



VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
KIDS MINISTRY
VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK
August 2022

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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

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 within 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 child's nose, etc.)
- Before handling food
- If hands become soiled

Please help or instruct children to wash their hands:

- 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 them 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. (i.e., 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 need to be notified the same day. ***If skin breaks, there is possible exposure to blood-borne illnesses.
- Notify the biting child's parents 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 Report and be sure it is signed by the volunteer that witnessed the event, along with a parent and staff person.

- **Bodily Fluid Cleanup:** Absorbent and deodorant material is available for use in each classroom with the first aid supplies. Wearing gloves, cover the area with enough material to absorb the moisture. Allow some time for the fluid to be absorbed, then sweep as much of the material as possible with a broom and dustpan into the trash. Immediately tie the trash bag and replace. Vacuum as needed. The broom and dustpan can be left by the atrium restrooms to be cleaned by staff. **Follow up with Curtis and/or Josh.**

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 Report.

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. Always stay with your group. **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 our children/youth, physically and emotionally, and to protect each of our serving staff and volunteers. 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 any supervisor or paid staff responsible for the care of a child 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.

Please report immediately to 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.

VOLUNTEER BASICS

*Serving is a combination of commitment to Christ and to others!
We aspire at Valley to support you in both commitments.*

Expectations

- Be committed to your own growth in Jesus
- Be connected and communicate with us
- Be attentive to our communication with you
- Be on time and commit to your volunteer schedule
- Be rested
- Be prayerful and focused (i.e., rise above personal challenges, put away cell phone)
- Be prepared

Scheduling

Schedules will be completed one quarter (three months) at a time. Teachers will normally serve twice per month and Helpers one time per month and will receive two reminders via email, prior to serving. **Volunteers may trade dates but must update Valley Kids Ministry staff.**

Communication

Volunteers will receive an email update a few weeks prior to the upcoming quarter. This update will include any new information, reminders, and a 'blockout dates' request. Volunteer input of all kinds is always valued! Please contact Valley Kids Ministry staff directly.

Training

Along with initial basic volunteer training, effort will be made to offer additional volunteer enrichment training.

ELEMENTARY PROGRAM

Serving children Kindergarten - 5th Grade

Sunday mornings after interactive worship

JUNIOR CHURCH (All Year)

Children attend the worship service with their family. They are released to Junior church after communion, where they enjoy a lesson and related activities.

Wednesday evenings, 6:30 to 7:45pm

STARS IN THE UNIVERSE (Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters)

Each child receives a manual and encouragement toward Bible memorization, literacy, and application in the context of themes, friendship, and active games.

VOLUNTEER ROLES (Sunday Morning)

K-2ND GRADE TEACHER

Serve approximately twice per month

Lead K-2nd graders through a Jesus-focused Bible lesson (curriculum provided)

Valley Covenant Membership Required

3RD-5TH GRADE TEACHER

Serve approximately twice per month

Lead 3rd-5th graders through a discussion-based Bible study on theme with the adult message (curriculum provided)

Valley Covenant Membership Required

ELEMENTARY TEAM HELPER

Serve approximately one time per month

Oversee and prayerfully interact with children K-5th grade

Assist the teacher as needed

TEACHING AND ACTIVITY SUPPLIES

Supplies of all kinds can be found in the large Resource Center in the atrium or in-classroom storage areas. Let us know if you need anything you don't see.

BATHROOM

Elementary bathrooms are in the hallway of the Kids Wing. If a child needs to use the bathroom, first check to make sure there are no adults using the bathroom. Wait in the hallway until the child is done.

Tell them you will be right outside if they need anything. Check in respectfully as needed. Remind and check to see if hands are washed.

CHILD PICK-UP

Parents should not need to enter the classroom. Instead, volunteers should be watching and ready to dismiss the child when their parent/guardian arrives and hand them the Make It Stick parent resource.

If the volunteer does not know the parent/guardian picking up the child, have another volunteer confirm their identity or find a Valley staff member to assist. If someone is attempting to pick up a child and is not a custodial parent or guardian, do not release the child. Have another volunteer find a Valley staff member to assist.

Siblings are not allowed to pick up children.

Pleasantly tell them that mom or dad will need to help them.

VOLUNTEER WRAP-UP

- Wipe down tables and chairs as needed and put away supplies.
- Straighten rooms and organize toys to their places.
- Put chairs on tables or stacked in a corner in readiness for custodial services.
- Vacuum as needed.
- Turn off the lights and close the door.

If you are the last one out of the Kids Wing, please close the glass doors near the check-in counter.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Serving children ages three through five

Sunday mornings 9:45 to 11:00

Children enjoy a weekly Jesus-focused Bible lesson and time to play together.

Wednesday evenings, 6:30 to 7:40

Children enjoy guided play and building friendships.

