



Early Childhood Manual 2015



We're glad you're here!

Thank you for serving and blessing the youngest children of our church family. Early Childhood Ministry offers vibrant services and programs for infants through kindergartners. By caring for these little ones you are also serving and encouraging their parents. As you minister in Early Childhood, you will bless the children with tangible expressions of God's love and care. You will be instrumental in making this church become a loving, tender and impelling place for them, where their faith in Christ will be nurtured and their sense of belonging will first be felt through the community we create. This is a very special season of life for these children and their parents. I am excited for you to be a vital part of this foundational ministry for these families.

On the pages that follow, you will find an overview of our expectations as they relate to the children in our care and the protocols for cleanliness and maintenance of our facilities. These policies have been developed for the protection of children, youth, and those who minister with them at Christ Church. I earnestly ask that you plod through these pages giving your utmost attention to these practices, as they are of critical importance in the care of these precious, invaluable and extremely loved 'gifts from God'. We have a most weighty mission before us and we take on this endeavor seriously and joyfully, for the glory of God.

Our mission in Early Childhood Ministries is to partner with parents in nurturing the faith of their little ones, through environments at church and encouragement for the home, so that these children will be caught up in the wonder and worship of Christ. Our prayer is that, through the work of the Holy Spirit, each child will grow to love and follow Jesus with all their heart, mind, soul and strength.

My hope and prayer is also for you: As you serve these families and nurture the faith of these little ones, may your love for Jesus grow deeply and increase in passion, and may your love for others expand and be joyfully expressed. Thank you for opening your heart to God. He has moved you to give of yourself in this impactful way. I am so grateful that you are taking this step to trust God, as you join us in serving in Early Childhood Ministries. Thanks be to God.

With gratitude and joy,
Kathy Woods -- Director of Early Childhood Ministries

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1. Volunteer Requirements

- **Forms:** completed, submitted and approved Application, Criminal Record Check, and signature on the Child Protection Policy synopsis. An interview, orientation and training may also be required.
 - Annual renewal...needed each year
 - Background check needed every three years
 - Child Protection signatures required upon changes to the policy
- **Age:** volunteers must be at least 5 years older than the children they are serving, with a 10-11 year old minimum. For these younger helpers, a recommendation from the Children's Director and an interview with EC staff are necessary. These younger volunteers will always serve with 2 to 3 other adults as helpers only. They will need the EC Director's special permission to serve with infants.
- **Name Labels:** All MOPS, Lil' Buckets, nursery volunteers, and Sunday program volunteers working with children must check-in and wear a system-generated name tag.
- **No guests:** only approved and scheduled volunteers are allowed in the rooms. Parents are advised not to enter rooms when dropping off or picking up their child unless requested to do so. If their child is upset they may enter the room only to help their child. When their child is calm, the room Captain should urge parent to attend services. If they insist on staying, they can be directed to EC staff to sign-up to volunteer and complete necessary forms.
- **Trial Period:** there will be a 3 month trial period for volunteers to assure a good fit in this ministry.

2. Volunteer Responsibilities

- **Arrival:** arrive no later than 15 minutes prior to start time of the service. Children are welcome to enter our rooms when

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- **Arrival:** arrive no later than 15 minutes prior to start time of the service. Children are welcome to enter our rooms when adequate supervision is available. Generally, supervision of two adults will be provided ten minutes before a program starts. This allows adequate time for parents to arrive at the beginning of services/program.
- **Absence:** Notify EC Director as soon as possible of an absence. If ill the morning of service, please call or text 630-212-3059
- **Dress Professionally:** We have the opportunity to represent our love for God and our respect for CC-OB by wearing clothes that will be conducive to our care of children. We need to wear things that are not revealing when bending over picking up toys or stooping down to pick up a child, paying special attention to skirt/short length, low-cut tops, fabric and tightness of tops and low-rise pants. We need to wear things being alert to the view and perspective of a short toddler or preschooler. To reflect the value of our service, we want to dress professionally and clean. Aprons or t-shirts may be purchased to provide clean, professional protection of clothing.
- **Shoes:** in the infant nursery, we will take shoes off or slip on booties over non-high heel shoes. This is to enhance cleanliness for crawlers and also to prevent high heels from accidentally hurting a baby. There will be NO bare feet in any rooms.
- **Language:** working with children, we need to pay special attention to the words we use and the topics we discuss. Most of our attention is given to the children, but on the occasion for the conversation among volunteers, please keep the topics uplifting and encouraging, for the building up of one another. There is to be no swearing or adult topics. Using the name of God/Jesus in our slang expressions, such as "oh my god," is very offensive and not what we want our children to hear.
- **Captains and Teammates:** There is a Captain in each room. They will serve as the leader of the room, facilitating care and/or teaching of the lesson. The Captain is the greeter at the door to acquire parent instructions and label bags/diapers. The Captain will pass the child to a Teammate, ready to accept the next child. Captain discerns if parent is needed for upset child.
- **Walkie Talkie:** there are radios in each room that can be used to access maintenance staff (channel 1) and EC staff (channel 6). Captains are able to use the walkie talkies.
- **Cell phones:** Due to the distractible nature of these devices, they need to be left in one's purse or coat pocket. If there is an emergency circumstance where you need to be available for contact by loved ones (i.e.: your daughter is having a baby any minute) please notify the EC director and your Captain.
- **Strollers:** Many infants can be consoled as they are strolled around the hallway. The EC staff will implement this tactic when notified.
- **Training:** quarterly equipping breakfasts or lunches that hold a high value to attend. The purpose of these gatherings is to: increase our love for one another as we serve as a team, to improve our service to the children and their families, to spur on our love and faith in Jesus.
- **Facilities:** periodically picking up toys to prevent children from tripping is highly encouraged.

