



VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
KIDS MINISTRY
CULTURE & SAFETY

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“Jesus said,
“Let the little children come to me,
and do not hinder them,
for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.””
Matthew 19:14 NIV

OUR MISSION as Valley Christian Church is
to love and protect, teach and support, pray for,
and reveal Christ to every child in our midst.

KIDS MINISTRY CULTURE: A deeper look into our mission

We desire for every child, and their family, to know and love Jesus as Lord.

LOVE AND PROTECT

"[Love] always protects." (1 Corinthians 13:7 NIV)

In the Greek, this verse speaks of a safe hiding place. We want to protect our children from all dangers, ranging from inclement weather to bad theology. 1 Corinthians 13 describes the love of Jesus we are aiming for, so that his love becomes visible through us. (1 John 4:12)

TEACH AND SUPPORT

"... how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?" (Romans 10:14 NIV)

The gospel of Jesus will be central to all curriculum, program, and interaction. Discovering a child's needs, we will endeavor to equip with all that the Lord provides. We do not whitewash holes in their wall, we fill them in, building them up in love. (Ezekiel 13, Ephesians 4:16)

PRAY FOR

"Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere." (Ephesians 6:18 NLT)

We believe in a present and powerful God who listens and speaks and cares for each of us, especially our children. Therefore, we are in constant prayer as we serve, willing at all times to pray personally for anyone.

REVEAL CHRIST

"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." (Ephesians 5:1-2 ESV)

We cannot truly love and protect, or truthfully teach and support, or powerfully pray without the revelation of Jesus. The most dangerous thing we could do is to try and teach our children to be good and loving people without revealing to them love himself, Jesus Christ.

TO EVERY CHILD IN OUR MIDST

"Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." (Matthew 19:14 NIV)

Our mission is not just to children participating in our programs or entering our building. We continue to model and reveal Christ in our neighborhoods and workplaces.

SAFETY

Illness Policy for Children, Volunteers and Staff

In an effort to promote and protect health and wellness for Valley kids, volunteers and staff, program participation is limited to those who do not have symptoms listed below. If a child or adult has or develops any of these symptoms please inform a staff member who will then assess the situation and determine next steps, including conversation with parents.

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Unexplained or contagious skin rash
- Chronic cough
- Ear or Eye Infection
- Pink eye
- Parasites (nits, lice, mites, ringworm, etc.)
- Covid 19 symptoms, a positive Covid 19 test or contact with someone (in the home or community) who has tested positive for Covid 19 in the last 6 days

Hygiene

Please help us prevent the spread of illnesses by washing and/or sanitizing your hands:

- When you first arrive in a room
- After a diaper change
- After accompanying a child to the restroom
- After contact with body fluid (wiping a children' nose, etc.)
- Before handling food
- If hands become soiled

Please help or instruct children to wash their hands:

- Upon arrival
- After using the restroom
- After wiping their nose
- Before eating
- If hands become soiled

Allergies (Food and Other)

- At this time snacks will not be served during our sessions.
- If this changes volunteers will be given specific instructions and reminders for identifying children with food allergies.
- Any allergies of concern will be noted on the child's name tag.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

Guide children to choose activities that interest them and are safe for everyone. Try to connect them with other children as well.

There are so many reasons children may struggle behaviorally (fatigue, frustration, family stress, to name a few). It is also important to remember that at this age some children are dealing with undiagnosed special needs. Be firm but compassionate. Try to build a genuine, caring relationship with each child.

If a child is having trouble with others, suggest other activities or seating arrangements. Remind children that we are learning kindness and how to be friends. If a child cannot interact positively, find a space in the room for him / her to be alone as needed.

If a child completely disrupts the classroom (ex: loud crying or yelling, throwing things) and is unresponsive to guidance for more than a few minutes, contact the parent to pick up the child. This may be a good time to go to Valley Kids Ministry staff if the lead volunteer is uncomfortable or inexperienced in this kind of situation. Be honest with parents about a child's behavior but assure them that we care about their child and will do everything we can for the child to adjust and succeed in our classroom.

Fill out an Incident Report as needed.

Do not treat potty training issues as behavioral. Never shame or disparage a child who has an accident. Instead treat it as an opportunity to show gentleness and care to the child.

Biting

- A child who bites may be frustrated or experimenting, but it is important to deal with it right away, in the right way.
- Move child who is biting away from victim and watch closely
- Offer care to victim (comfort, wash, bandage as needed)
- The child may remain in the classroom if skin is not broken or if bandage controls bleeding. The child must be removed if the bleeding is not controlled.
- Notify the parent of victim immediately
- Explain situation without naming the child who did the biting
- Biting child's parents will be notified as well
- Notify the parent(s) of a child who has bitten immediately IF the child cannot be redirected or continues to display this behavior. Assure them that this happens occasionally and is usually not an ongoing problem. Discuss more as needed.
- **Fill out Incident Report**, which includes a signature from VCC Staff person. Discuss as needed.

