

COASTAL KIDS

Policy and Procedures

WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH, SAFETY POLICIES
AND PROCEDURES

Coastal Kids Goals

- Teach Children about the Bible and reach children where they are
 - Provide a safe and comfortable environment
 - Love children and their families
- Create a FUN environment, one the kids will want to return to

Safety

TO SERVE IN COASTAL KIDS

- All adults must have a completed background-check on file at MCCC to serve in the children's area.
- All Coastal Kids Volunteers should have a relationship with Jesus Christ and understand their role in serving Him and His church.

FOR THE SAFETY/PROTECTION OF ALL INVOLVED IN COASTAL KIDS

- There should never be a leader left alone with any child.
- There should always be at least two leaders in every classroom with the kids.
- Children should never be left unsupervised.
- Leaders should never abuse children in any way.

COASTAL KIDS VOLUNTEERS ARRIVAL

- Teachers, please arrive 30 minutes before service time begins.
- Volunteer helpers, please arrive 30 minutes before service time begins.
- Please contact a member of our children's ministry team if running behind to give them an update and to make sure someone is in your room to fill in until you arrive.

RATIO

While we will always have at least two adults in each class, the following ratios will be followed if the number of children exceeds what is listed:

We are working towards setting up classrooms as they are listed below:

- Baby Bay — Birth-1 year old — 1:3
- Tot Landing — 1-2 year olds — 1:5
- The Reef — 3 - 5 year olds — 1:7
- Treasure Harbor — K-5th grade — 1:7

APPROPRIATE/INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH

Appropriate

- Bending down to eye level and listening/speaking kindly
- Leading a child by the hand to an activity (kindly/gently)
- Putting an arm around a child to comfort them
- Congratulatory affirmation (high fives/pats on the head/back)
- Holding a preschool child who is crying

Inappropriate

- Kissing a child, coaxing a child to kiss you, extended hugging/tickling
- Touching a child in any private area/area that would be covered by a bathing suit (except for diaper changes)

- Piggy-back rides
- Lifting a child above shoulder height (never toss children into the air or carry them on your shoulders)
- Seductive or suggestive contact
- Any physical touch of any kind that is done for the pleasure of the children's worker
- Any abusive touch or touch used to show power over a child (strike, spank, shake, slap)
- Wrestling/rough-housing
- Lap sitting is permitted for kids 3 and under, any child older who persists should be encouraged to sit next to leader or on their knee
- Any touch of a child that is inappropriate will be considered abuse and if not corrected will lead to the removal of the children's worker.
- Abuse is not limited to touch. Workers should use judgment in the way they speak to children as well, speaking all things in love and godly leadership.
- Each worker should get to know the children in their care, listen to the parent/ guardian, and use proper judgment when it comes to touching children.

-If at any point a volunteer has reason to believe a child is being abused outside of MCCC, they should notify a children's team member immediately.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The goal of our church's children ministry is to foster a sense of both fun and learning, and to lead the children we serve the same way Christ leads us. He does so without fear, intimidation, coercion, or manipulation. Often, discipline can be handled by redirecting the child to a more constructive use of time and energy. Keeping the learning environment active and fun will usually eliminate the need for a lot of involved discipline. Keep in mind that you are serving children at a variety of developmental ages. It's important to have age-appropriate expectations for attention spans and obedience; for example, you cannot expect a four year old to sit quietly through a story for an extended period of time, or you cannot expect a toddler to follow every direction given 100% of the time. Your job is to teach and guide, so if correction is necessary, be sure to do so with all the love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control the Holy Spirit provides. Remember that you are to model a spirit of Christ in every situation, including the correction of children. Of course, children must also understand that sometimes it is important to listen to the lessons or instructions for an activity. Disruptions during classroom times take away from the fun and learning of fellow students, and wild or unsafe behavior can put other children at risk of injury. When correction is necessary, all interactions will carefully consider a child's integrity and fragility. All children will be treated with gentleness, respect, and understanding. Physical punishment, such as spanking, will never be used. Using physical restraint to prevent a child from doing something dangerous is permitted only as a last resort but may, in some instances, be necessary. Affirmation and encouragement should always be used first. Remember that the children we serve have underdeveloped emotional regulation and impulse control. They also have far less experience dealing with these situations than we do. If we want our children to learn to be Christ-like, we must first model it. Hold yourself to the same standard to which you are holding the children, and discipline yourself before discipling them.