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- **Cleaning of the toys:** volunteers will place used toys in Dirty Toys bin. After each shift/service, caregivers will spray down or wipe (Clorox wipes) the toys. Tabletops, counters and larger items, such as swings and bouncy seats, should also be wiped down between services. Disinfect changing table as needed.
- **Laundry:** used sheets, blankets, etc. need to be placed in the hamper for pick up at the end of each shift.
- **No favoritism:** volunteers will not show favoritism to a few children, but will be open to serving all children present. Avoid spending all of your time with one child.
- **Redirecting a child:** as much as possible, please walk to child (ren) to talk with them rather than yelling across the room.

3. Security

- **Child Label:** each child must have a name label (claim tag) before entering. Labels and Receipts are printed at kiosks by the responsible adult (parent, grandparent, care giver). The claim tag is used to release children back to their parents. The room Captain will oversee the pickup process to ensure a child is only released to a parent or person authorized by parent. If the parent cannot find the receipt, contact the EC Director.
- **Sign-In Sheet:** in case of an emergency, we are required to have an accurate list of children in our care. The sign in sheet serves this purpose. We take this binder with us outside or in the hall. This also gives us the current cell number to call if needed.
- **Child Protection Policy:** this policy has been carefully assembled and is always being updated. It is essential that we abide by these policies. For **both the volunteer's and child's safety, a volunteer must never be alone with a child.** If a child is being dropped off before two adults are present, the parent **MUST** be asked to stay until the second adult arrives. Two adults must be present until the last child is picked up.
- **Missing Child:**
 - Twenty minutes into the service, we receive a printed roster of children in attendance. If there is a child on the list that is not in our care, please notify EC staff immediately.
 - If you notice a child missing or if a parent comes and the child is not there, please notify EC staff immediately. Maintenance staff will be immediately notified and alerts to search will begin.
- **Photos:** For security and liability issues, there will be no taking of pictures of any of the children and no pictures of volunteers with children. No pictures will be posted on any social media, including Face Book pages, without Communications Department approval.
- **Bathroom Procedures:** never take a child to the bathroom alone. Two adults with one child, or one adult with 2 children are necessary. Adults are to stand outside the stalls and if of opposite gender, outside the bathroom with the door open. In rooms with a bathroom, leave door partially open if you need to enter the bathroom for any sort of assistance.

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4. **Proper Displays of Affection:** Touch is an essential responsibility in nurturing lives. Physical contact with children should be age and developmentally appropriate. The following guidelines are to be promoted for pure, genuine and positive displays of God's love:
- **Hugs:** as much as possible, one-arm side hugs are positive contact.
 - **Kisses:** only appropriate on forehead or top of head as a blessing or expression of God's love. No kisses on the mouth or lips. We need to limit the exchange of germs as much as possible.
 - **Lap sitting:** Appropriate sitting on laps, such as for story time or consolation with toddlers or infants, may occur with children five years old and younger. Discourage lap-sitting with school-age children. Rather, encourage them to sit next to you.
 - **Touch:** Gentle contact during activities may be on children's heads, shoulders, arms and hands.
 - **Back Rubs:** Anyone working with children should refrain from giving backrubs unless part of a public group activity.
 - **Carrying/holding of infants/toddlers:** please be very careful when holding a child. No high heel shoes with a heel higher than one inch are allowed when carrying a child. No spinning of children or turning them upside down. As much as possible, do not pick up toddlers or older children.
 - **Changing Diapers:** changing tables are placed in open and public spaces. Caregiver needs to wear gloves and clean the pad after changing each child. Spray and Clorox wipes are available to wipe down area. Dirty diapers are disposed of in the containers with lids in the bathrooms.
 - **Extra Clothes:** are available if an accident occurs.
 - **Counters:** please do not place children on counters. Also, do not sit on counters while volunteering.
 - **Play:** as much as possible play with the child and interact with them, with engaging toys, stories, conversations, pretend scenarios. Videos or screen time, are highly discouraged, unless related to the Bible lesson or worship.

