Sundays and Wednesdays. Nonetheless, Five Points strongly urges its staff and volunteers to adhere to these guidelines and, above all, to maintain the two primary objectives of these guidelines: that children be protected from harm and that the Children's Ministry volunteers have accountability structures in place.

### **Volunteer Requirements**

All volunteers are required to ...

1. Attend Five Points for at least six months and are encouraged to join in covenant membership.
2. Complete a background check consent form and pass a background check. (Available from the Children's Ministry Administrator and turned in to the Church Office.)
3. Application for volunteering in the nursery does not ensure acceptance.

All volunteers should be checked-in and ready to receive children into the room 15 minutes before an activity is scheduled to start.

All volunteers are responsible for finding a replacement in the event of a scheduling conflict.

## **Parent/Child Requirements**

All participants in Children's Ministry functions must ...

1. Check-in all children on one of the three kiosks located at the Children's Ministry Check-in desk or via the FellowshipOne GO App.
2. Communicate any special instructions (medical conditions, allergies, etc.) for the child on his or her nametag, as well as to the child's supervising teacher.

Parents/guardians should pick up their children within 10 minutes of the conclusion of an activity.

## **Check-in/Check-out Procedures**

### ***Nursery – Kindergarten***

Upon arrival, parents are required to check-in their children at one of the three kiosks at the Children's Ministry check-in desk or via the FellowshipOne GO App. The kiosk will print a nametag for the child, a parent receipt with a three-digit security code, and an optional item tag for items accompanying the child (diaper bag, jacket, etc). Multiple security codes will be printed on the parent receipt if more than one child is being placed in the Children's Ministry.

No child will be released unless the person picking him/her up presents the matching-numbered parent receipt. Only parents and siblings over the age of 12 may pick up children. No matter who picks up the child, the matching parent receipt must be shown. Workers are to match the correct # on both tags before releasing the child. Parents (or siblings with parent receipt) will be allowed beyond the desk to pick up their child/sibling only once the Desk Attendant has confirmed possession of the parent receipt.

In the event of a lost parent receipt, the child will not be released unless two Children's Ministry workers can verify the identity of the person picking up the child. This will take place after the other children have been released from Children's Ministry. If there remains any question about the identity of the person picking up the child, an elder should be consulted.

### ***1st Grade – 6th Grade***

Upon arrival, parents are required to check-in their children at one of the three kiosks located at the Children's Ministry check-in desk or via the FellowshipOne GO App. The kiosk will print a nametag for the child, which must be worn during class, and a parent receipt with a three-digit

code. Check-out procedures will be the same as those for Nursery - Kindergarten, except that the 1st - 6th graders will be released at the desk and parents do not need to go behind the Children's Ministry Check-in desk to check-out their child.

### **Sundays:**

- 1st - 6th grade students - parents / siblings will need to pick students up at the Children's Ministry check-in desk by 10:35am after BSH / before church
- Nursery - Kindergarten - parents / siblings will need to pick-up within 10 minutes of the end of the worship service. Please be considerate of the nursery worker and desk attendants.

### **Wednesdays:**

- Parents must pick up their children from the classroom with a parent receipt no later than 7:45pm for Nursery - 6th Grade.

## **Classroom Policies**

### *Reducing Isolation*

- Two caregivers must be present in each classroom at all times. At least one must be over 18 and the second must be at least 12 years old.
- All rooms will have open doors (full or half) or windows in doors to ensure visibility.
- Only scheduled volunteers or approved substitutes should be present in the room during an activity. The only exception is a parent or guardian caring for an upset child.

### *Restroom Procedures*

- Parents are asked to take their children to the restroom prior to class.
- All children and volunteers using or assisting in the bathroom will wash hands with soap and water when finished.
- Children will be assisted in the restroom and diapers changed by adult female volunteers only.
- Every child's diaper needs to be checked during each service and changed if wet or soiled. The changing table must be disinfected after each diaper change.
- If a child is being potty trained, it should be noted during check-in and the child will be taken to the restroom often.
- 1st- 6th grade students should use the restrooms in the children's area, if needed. They should not leave the children's area to use the restrooms in the main lobby.

### *Appropriate Discipline*

All volunteers are responsible for providing a loving, respectful, and orderly atmosphere in which children can learn, play, and interact with others. Volunteers must set and maintain high standards, thus modeling the goodness of God and godly authority. We expect children

(beginning with one-year olds) to begin learning to listen during story time, to share with each other, to take turns, and to treat others with respect. We expect volunteers to be obeyed.

The above classroom atmosphere should be maintained by ...