VOLUNTEER ROLES

PRESCHOOL TEAM LEAD

Serve approximately one time per month

Oversee children ages 3 through 5, along with helper(s)

Implement Bible enrichment activities (provided)

Valley Covenant Membership Required

PRESCHOOL TEAM HELPER

Serve approximately one time per month

Oversee and interact with children at play, ages 3 through 5

Assist Lead Volunteer as needed

(Youth Helpers do not assist with bathroom needs)

TEAM EMMA

Serve one time per month

One on One companion for Emma Watczak

PRESCHOOL SUNDAY AM CHECKLIST

- 9:30** Arrive, turn on lights, wash hands & PRAY
Prepare tables/chairs, toys, lesson
LEADER receives children, HELPER plays with children
- 9:55** Check individually if anyone needs the restroom
- 10:00** Ring bell for Circle Time lesson
- 10:15** Craft activity
Open play
- 10:45/11:00** LEADER releases children, deliver any Parent Notes
Wash any toys that were in mouths, leave to air dry
Straighten room, chairs on tables
PRAY, turn off lights & close door

CHILD DROP-OFF

Post the lead volunteer at the doorway of the preschool room to welcome and warmly receive children. Introduce yourself if needed. Feel free to ask, "Have we met?" Parents should not enter the room unless it's necessary. If a new family is visiting, they are welcome to step in and see our classroom, along with their child.

Show the child where to put any belongings they have with them (in cubby shelves near the doorway). If the child is new and looks like they are wearing a diaper or pull-up, ask the parent if their child is being toilet trained. It may be helpful to show the parent and child their bathroom. If they do not have supplies, tell them that we're happy to share supplies but be sure there are not concerns with our products (especially wipes).

If a child has trouble separating from their parents, be gentle, cheerful and use distraction. Assure the parent that you will help their child and contact them if needed. New families will be given a pager and the number will be on the child's tag. Welcome new parents to stay for a while as needed.

Mark attendance record.

PLAY TIPS

The preschool classroom has many play areas and sets of toys available. There are also puzzles in the green cupboard and other options in the counter cupboards, including Play Doh sets. Some puzzles are best on tables and others on the floor.

Play Doh Instructions

Find everything needed for playing with Play Doh in the lower right counter cupboard.

1. Spread one strip of gripper down the middle of the table.
2. Space three red trays crosswise down table.
3. Put one Play Doh bin set on each tray.
4. Scoot the child up to the table (tummy to table!) for play.

Safe Play

Volunteers must always pay attention to safety within the preschool environment. Running and rough play are not allowed. Redirect as needed. Also be sure that children do not play near doors.

If a child is injured be sure to tend to the child as needed and relay the incident in a Parent Note, and Incident Report as needed.

TEACHING AND ACTIVITY SUPPLIES

Supplies of all kinds can be found in the large Resource Center in the atrium or in our green cupboard. The counter cupboards also store assorted curriculum.

BATHROOM

Preschoolers are moving toward independence!

At age three they may not be fully potty trained but by age five they may be experts and want some privacy.

Encourage the child to let you know if he/she needs to use the toilet.

Female adult volunteers may also invite the child to use the toilet one or two times during a session by saying something like "It's time to use the bathroom!" or "Let's see if you can go potty!" **NEVER force the child to use the toilet.**

If a child is willing to use the toilet, leave the door propped open at all times, helping the child through each step as needed. This includes helping to seat the child on the toilet and keeping urine heading in the right direction (with verbal reminders or by pointing penis downward under a piece of toilet paper). Assist with toilet paper and washing hands.

If an older child wants the door shut, that's fine but tell them you will be right outside if they need anything. Check in respectfully as needed. Remind and check to see if their hands are washed.

Diapering

If a diaper change is needed, first check the child's name tag for diaper-changing instructions. Occasionally a parent asks to be contacted to change a child's diaper.

If a child has a bag in the cubby, check it for supplies needed and take it to the changing table. If a child doesn't have supplies, find out if we have permission to use our classroom supplies.

Prop the door open. Lift the child to the changing table or move a stepstool near for the child to use, if preferred. **STAY CLOSE UNTIL CHILD IS OFF OF CHANGING TABLE.** Put wet or soiled diapers and wipes in a plastic bag, tie and put them in the trash.

If the child's clothes are soiled, put them in a plastic bag. Tie and put in the child's bag or with a Parent Note. (We have a few extra clothes which may work for children, if needed.)

Mark Parent Note accordingly.

CHILD PICK-UP

Parents should not need to enter the classroom. Instead, volunteers should be watching and ready to hand the child's parent the diaper bag and Parent Note, along with the child.

If a volunteer does not know the parent/guardian picking up the child, the volunteer should request to confirm that the adult's tag matches the child's name tag before releasing the child. If someone is attempting to pick up a child and is not a custodial parent or guardian, do not release the child. Have another volunteer find a Valley staff member to assist.

Siblings are not allowed to pick up children.

Pleasantly tell them that mom or dad will need to help them.