5. **Facilities:**

- **Set-Up:** at this point, the set up is being done for the volunteers prior to the 9:00 service. Arrive a few minutes early to familiarize yourself with the lesson and needed supplies.
- **Rooms:** please leave the rooms clean and tidy...put away supplies and table cloths after the 10:45 service...leave things better than how you found them. J
- **Supplies:** each room has a closet or cabinet filled with our weekly supplies, such as glue sticks, crayons, play doh, etc. When your supplies run low, please notify EC staff. There are post-it notes in each bin to report what is running low so we can restock your supplies.
- **Cribs:** sheets need to be changed after each use.
- **Other ministries:** other ministries use these rooms so we need to respect their materials and resources and refrain from using or taking anything that doesn't belong to the church.
- **Lesson bins:** please return the weekly bins to the EC director's office after the last service of the morning.
- **Donations:** donations to the EC Ministry need to be screened thru EC staff.

6. **Drop Off and Pick Up of children-**

- **Window/door:** Contains is at the welcome window/door, receiving

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6. Drop Off and Pick Up of children-

- **Window/door:** Captain is at the welcome window/door, receiving parent instructions, and making sure parent signs binder. The binder is needed in case of emergency.
- **Roster:** It is the Captain's responsibility to make sure attendance is taken against the roster and note any discrepancies.
- **Label items:** Encourage parents to label AS MANY things as possible...diaper bags, sippy cups, diapers, blankets, pacifiers, etc. Label the bin where you will place the child's bag.
- **Attendance Binders-** parent signs in their child, designates their location and cell number
- **Parents:** as much as possible, encourage parents to drop off and leave. They are not encouraged to enter the room. Captains are responsible to assure that parents leave their child in a timely manner once the child is integrated.
- **Child Name Label and Receipt:** child must have printed label on their front or back. Parent needs the receipt to pick up their child. We occasionally have families with legal restraining orders and we need to ensure they stay safe. We will let the Captain know if there are any families in your room that need this special care and consideration. This information is confidential.
- **Door:** please be extra careful at pick up time for 'escapees'. Children are excited to be reunited with parents and can hover near the door. Please be on extra alert at this time.
- **Allergies:** be sure to be alert to any allergies printed on label.

7. Visitors

- **New Family:** new families need to visit our Family Welcome Booth between the infant and toddler nurseries. They will get registered at this booth which will enable them to acquire the name labels and receipts for their children.
- **Finding Appropriate Room:** the room color and number is printed on the child's label. If assistance is available, it is best to walk the new visitor to the appropriate room.
- **Sign in:** new parent signs in their child also.
- **Saturdays:** the numbers on Saturdays are a lot smaller and our volunteers limited. There is no registration service offered. Writing a child label by hand is appropriate protocol at this time.

8. Health and Safety

- **Wellness:** we are diligent about not accepting children who exhibit signs of illness. Please do not accept children with the following symptoms: fever in the past 24 hours, runny nose that is green or yellow in color, sneezing due to colds, questionable rashes, diarrhea in the past 24 hours and/or congested coughs. If a child in your care begins to exhibit any of these symptoms during the service, contact the EC Director so we can isolate the child to prevent the spread of germs and illness. If a child becomes sick during the service, his/her parent will be contacted to come and remove the child from their assigned room.
- **Hand Sanitizer:** use as MUCH as possible, for yourself and for the children...upon entering the room, after wiping noses, before snacks, when exiting the room, etc.