1. Preparing beforehand and praying for the children.
2. Giving brief yet firm directions.
3. Proactively and positively directing children towards acceptable activities. For example, tell a child what he can do rather than what he cannot do: "Here is a paper for you to color on," rather than, "Don't color on the wall."
4. Verbally encouraging positive behavior and offer choices only if they are possible. For example, if the child is expected to come to the table, say "Here is a chair for you to sit on," not "Would you like to come to the table?"
5. 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/her behavior is endangering or upsetting other children).

Volunteers and staff members should never yell at, spank, or hit a child. If behavior is uncontrollable or the child does not respond to the discipline measures above, the Children's Ministry Administrator should be notified and the parents located. In all cases, parents should be informed of any significant or on-going incidents, as they are the primary shepherds of their children, and will be expected to address these problems.

### *Physical Touch*

While appropriate physical contact with children can be an effective means of aiding in communication, redirecting attention, calming restlessness, or showing godly love and care, it can also be easily misinterpreted. Volunteers are to be above reproach in all relationships, using care and discernment in all situations.

### *Food/Drink Policy*

Parents must note on the check-in system any food allergies their child has, and if they do not want provided snacks/drinks to be given to their child. The only snacks that may be served are those provided by the church (outside of an alternative for children with allergies).

If a parent wishes to feed their child something other than what the church provides, he/she may check their child out of the classroom and feed him/her outside the room.

No hot beverages will be permitted in the nursery.

### *Injury Policy*

In the event of any injury to your child during nursery, an Ouch Report will be filled out by the Volunteer and given to the parent at pickup. If the injury is severe, a report will be filled out and you will be contacted immediately.

#### *Accidents and First Aid*

- All classrooms are equipped with basic first aid kits and there will be a first aid kit at the Children's Ministry Check-in desk
- Parents will be notified anytime an injury (major or minor) occurs in the classroom via the Ouch Report.

#### *Wellness Policy*

Five Points is dedicated to preventing the spread of communicable disease among children and volunteers. Volunteers may refuse a child on the basis of any symptoms.

1. Children who appear ill while participating in a Children's Ministry activity will be removed from class and placed with another volunteer while the parent is located.
2. If a child contracts a serious communicable illness (e.g., meningitis) and has been in contact with other children while at Five Points, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the Children's Ministry Administrator, so that other parents may be notified, as necessary.
3. Neither volunteers nor church staff will give any medication to any child, with the exception of staff/teachers who have been instructed by a parent of a highly allergic child in need of an EpiPen.
4. If a child or volunteer has had a fever or has vomited in the past 24 hours, please refrain from participating in a Children's Ministry activity (volunteers will need to identify a substitute).

#### *Monitor/Paging System*

If the nursery needs to contact you to come get your child, we will send you a text message. If your phone number is not in FellowshipOne GO or you have not provided it to the Children's Ministry Administrator, your security code from the parent receipt will be displayed on the lower right hand corner of the screens at the front of the gym (during Sunday morning worship service only).

### **Classroom Advancement**

All children will stay in the same room from September to September (with the exception of Nursery, where children are advanced based on development). Because [The Gospel Project for Kids](#) curriculum we teach builds from year to year, it is beneficial for the children to have the

continuity of the same classroom for one full year. Additionally, they will move up with the same classmates as they grow.

If a child turns five before October 1, he/she will be in the 4s and 5s class. Please use this guideline if you have questions as to which classroom your child will be in.

## **Curriculum**

Five Points currently uses curriculum produced by LifeWay called [The Gospel Project for Kids](#). The Gospel Project is a 3-year chronological study that covers Genesis to Revelation, showing how each story fits into the Big Story of Scripture—the story of Redemption. The Preschool, Lower Elementary, and Upper Elementary will study the same lesson each week, tailored to each group's age level.

Wednesday night's will continue with its use of the [New City Catechism](#) for teaching to the 1st - 6th graders.

## **Child Abuse Response Plan**

Legally and morally, those who reasonably suspect child abuse are obligated to report it. In the event of suspected child abuse (sexual, physical, or emotional), the following policies will be observed:

Reports should be communicated to at least one of the following individuals within 24 hours:

- Jim Gardner, Children's Ministry Elder ([jamesgardner@gmail.com](mailto:jamesgardner@gmail.com))
- Mark Kakkuri, Chairman of the Elder Council ([markkakkuri@gmail.com](mailto:markkakkuri@gmail.com))
- JJ Sherwood, Lead Pastor ([jjsherwood@5pointsc.org](mailto:jjsherwood@5pointsc.org))
- Karen Jerome, Children's Ministry Administrator ([karenjerome@5pointsc.org](mailto:karenjerome@5pointsc.org))

If it is a questionable offense (e.g., flirtations, shoulder massages, peculiar abrasions, etc.), notify listed individuals, and they will take the appropriate course of action.

