

City Church Denver Child Protection Policy

As followers of Christ we are called to care for children in a way consistent with Jesus' model. Therefore, as we seek to love, nurture, and train up the children of City Church Denver we are called to ensure the safety and protection of all the children that participate in activities and events of the Children's Ministry of City Church Denver (nursery, Children's Church, City Kids, etc.). The following child protection accompanying policy is meant to responsibly engage our duty to those entrusted to our care.

Requirements for service in Children's Ministry:

- At least 2 months of regular attendance of City Church Denver. Those who have attended less than 6 months must serve with a volunteer who has attended the church more than 6 months.
- Completion and approval of [City Church Denver Volunteer Application](#)
- Submission and approved via screening through a background check provided by City Church Denver
- Attendance of all required training
- Adherence to all Children's Ministry policies as given below

Note: All completed forms and screenings are confidential and will only be reviewed by Children's Ministry Pastor and elders as needed.

I. General Protection Policy

- There must be two adults¹ (not spouses) in any room in which a children's ministry activity² is being conducted. Spouses may serve together if there are more than two adults in the room in which a children's ministry activity is being conducted.
- Changing of diapers is to be done in the diaper changing station in the Garage Lounge.
- A volunteer (woman) must accompany any child from the activity room to the restroom. After checking to see if anyone is in the restroom, the volunteer should stand holding the door open, entering only if the child requires assistance.
 - In instances in which a volunteer needs to leave the activity room, then another adult should be asked to stay in activity room until the volunteer is able to return.
 - Children should not be allowed in the halls unattended.
- Only those with a corresponding ticket may pick up their children from the nursery.
- No parent who asks to sit in on a children's ministry activity should be left unattended with other children.
- Minors wanting to volunteer to help with childcare must be accompanied by their parent at all times.

¹ For the purposes of this policy document, an adult is defined as one that is 18 years old or older.

² An activity is defined as any event where City Church Denver organizes and pays for childcare. While this is not a binding policy for events where City Church Denver does not organize and pay directly for childcare, it is recommended that the group adopt this policy.

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- All Children's Ministry workers should report indicators of abuse, physical or sexual, to the Colorado Department of Human Services.³ Upon making such a report, the observed indicators should be communicated to a pastor.

II. Policy on Appropriate Touch

As a covenant community all of our members are called to raise up the children at our church in the love and knowledge of the Lord (Deut. 6:7-9). A crucial aspect of that calling is to show the love of God to the children entrusted in our care through physical affection. **We encourage physical affection as we minister to the children at City Church Denver, but within safe standards and boundaries.**

These standards for physical affection are designed for the protection of our children as well as the protection of those that volunteer to spend time with them.

We will not allow:

- Kindergarten and/or older children sitting on an adult worker's lap
- Extended hugs
- Extended tickling
- Any form of touch inside a child's clothing that is not related to diaper changes or assisting in restroom visits.

We are designed to give and receive affection. The children we minister to should see the love of Christ reflected in the way we care for them. In providing care, we are called to the highest standard of care and safety for our children as we live before our God and as we represent him to the world around us. Affection should be a regular part of ministry to children, and should be expressed through safe means like brief hugs, high fives, hair tousles, etc. Let us look for ways that express our love for the kids of City Church Denver both in our affection and our restraint.

III. Children's Ministry Discipline Policy

Rationale:

Scripture tells us that as a loving Father, God disciplines those whom he loves. We are called to provide boundaries, rules, and structure in which children can be safe, recognize they are loved, and be instructed in a way of life that honors God's commandment to love Him with all our hearts, and love our neighbors as ourselves. Discipline is rendered for the sake of the children and should come out of a desire and an awareness of the needs of the children we serve.

We should take responsibility to both clearly communicate the high standards we have for our children, and to consistently implement them.

While parents may choose to utilize appropriate physical discipline of their children, City Church Denver Children's Ministry staff or volunteers are not permitted to engage in physical discipline of the children they work with.

³ To report suspected child abuse, call (720) 944-3000. For more information, please view the following link: <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDHS-Main/CBON/1251633944381>

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Loving respect:

As the covenant community we should be helping our children walk in the commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves. In the context of children's ministry this particularly means respect: for the teachers, volunteers, fellow children, and the physical space in which it is being conducted. We are called to set an example in our own lives, but also help children understand this commandment by helping them live it out in way that reflects Christ.

Procedures for Discipline:

- **Expectations should be clearly communicated to children.**
Whether, in a set of classroom rules, or through a reminder at the beginning of time together, rules and expectations need to be placed before the children in a specific manner.
- **Upon their first offense of communicated expectations, the child should be given the opportunity to correct their behavior.**
This should be a positive statement, within which consequences can be communicated like, "Ricky, please keep your hands to yourself, or I will have to move your chair to the corner."
Avoid publicly shaming the child.
- **Upon their second offense, a child should be allowed to correct their behavior or be moved apart from the group.**
The child may be separated from the rest of the group or asked to leave the classroom if the offense is sufficiently disrespectful and disruptive. If the child needs to leave the room, an adult should be with them. The parent should be informed of the situation at departure, so the parent can be aware of the situation as well as having the opportunity to provide input on what is best for the child, including best approaches to discipline.
- **When a third offense occurs (especially harsh verbal or physical disrespect), an attempt should be made to notify the parent/guardian immediately.**
The child may need to leave the classroom or event for the rest of the day, or only re-enter with the attendance of the parent or guardian. The teacher or activity leader should inform the ministry coordinator so that they may discuss the incident as well as future plans for the child.

NOTE: Parents should not interrupt Children's Ministry classes or activities to discuss discipline matters with volunteers. Should a parent have a concern or be upset about how a situation was handled they should wait until a more appropriate time and space allows further discussion.

Any continued disagreements between parents and children's ministry volunteers/staff should be addressed with members of the pastoral staff or elders.

City Church Denver Family Ministry Volunteer Application

This form is meant to help safeguard the children entrusted to our care. If you have any questions or concerns about filling this document out, please speak to a pastor. Your information will be kept confidential.

Name: _____

Have you read through the *Children's Ministry Protection Policy*?

What experience do you have in caring for small children?

What do you find difficult or frustrating about caring for children?

Do you agree to abide by the CM protection policy to the best of your ability?

This position would require you to greet parents and enforce check in procedures. Would you feel comfortable doing this?

This position would require you to be at the Tivoli by 9:30 a.m. on the Sundays you are working. Would that be difficult for you?

Have you ever been convicted of a felony?

Have you ever been accused of harming a child?

References (Name & Phone #)

Signature _____

Date _____