VOLUNTEER WRAP-UP

- Wipe down toys and tables as needed and wash the ones collected in the sink. Put away (they can air dry).
- Straighten the room and organize toys to their places.
- Put chairs on tables in readiness for custodial services.
- Vacuum as needed.
- Be sure the toilet is flushed.
- Turn off the lights and close the door.

If you are the last one out of the Kids Wing, please close the glass doors near the check-in counter.

NURSERY PROGRAM

Serving children ages 6 weeks through 36 months

Sunday mornings 9:45 to 11:00

Children enjoy loving and interactive time to play together.

VOLUNTEER ROLES

NURSERY TEAM LEAD

Serve approximately one time per month

Offer loving care to children 6 weeks to 36 months

Oversee helper(s)

Valley Covenant Membership Required

NURSERY TEAM HELPER

Serve approximately one time per month

Offer loving care to children 6 weeks to 36 months

Assist Lead Volunteer as needed

CHILD DROP-OFF

Post one volunteer at the doorway of the nursery to welcome and receive children. Introduce yourself (if needed). Feel free to ask, "Have we met?"

Invite parents in to hang up labeled diaper bag and relay any instructions to you.

Or they may hand off child to you. If a parent doesn't have a diaper bag, confirm whether we may provide our wipes and diapers if needed.

If a child has trouble separating from their parents, be gentle, cheerful and use distraction. Assure parents that you will contact them if needed by pager (child's pager number is on their nametag).

PLAY TIPS

Enjoy observing or playing with each child!

Help them discover different toys in the room if they need encouragement.

If possible, hold each child for a few minutes with a book.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

Babies are busy being babies---they aren't making behavior related choices for quite a while!

For toddlers, patient, consistent and calm instruction goes a long way. Support them with helpful ideas and ways to do things. They may not understand consequences that are given verbally, and they should never be threatened. Find ways to help them choose well by removing them from a situation or removing items that they may be mishandling (such as throwing).

TOILET TRAINING

Parents will let volunteers know if their child is being toilet trained.

It may be helpful to show parent and child together the bathroom the child will use. Find out when and how often the parent thinks the child should try to use the toilet.

Encourage the child to let you know if they need to use the toilet.

Female adult volunteers may also invite children to use the toilet one or two times during a session by saying something like, "It's time to use the bathroom!" or "Let's see if you can go potty!" **Never force a child to use the toilet.**

If the child is willing, stay close, helping to seat the child on the toilet and keep urine heading in the right direction (with verbal reminders or by pointing the penis downward under a piece of toilet paper). Assist with using toilet paper and helping the child wash their hands.

If a child needs a diaper change, use the larger, more private changing table in the bathroom. Be sure to have everything you need within reach before placing the child on the table. **STAY CLOSE TO CHILD AT ALL TIMES.**

While the volunteer and child are in the bathroom, keep the nursery bathroom door open with other volunteers standing nearby.

DIAPER CHANGING INSTRUCTIONS

These are posted above the changing table.

Check each child's diaper one or two times per session (and use your nose!)

If a child needs a diaper change, check the upper right hand corner of their nametag first---to see if the parent prefers to be contacted to change the child's diaper.

Before putting the child on changing table:

Get diaper, wipes, and extra clothes (if needed) from the child's diaper bag and put them in a cubby above the changing table for easy reach. If the child doesn't have a diaper bag, use nursery supplies.

Disinfect changing pad.

Wash hands and put on nitrile gloves if desired.

Pick up the child and tell them what you're going to do.

("Let's change your diaper!")

Place the child on the changing table and never turn away from them, even if strapped!

Open the soiled diaper and fold the top half over the bottom half.

Using wipes, clean children from **front to back** (to prevent infection).

Place wipe on soiled diaper; roll and seal with diaper's Velcro.

Put a clean diaper on the child and remove the child from the changing table.

Bag the soiled disposable diaper and then in the trashcan or cloth diaper in a plastic bag and add to the child's diaper bag.

Disinfect the changing table and wash your hands.

Update Parent Note regarding the child's diaper change.

CHILD PICK-UP

Complete a Parent Note (if needed) prior to the end of the session.

Parents should not need to enter the classroom. Instead, volunteers should be watching and ready to hand the child's parent the diaper bag and Parent Note, along with the child. Collect the pager from them if they have one.

If the volunteer does not know the parent / guardian picking up the child, request to confirm that the adult's tag matches the child's name tag before releasing the child. If someone is attempting to pick up a child and is not a custodial parent or guardian, **do not release the child.** Have another volunteer **find a Valley staff member to assist.**

Siblings are not allowed to pick up children.

Pleasantly tell them that mom or dad will need to help them.

VOLUNTEER WRAP-UP

- Wipe down toys as needed and wash any collected from mouths and leave to air dry.
- Straighten the room and organize toys.
- Vacuum as needed.
- Turn off the lights and close the door.
- Return any pagers to the check-in counter.

If you are the last one out of the Kids Wing, please close the glass doors near the check-in counter.