If it is a clear offense (e.g., observing actual abuse), immediately remove the child from the situation and notify the listed individuals.

At this point, the supervisor will initiate the following response plan:

1. The elders will be notified.
2. If the person suspecting child abuse is a mandated reporter, that person must report it to child protective services; otherwise the overseeing elder will call the Child Protection Hotline (1-800-942-4357) and any other appropriate authorities. During this time, the person witnessing the abuse will be present, and he/she may need to provide a statement to the authorities.

3. The supervisor will document the allegation according to the Michigan Department of Human Services standards with the assistance of the witness volunteer.
4. Every allegation of suspected abuse will be taken seriously.
5. Situations will be handled forthrightly with due respect for all parties' privacy and confidentiality.
6. After consulting the proper authorities, the elders will decide on options regarding the alleged perpetrator. These will vary from restricting the individual's activities temporarily to prosecution.
7. The supervisor and elders will respond to congregational concerns. The church, as well as the witness volunteer, must maintain strict confidentiality concerning all information, including the facts of the incident, the identity of the victim, and the identity of the alleged perpetrator.

## **Emergency Procedures**

Developed in conjunction with the Life & Safety Ministry Team

### ***Basic***

The LSM works closely with the Children's Ministry workers to provide a safe environment for our children and enforce policies.

1. There is a radio present at the check-in desk for staff to get in touch with LSM team members. Each nursery also has a radio so the workers will not need to leave the nursery.
2. The LSM team member on duty will identify himself to the workers at the desk when coming on duty. Contact via radio for any safety concerns.
3. The emergency exit from the Children's Wing to the main hallway is never to be used as an exit. This must be enforced and the door is to remain shut and locked.
4. Only Children's workers and parents of nursery age children may go behind the check-in desk. Enforce this rule. LSM members on-duty may periodically go behind the desk to check the area, particularly if no one is stationed at the desk.
5. The exterior entrance to the Children's wing will be unlocked for limited periods of time and will be monitored by LSM team members.
6. During any service or event, the LSM team member stationed in Zone 2 will not go off duty or leave the general area until all children have been picked up by their parents.
7. Basic bandages and minor medical necessities are located in the check-in desk. A full first aid kit is located across from the restrooms near the main entrance.

### ***Strangers/Transients***

Any person appearing suspicious or out-of-place should be reported to the LSM team member in Zone 2, Children's Ministry Administrator, desk attendant, elder or church staff member immediately. If imminent danger is suspected, 911 should be called and LSM team member then called on radio provided in classroom or at Children's Ministry Check-in Desk.

### ***Missing Child***

Please consult with Desk Attendants, Children's Ministry Coordinator, LSM team member or elder immediately. There is specific protocol available at the CM main desk. CM workers will be trained in appropriate responses given this situation.

### ***Fire or Evacuation***

Emergency evacuation sheets are posted in each room of the Children's Wing. These include the locations of emergency equipment and exit routes.

1. If a confirmed building fire requires evacuation of the Children's Wings, follow the primary route listed on the posted evacuation sheets.
2. If the primary route is blocked, pursue a secondary route.
3. In the event that safe evacuation via a prescribed exit is not possible, windows may be broken by hitting them with a fire extinguisher. Aim for a corner of the window where the ability of the window to flex is minimal, increasing the chances of the window breaking.
4. The LSM team member will direct children who can walk and their teachers through the appropriate exit. The LSM team member will also assist in the carrying of infants outside the building. Special evacuation cribs are located in the nurseries to expedite the process. Any ushers or help who arrive on scene will be directed by the LSM team member assigned to that area.
5. Parents should not attempt to pick up their children, rather meet them at the evacuation rally points. Workers will release children to parents via the normal procedure.
6. Those adults assisting with the child evacuation need to be prepared to properly dismiss children to their parents/guardians once safely evacuated and all children are accounted for.



### ***Tornado/Severe Weather***

1. In the event of a tornado or strong winds, children must be moved away from windows.
2. The LSM team member assigned to that area will direct the Children's workers to move children into the restrooms of each classroom and wait with the children until the weather has subsided and the all clear has been given.

### ***Active Shooter***

Please consult with Desk Attendants, Children's Ministry Coordinator, LSM team member or elder immediately. There is specific protocol available at the CM main desk. CM workers will be trained in appropriate responses given this situation.

### ***Notice regarding this procedure document:***

*This document is subject to change. The most recent version and therefore the version in effect will be posted to the [Rooted: Children's Ministry homepage](#) on the [Five Points Community Church website](#).*