

Children's Ministry Child Care Training Notes

This document are the notes used by Capitol Hill Baptist Church Children's Ministry team to introduce prospective workers in Children's Ministry to our philosophy, our policies and opportunities to serve during our regular Child Care Training Classes, held every few weeks.

Vision

Children's Ministry is a subset of CHBC's ministry to families and children.

Children's Ministry is not the same as day care. While we hope the children's time with us will be enjoyable and memorable, entertainment is not a goal.

Our 3-Point Vision Statement:

1. Our first goal is to always keep the children safe and secure.
2. Our second goal is to encourage and assist parents in their role as the primary disciplers of their children.
3. Our third goal is to teach God's Word to the children.

Children's Ministry is Our Chance to Exemplify the Gospel

In Deuteronomy 6:5-7, Moses instructs the people of God saying, "And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children." *NIV 1984*

Later in Deuteronomy 31, he goes on to say, "Do this so that your children who have not known these instructions will hear them and will learn to fear the Lord your God."

So, consider Children's Ministry your very own and very real mission field. This is evangelism. This is a group of little people who have not yet understood the gospel and we have the very great privilege of working with their parents to share the good news of Jesus Christ with them.

Introduction of Children's Ministry Leadership Team

Introduce the Pastor of Families, the Children's Ministry administrator, the Children's Ministry curriculum and teacher support leaders, and the five deacons/deaconesses of Child Care and Children's Ministry.

Protection against Abusers

- Children’s Ministry is a privilege and joy, but also a tremendous responsibility.
- As a caregiver or teacher, parents are entrusting you with their children.
- Be wary of abusers and abuse. We need to take this problem seriously. Two of our staff elders recently read a book about the problem of sexual offenders and were surprised by some of the things they learned:
 1. Some sexual offenders will deliberately target churches because they assume Christians are naïve and that they (i.e., the sexual offenders) can get easy access to children.
 2. While single males are the typical profile for a sexual offender, sexual offenders come in all types: single and married, blue and white collar, educated and uneducated. Examples that we read about included a college professor, a Catholic priest, a doctor, a lawyer, the athletic director for a private boys’ school, and many other professionals. So don’t assume there is just one type of sexual offender!
 3. While it is much less likely for a female to be a sexual offender, it does occur, and when it does occur it is much worse than having a male because they tend to be sadistic.
 4. There are two types of sexual offenders: The Bear – who takes by sheer force and by using his power to overtake his victim. You can think in terms of a bear when you hear about children being abducted on their way home from school or while playing in a park. The offender we are typically dealing with is not the bear, but the shark. The Shark circles around his prey until it is just the right time to strike, and then he “attacks” when he gets that opportunity.
 5. Sexual offenders work to cultivate a double-life. They work very hard to be respectable members of a community in order to engender trust in that community and then, once they are trusted, gain access to children. That means they are going to work hard to put on a persona of someone who can be trusted.
 6. One myth that most people assume is that they could pick out a “monster” (that is, a sexual offender) if they see one. And, as you can see from the things I’ve already said that is false. If there is not just one set profile (but instead there are all types of offenders... male, female, blue collar, white collar, etc.) and they work hard to cultivate a double-life, then it is going to be really hard for you to pick one out.
 7. What does that mean for you? Practically speaking, it means 2 things: (1) you need to have a healthy level of skepticism when it comes to protecting our kids; and (2) our policies are designed to protect the children, so take the policies seriously. For example, we deliberately don’t allow adults to be alone with children. That is for their protection, and for your protection (to help you from being accused of any wrongdoing).
- It is essential that you conduct yourself in a way that is always entirely above reproach.

- This is a serious issue that we all need to be aware of as we serve in Children’s Ministry. We cannot be too careful to protect not only the children who participate in the ministry but the witness of this church in our community. We want to be known as a church that proclaims the gospel. We don’t want our reputation in the community to be associated with a church where sexual abuse occurred. Most of the policies I share with you today are for the purpose of that dual goal—protection of our children and protection of CHBC’s witness.

(On Guard: Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse by Deepak Reju offers much more information on this topic)

Child Protection Policy

- In light of the seriousness of the trust we are given, and to help you know what is appropriate, we have implemented a child protection policy.
- Highlights of Child Protection Policy
 1. Importance of children’s safety and security above all
 2. 2 caregivers in the rooms at all times, one of which needs to be a woman. (Ask question: Why does one of the child-care workers need to be a woman? Answer: Because the profile of a sexual offender is more often a male.)
 3. Ratios; being aware of them and knowing why they are important. There should be a ratio sign on the bulletin board on the wall of each room. Use common sense to maintain the ratios in a room. If you are under ratio (example, two adults with 25 two year-olds) then you should contact the team leader and ask for help. (Now you can tell them what “100” means...it’s not a family who is called all of the time because of difficult children...it is our way of notifying the congregation that we need help and that we are under-ratio in one of our rooms.)
 4. Signing in/ Signing out
 - Only a parent can sign child out, unless it is indicated on the log.
 - If you don’t know the parent then you need to ask to see the wrist band. Tell the story of Deepak waiting to pick up his son and noticing Brent Maravilla, who was working as a volunteer in the 4’s room...when a parent came to pick up the child and Brent didn’t know who she was, he asked to see the wrist band. Brent checked the number and made sure it matched the wrist band on the child. And then, as an added measure of protection, Brent asked the child to look up at the door and tell him who that was (and the child exclaimed, “Mommy!”). While Brent didn’t need to take that extra step, it helped him doubly ensure that the child belonged to that particular mother.
 - Wrist bands should be removed when they leave a classroom.
 - **Families should not be in the classroom.** If a kid is having a problem then the family can take them out of child-care until the child is ready to transition back into the classroom setting.
 5. Restroom policy
 - Up through kindergarten, only female workers can take children to the bathroom.
 - After kindergarten, two children can go the bathroom together and they should be accompanied by the women only.

- Two men should never be alone with children at the same time, but exception to this is when a hall monitor fills in for a female who is taking young kids to the bathroom.
 - 6. Allergies/Food – NOTE the red wrist bands.
 - 7. The snacks that we do provide (Kix and water).
 - 8. Wristbands (show them the book; explain what parents do).
 - 9. Reporting Abuse—contact deacon or staff immediately. Required by law to report it. We have a protocol list.
 - 10. Accident Reports – Please be sure to fill them out if something happens to one of the kids (usually the kid gets hurt). This allows us to ensure that the parent was notified and it also helps the staff respond to questions if the parent calls during the week. If you don't write out the accident report then the staff doesn't know about it and they can't respond to questions from parents.
 - 11. Team Leaders—4 child-care teams. They “oversee” the teams and usually are one of the two friendly faces you see when you check in your children on the second floor.
 - 12. Hall Monitors—at least one is assigned to every service. Their main jobs: security and assisting child-care workers in whatever they need.
 - 13. Paging System – it is there for you to get a hold of parents if something is wrong with their children.
 - 14. Be aware of checking and changing diapers for the smaller children (out of care for the parents)
- When in doubt, let this rule be your guide: Decrease Isolation, Increase Accountability

Areas of Service

- Child Care
 - 1. Expectations
 - Please try to be 15 minutes early (9:15 am for 9:30 am Sunday School; 10:15 am for the 10:30 am Sunday morning service; 5:45 p.m. for the 6 p.m. Sunday evening service; 6:45 p.m. for the 7 p.m. Wednesday night service)—this is especially helpful in transitioning children from Core Seminars (aka Sunday School) to the Sunday morning service.
 - 2. Schedule
 - We try to schedule you only once a month. If you are serving as a hall monitor, you will not be scheduled in the nursery as well.
 - If you are scheduled and cannot serve for some reason, please find your own subs and let us know about it. Give us a call if you cannot come at the last minute.
- Hall Monitoring
- Sunday School teacher
- Praise Factory for preschool and elementary age children during morning service (additional training/mentoring provided)

- Other non-child related help: Welcome Desk, help prep crafts, etc. This can be done prior to six months in membership which is required for all direct child-related ministry.

Caring for Children

- A few points about spending time with kids:
 1. Don't be passive. Engage the kids, and especially for the younger ones—get down on the floor with them.
 2. Don't leave them to occupy themselves. Provide structure. Children who are bored can quickly find mischief.
 3. Kids who have a hard transition (i.e. separation anxiety) will take some more effort. Take the kid out of the parent's hands at the door, and try to comfort them and get them interested in something right away.
 4. Note: if a child is so upset he cannot be comforted, then get them to page the parents.
 5. For those in diapers, try to change each child at least once in the service. We don't want to hand off children who have messy diapers. It makes parents wonder how long their kids have sat in the mess.
 6. Be aware of kids who are potty training (especially 2's, 3's, 4's). By threes we are usually done with diapers.
 7. Pray for the children. Pray especially for their salvation.
- Our expectations for children
 1. We expect children to respect authority.
 2. We expect children to share.
 3. We expect children to listen during story time.
 4. We expect children to take turns and to treat each other with respect.
 5. Granted, they are sinful children, so you've also got to expect that many of the children will not want to do these things.
 6. Don't act as if they can't do these things, or else they will follow your low expectations.
- Correction
 1. How do we correct children in a way that points them to God?
 2. You must never, ever hit a child.
 3. Remove the child from the situation and speak to them privately.
 4. Point out the problem and ask them to stop. When appropriate, ask them to apologize.
 5. Pray briefly with them; direct them to a new activity.
 6. Be consistent.
 7. Don't be afraid to be the authority. They may not understand everything you say, but they will respect you for noticing and stopping them from bad behavior. This especially points them to God.

- Persisting with kids so that parents can stay in the service
 1. Remember, we are here to help facilitate the parents being in the service and being able to worship with the congregation.
 2. If kids are hurt, sick or inconsolable (i.e., they cry for 45 minutes and won't respond to any type of comfort) then you should obviously call the parent out of the service. Contact the team leader or deacon and they can page the family by posting the family number.
 3. Otherwise, we ask you to do your best to persist with the kids, even when they are being whiney, difficult, or complaining. Story: We had a mother whose husband had been sent to Iraq for three tours of duty. On the most recent tour, she said to the child-care worker as she dropped off her child, "I know that she will be very difficult this morning, but if there is any way you can persist with her, I'd really love a break and the opportunity to actually stay in the service." So, as you might expect, we did everything we could to care for the child and facilitate the mother being able to stay in the service.

How to Get Involved

- You are right now attending training
- In a minute you will fill out application
 1. References—if you don't have them, write down the name, fill out the rest of application, and e-mail us the reference.
 2. Confidential Questions (only Deepak--Pastor for Families--will see the answers and talk to you about them, as needed)
- Explain 6 month waiting period for working with children (for the purposes of getting to know you...and letting us serve you as fellow church members before we ask you to volunteer with the children.)
- But there are things to do ever before the 6 months waiting period is up!
(Help with administrative tasks in Children's Ministry, such as cleaning toys, prepping classroom and crafts, etc.)

Time for Questions and Answers

End with a tour of the facilities and then filling out the application