EMERGENCIES

In case of a serious emergency, find a staff member to call 911.

Valley's address is 20270 Iberia Avenue, Lakeville

Injuries

In the case of a non-emergency injury to a child or adult, inform a staff member immediately and offer practical care. Classrooms are equipped with First Aid kits. Remember to wear nitrile gloves to handle any body fluids (blood, vomit, saliva, feces etc). Lastly, fill out an Incident Form and be sure it is signed by the volunteer that witnessed the event, along with a parent and staff person.

AED

VCC has an AED located in the hallway that leads to the east parking lot. It is on the wall to the right of the kitchen. AED use is indicated if **a person collapses and is unresponsive and not breathing**. VCC has pads for pediatric use, which is typically defined as a child who has not gone through puberty.

Incidents

Notify a VCC staff member in the case of any non-accident or injury incident that is a cause for concern. This may include behavior that indicates possible abuse, inappropriate talk or touch from one child to another. In addition to a conversation with a staff member, complete an Incident Form.

Severe Weather

If sirens go off a staff member will make the decision to follow severe weather procedures.

Count children, and calmly move children to the Kids Wing bathrooms. Stay with your group at all times. Do not leave to get your own children.

VCC staff will monitor the National Weather Service and notify you when it is safe to release children to their parents.

Fire Alarm

If the fire alarm goes off, count children and immediately evacuate children to the closest exit and go to Fellowship House yard. If the weather is harsh, take children into Fellowship House.

VCC staff will monitor the situation and give notification for safe return to the building. Do not release children until the staff member in charge has given the "all clear".

Intruder

If someone enters the building intending to cause harm, VCC staff and volunteers will prayerfully follow the guidelines: RUN. HIDE. FIGHT.

RUN

- Evacuate to the Fellowship House if safely possible.
- Leave belongings behind.
- Help others escape if possible.
- Prevent others from entering the area.
- Call 911 when you are safe.

HIDE

- Lock and / or block your door(s). If possible move to windowless rooms or close blinds if possible.
- Hide behind large objects.
- Tell children to be very quiet.
- Silence your cell phone.

FIGHT

- Use only as a last resort.
- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter
- Act with physical aggression
- Improvise weapons
- Commit to your actions

WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES

- Remain calm and follow instructions
- Keep your hands visible at all times
- Avoid pointing or yelling
- Know that help for the injured is on the way

CHILD MALTREATMENT

Valley's intention is to provide a safe place for all of our children/youth, physically and emotionally, and to protect each one of our serving staff and volunteers as well. This requires a prevention plan. It also means that if physical or sexual abuse happens or is even suspected, we will act quickly but with compassion and care for all persons involved.

Neglect

Neglect is the most common form of maltreatment. It happens when volunteers are uninformed, inattentive or fail to provide protection, food, clothing or appropriate supervision.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is when a caregiver intentionally causes or threatens harm or injury to a child. It can range from minor bruises to severe internal injuries and death.

Mental Injury

Mental injury is harm caused to a child's psychological capacity or emotional stability evidenced by an observable and substantial impairment of a child's functioning.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is when a child is a victim of a criminal sexual act or threatened act committed by:

- A person responsible for a child's care
- A person who has a significant relationship to or with a child
- A person who is in a position of authority

Child Sexual Abuse is any sexual activity that exploits a child's vulnerability and powerlessness in which the abuser is fully responsible for behaviors that involve touching and non-touching aspects, including:

- Verbal comments
- Pornographic materials
- Obscene phone calls
- Exhibitionism
- Touching, fondling, kissing
- Oral, genital and anal penetration
- Intercourse or forcible rape
- Allowing children to witness sexual contact

Reporting Abuse

If volunteers, the Ministerial Staff or the Board of Elders knows of or has reason to believe any activity listed above has occurred, such information must be reported to the proper authorities as mandated by law. Failure to report abusive behavior is subject to possible punishment by jail, or a fine.

Every staff or volunteer worker is responsible to report immediately to their ministerial staff any known or suspected abusive behavior. If the known or suspected violator is a ministerial staff person, staff or volunteer worker must then report to a member of the Board of Elders.

Individuals who report abuse will be protected by the Ministerial Staff and the Board of Elders for their good faith reporting. Allegations will be held in the strictest confidence, outside of reporting to authorities.

Response to Report of Abuse

Sexual abuse allegations will be taken seriously. Legal counsel will be sought immediately by the Ministerial Staff or the Board of Elders.

If a child is in immediate danger, 911 will also be called.

Allegations will be reported to:

- Child Social Services of Dakota County
952-891-7459 during office hours or 952-891-7171 after office hours
- The local Police Dept or County Sheriff will be contacted within 24 hours.

Valley's Ministerial Staff and Board of Elders will offer compassion and appropriate care to any victim of abuse.