Follow these rules for discipline:

1. **POSITIVITY**—always state the behavior you want to see instead of what you don't want (“walk please” instead of “don't run”). Phrase any correction in a positive way that reflects your desire to help a child succeed and solve problems instead of a desire to shame or punish negative behavior. (“I see you're having trouble keeping your hands to yourself. I'm here to help you, so I'm going to help you move your body away from your friend and keep you both safe.”)
2. **CONSISTENCY**—maintain consistency in handling issues and always follow through. It's not enough to say what you'd like to see, sometimes a child really needs help following our directions. Have the same expectations for all children, and intervene when necessary.
3. **PAY ATTENTION TO THE CHILDREN**—behavior is always a child's imperfect way of communicating a need or an emotion. If you're able to address the underlying cause of the behavior while correcting it, you can prevent this from being an issue in the future. For example, if the children are not paying attention to the lesson because they're hungry or have too much energy, it's helpful to find ways to address these needs before expecting them to sit still.
4. **TAKE PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**—if you see a child starting to have a hard time controlling their body or their voice, step in before they begin to cause disruptions. Redirect and teach before it becomes an issue. (“I can see that you're mad and you want to hit him. It's okay to feel angry but it's never okay to hurt another person. Why don't we take a break so you can calm down and then we can figure out a solution.”)
5. **ACKNOWLEDGE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR**—Encourage children who are choosing to do the right thing and are exhibiting self-control.
6. **PLAN LESSONS THOROUGHLY**—often the best deterrent to any issue is a well planned and active class.

7. **PRAY**—Volunteers are encouraged to pray for the children and the patience of all the volunteers. They should also pray for the Lord's guidance throughout the class.
8. **FURTHER ACTION**—If a volunteer was not able to prevent any misbehavior with the above steps, volunteers should help the child take a break from the activity and use strategies to help them calm down and choose appropriate behavior. Remove the child from the over-stimulating environment and stay with them as they calm down (You're angry, and that's okay, but I can't let you hurt yourself or someone else. We're going to go to the hallway while you calm down so I can keep you and others safe). Keep your voice calm and your responses positive (It's okay to feel angry. Take as much time as you need to calm down. Once you're calm we can talk about it and figure out a solution. You're safe here). Once the child is calm and able to hear you, brainstorm some positive alternatives to the unwanted behavior. (You were mad so you hit him. It's alright to feel angry, but it's never okay to hurt another person. What can you do next time so you can keep your hands from hurting someone? How can I help you succeed?)
9. **CONTACTING THE PARENT** - If you have tried all of the above actions and you are still having a difficult time at helping to meet that child's need, at that time it would be time to contact the parent for some help.

HEALTH

- A First-Aid kit should be in the children's area and the location should be known by every children's worker.
- Each worker should make a regular practice of washing hands before and after changing diapers, after assisting a child in the restroom, and after wiping and blowing noses.
- Children should not be admitted into a classroom with any communicable physical condition including but not limited to:
 - A fever of 100 or above
 - Contagious skin rash

- Bumps (boils, untreated ringworms, mumps, measles, chicken pox, etc.)
- Lice
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Common Cold
- Discolored nasal discharge
- Open wound
- Eye/ear infection
- Pink eye
- Any other childhood disease (rubella, scarlet fever, etc.)

-If a child bites another, both parents/guardians will be notified immediately and asked to come to the children's area to attend to the situation. An injury/incident report must be filled out.

-A child with any of these conditions should be well for at least 24 hours before returning to MCCC

-It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to let us know if there is any invisible physical condition we should be aware of.

-If Epi-pens, inhalers or another instrument is needed for allergies or asthma, written instructions should be provided by the parent/guardian and provided to the teacher. Instructions should be signed and dated.

-MCCC workers should not give or apply any medication, only parents/guardians may do so.

-Please refrain from wearing any type of fragrance when working with the children, as some can be sensitive to certain smells and fragrances.

FOOD/ALLERGIES -Because of allergies, food and drink should be left out of the children's area during operation—no outside snacks of any kind are allowed. (If food is sent with a child for any reason, it should not be taken out in the children's area *unless by a parent outside of a classroom*).

-In the rare case that food or drink is used for curriculum purposes, allergy concerns will be addressed beforehand.

SIGN IN PROCEDURES AND VISITORS -All parents are to sign in children at the Coastal kids sign in table. Parents are to take a matching sticker label badge and turn in the matching sticker label badge upon pick-up after the service.