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- **Medicine:** We do not administer **any** types of medications. **The only exception to this rule is if the child has a severe allergy, and the condition is life-threatening.** If this is the case, contact the preschool director for assistance. Any parent requesting to leave an EpiPen for their child should contact the EC Director.
- **Accidents or Injuries:** accidents happen. There is a first aid kit in each room. Contact the EC staff if more care is needed, such as ice. Please talk with parent about the incident when they arrive for pick up. We have an Incident Form that needs to be filled out if a child hits his head, scrapes a knee, or anything with blood.
- **Illness:** if child gets sick while under our care (vomit), call parent immediately.

9. Snacks/Food

- **Allergies:** please be aware of any and all allergies before distributing any food. Check the sign in sheet and the child's sticker/label. Cheerios and Goldfish are typically available in each room. If anything else is offered, parents must be notified.
- **Snacks/Food:** are served on an as needed basis. They should not be the first 'go-to' for a crying or upset child.
- **Prayer:** encourage children to sit and express prayer of thanks before enjoying the snack.
- **Peanut-free:** Due to the seriousness of peanut allergies, our rooms are peanut-free zones. Products of any kind of nut, peanut butter or manufactured on equipment that processes nuts are always restricted from these rooms.

10. Videos/DVDs

- **Showing DVD/videos:** please use minimally except for worship songs with motions. This is our time to develop relationships with the children.
- **Faith building movies:** unless given special permission, movies and DVD's shown need to nurture the faith of the children. On longer childcare shifts, exceptions can be made.
- **Video usage** as a "babysitter" is discouraged.

11. Children with Special Needs

- **No diagnosis or labels:** we are not a physician's office or a school, so we are not the ones to give a name to how a child is behaving. If there are concerns regarding a child's behavior, notify the EC staff as soon as possible.
- **Concerns:** if there are behavioral concerns, please notify EC staff to come in and observe the interactions before speaking about specific concerning behavior to the parent.
- **Buddies:** if you think that a one-on-one buddy might be helpful for a child, please notify the EC staff.

12. **Child Abuse:** All volunteers and employees of Christ Church shall immediately report to the EC Director any allegations or suspicions of abuse or neglect on minor children which they become aware of during their duties at Christ Church. If the EC Director is unavailable (or if the allegation or suspicion involves them), all allegations or suspicions shall be immediately reported to the Senior Pastor or another member of the Executive Team. For details of this mandatory

shall be immediately reported to the Senior Pastor or another member of the Executive Team. For details of this mandatory process see Section III of the Christ Church "Protection Policy." All allegations or suspicions of abuse or neglect shall be kept confidential.

13. **Discipline:** Please consider the following suggestions:
 - **Pray for discernment.** There are three different kinds of behavior issues: foolishness (encouragement), ignorance (training) and rebellion (correction of a heart issue.)
 - **Avoid embarrassment.** No correction if possible in front of other children.
 - **Avoid hostility.** You must first have your own emotions under control.

Emergency Procedures

- **Radios are available in each room. Channel One is for Maintenance. Inform them of what is happening.**
1. **Fire:** Evacuate students to designated area in orderly manner. The current designated area is the **grass area south of Church along York Road**. Parents will meet us at this location.
 - Evacuation routes are posted in each room; please familiarize yourself with the map. The designated location is the grass lawn south of the church along York road.
 - Have children sit down in class groups; take roll, report missing students to church leadership or 911.
 - For our infant, toddler and two year old rooms, the children can be put in an evacuation crib and rolled out of the building. Maintenance and Church Staff will come and assist in carrying and rolling these children out. For walking children, please use the fire ropes. An adult will be on each end of the rope.
 - Bring the binders with you. Release students to authorized adults only. Have adult sign on roll sheet next to name of student being released. Please do not release children on the way out of the building as this delays exit. Receipts should be turned in for the release of child.
 2. **Tornado/Storm:** children will exit to the nearest halls where there are no windows. Often the stairwells, such as lower level stairwell between classrooms/Discovery Center doors or lower level women's bathroom by elevator, are secure places. Sit down along wall. Have children sit down in class groups; take roll; report missing students.
 3. **Active Shooter:** This emergency has three options: Run, Hide or Fight. Discern what your safest option is: get out of the building with the children (run), hide the children in a bathroom or closet or against the wall or fight off the shooter.
 4. **Additional Procedures:** **Always take attendance binder with you; take two-way radio and/or cell phones; plastic gloves and first aid kit if possible. We will have some of these items in the Garage and shed in the playground area.**

I have read, understand and commit to following and obeying the Christ Church of Oak Brook Early Childhood Manual.

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

Ministry Area _____

Early Childhood Director _____