-No children are permitted in the classroom before 10:45 AM. -If a child brings a friend, the parents/guardians of the child who is present will be regarded as the parent/guardians for the visitor(s).

-Upon arrival of a visitor, the sign-in worker should ask the parent/guardian dropping the child off:

-To fill out an information sheet (which will include parent's cell number for notification)

-To keep their matching sticker handy for pick-up.

-If there is anything the teacher should be aware of for this child (allergies/ unseen illness).

-The volunteer at the sign in table will escort them to their preferred area.

RESTROOM POLICY

To ensure the safety and best care possible for our kids and workers, please follow these guidelines when taking children to the restroom:

-As much as possible, adults should only lead children of their same gender to the restroom.

-Children should be provided with as much privacy as possible.

-Under no circumstances should an adult be in a restroom stall with a child with the stall door closed. Children should be accompanied by an adult to the restroom. While the child is using the facility, the adult should wait outside for the child. Should the child need assistance, the adult should help, following the guidelines listed above. In the case that a

child has an emergency and must go to the restroom at that moment, a children's volunteer will escort the child to the bathroom.

NOTIFYING PARENTS DURING WORSHIP

In the case that a parent must be reached during the worship service, the following procedure should be followed:

Worship Hour:

- Nursery and toddler parents will have a pager and the pager will buzz if the parent is needed.
- The helper will text the check-in worker or the children's minister or lean out of classroom door to get MCCC volunteer or children's minister. -The worker at the sign in table will text the parent and ask them to come to the children's area.
- If the parent does not have a cell phone the Coastal Kids worker at the sign in table will attempt to retrieve the parent from the worship service.
- We will have pagers to notify parents in the nursery, toddler, and preschool classroom.

Parents should only be notified in the case of a serious injury, a baby who is inconsolable or as the last step of disciplinary action.

MEDIA

Please refrain from taking videos or pictures of the children. In the event that you have an image or video to be shared with a parent, please give to the parent only and then delete from your personal device. No videos or images are to be shared of other children on any social media sources.

Incident / Injury Reports

It is crucial that you fill out an incident/injury report any time a child is seriously injured or there is some type of abnormal incident that takes place in the classroom. The report will be turned in to one of the

Coastal Kids Team members who will then follow up with the parents of the children involved to ensure the issue resolved.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Fire (*Fire-exit plans should be posted at the doorway of each classroom*) -Each leader will be responsible for familiarizing themselves with the fire-exit plan for their classroom.

-See evacuation instructions below.

Evacuation

-If evacuation of the building is necessary, children should be escorted calmly but quickly out of the classroom in a single-file line with a volunteer teacher at the front and end of the line. The fire-exit route should be followed.

-Upon arrival outside, volunteer teachers will immediately do a head-count to ensure all of their kids are safely outside.

-No one will be permitted to re-enter the building until an all-clear is given by Coastal kids volunteer staff or a first responder.

Lock Down -In the case of the Children's area needing to be locked down, please follow the instructions below.

-Everyone should stay in their room away from windows and doors. -An adult should make sure the doors and windows are locked.

-Ensure each child and adult are accounted for.

-Do not allow anyone to enter or exit the room.

-Do not release any children until an all-clear has been given by a Coastal Kids team member/staff or a first responder.

Coastal Kids Team Contact Numbers

Lacie Gandy - 843-472-7140

Laura Ross - 314-570-8252

**Children's Ministry Volunteer Agreement &
Acknowledgement**
Volunteer Commitment Statement

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Market Common Community Church Children's Ministry Volunteer Guidebook.

By signing below, I agree to the following:

- I understand and will follow all **policies, procedures, and safety guidelines** outlined in this guidebook.
- I commit to helping provide a **safe, respectful, and Christ-centered environment** for every child and family.
- I understand the importance of following **check-in/check-out procedures**, supervision guidelines, and discipline policies at all times.
- I agree to immediately report any **safety concerns, injuries, or inappropriate behavior** to a children's Ministry leader or staff member.
- I understand that these policies exist to **protect children, volunteers, and the church**, and that failure to follow them may result in temporary or permanent removal from serving in Children's Ministry.

I understand that serving in Children's Ministry is a privilege and responsibility, and I commit to serving with integrity, care and accountability.

Volunteer Name (Printed):

Signature:

Date:
