Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry
Policy Manual

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Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry

Policy Manual

General Introduction

Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry desires to fulfill its mission and purpose to advance the Kingdom of God and to lead children to a closer relationship with Jesus while still abiding by the “laws of the land.” We desire to do all we can to protect the individual safety of the children in our ministry while also legally protecting Centerpoint Church, its pastors, staff, and all who serve on our children’s ministry team. It is with this purpose in mind that the following policies and procedures are created and upheld.

Definitions

1. “Children’s ministry” is any gathering of children, on or off the church campus, that is organized and carried out by church personnel.
2. “Those who serve” are people who come in contact with children during a children’s ministry event or program (see definition above).
3. “Adults” are people 18 years or older.
4. “Events” are programs, which are not regular, weekly weekend services. Special programs (on and off campus), trips, etc.
5. “Curriculum” is a published lesson plan to be followed in teaching children.
6. “Teen” is a volunteer in our children’s ministry under the age of 18 years old.
**Screening Personnel**

All who serve in our children’s ministry will be screened by our application process, which includes:

1. Six months attendance at Centerpoint Church (prior to applying to serve)
2. The Children’s Ministry Application form
3. Two personal references
4. Background check with law enforcement agency (child abuse registry)
5. Attend the Children’s Ministry Orientation
6. Signing the Agreement To Serve
7. An apprentice period under an approved children’s ministry mentor

If the applicant refuses to complete any of the components of the application process, the application will be denied and access to children, on the part of the applicant, will not be permitted.

If the information received during the application process is deemed questionable by those who review the results, the application will be denied, and access to children will not be permitted. The Life Stages Pastor, or Lead Pastor may be consulted by the Children’s Ministry Pastor for counsel regarding an application.

We will accept applications from people who are 16 years old and older. People younger than 18 will be considered “teens,” and must be teamed with adults in service.
Commitment To Ministry

All who wish to serve in the children’s ministry must sign an Agreement To Serve for their specific area of service. This agreement states that the team member applicant has read and agreed with:

1. A complete “job description” for their particular area of service
2. The Children’s Ministry Policy Manual, with specific verification and agreement required for the policies and procedures for:
   a. Child safety / sexual abuse policies
   b. Team teaching policy
   c. Event policy and procedures
   d. Absence from ministry policy
   e. Child discipline policy
   f. Emergency response policy
   g. Removal from ministry policy
   h. Bodily fluids / HIV policy
Training Personnel

All who serve in our children’s ministry will be required to receive training appropriate for their area of service. Centerpoint Church will provide the following training:

1. Age-group characteristics of children
2. Discipline of children
3. Classroom management
4. Lesson presentation
5. Use of curriculum
6. Emergency procedures and reporting
7. Child abuse recognition, prevention, reporting
8. Cleanliness and disease control
9. Parent relations

Opportunities will be made available for specific training in CPR and basic first aid via outside agencies.

Training will be accomplished through a mandatory four-week apprenticeship, and quarterly children’s ministry conferences. The apprenticeship will be served under a mentor for the specific area of service.

If, during the apprenticeship, the mentor’s concerns are severe enough to question the trainee’s suitability for children’s ministry service, the mentor will contact the coordinator who will contact the Children’s Ministry Pastor. The Children’s Ministry Pastor will consult with the trainee, the coordinator, and the mentor to determine the possibility of service. The Life Stages Pastor or Lead Pastor may be consulted at the discretion of the Children’s Ministry Pastor.
Team Ministry

At no time, will any one who serves in the children’s ministry be alone with children. All who serve in the children’s ministry will serve as part of a team of at least two adults. It is our desire, whenever possible, to create teams of three or more. The addition of a teen to a classroom does not equal the addition of an adult. One adult with one teen is still considered an adult “alone” with the children. This situation must be corrected.

Approved adult:child ratios for children’s ministry classes and events will change with each setting. In addition to the “never alone” clause stated above, Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry will work toward the following adult/child ratios:

- Nursery (0-20 months) – 3:1
- Nursery (21-36 months) – 5:1
- Preschool (3-4 yrs.) – 7:1
- Elementary (Kindergarten-5th grade) – 10:1

If, due to unforeseen circumstances, a team of at least two adults cannot be guaranteed for a children’s ministry event or program, the coordinator or supervisor for that event will consult with the Children’s Ministry Pastor to decide which of the following options are best for the situation, and then act on that situation. The options are:

1. Join the children in two classes or areas to guarantee a team of two or more adults. *
2. “Borrow” adults from the teams in other classes or areas. *
3. Recruit other church employees to staff the area in order to permit the continued check-in of the children.*
* All of these "options," by their nature, may not be the best choice for either the church or the children. If options 1 or 2 above cannot be done without raising the adult:child ratios beyond our "approved" limits, then option 3 must be used. Considerations must also be given to the maximum occupancy of the room being used. Child safety and church liability must take priority over convenience or programming. If, after all three options are exhausted, the children's safety cannot be guaranteed; the Children's Ministry Pastor may choose to close the class or ministry environment. If this is done, the Life Stages Pastor or Lead Pastor must be consulted prior, or informed as soon as possible.

Married couples will be permitted to serve together only when a third adult joins them. This is to protect both the couples and the church from any accusations of negligence or child abuse apart from a "neutral" third party's observations.

**Teens In Ministry**

Teens must always be teamed with an adult while with the children.

Teens must never be permitted to accompany children to the rest room, playground, or any other out-of-class destination. Teens, who serve in the children's ministry, will be supervised by adult team members while with the children. We will work together with Centerpoint Church Youth Ministry to assure that the teens, who serve in the children's ministry, are consistently involved in a small group or midweek Bible study.
**Sickness / Disease Control**

It is our intention to protect children from all harm while they are in our care. This includes protection from sick children, sick adults, or dirty surfaces and toys.

All surfaces and toys in the nursery classrooms will be disinfected at the end of every use period. Those who serve during that use period are responsible for this cleaning. Linens and bedding used in the nursery will be changed after each use, and washed prior to being used again.

No sick children will be accepted into any children's ministry event. It is the responsibility of the children’s ministry team member checking in the child to recognize the sickness symptoms and graciously ask the parent to care for his/her child elsewhere until the child is well. If the parent desires to discuss the policy further, the children’s ministry team member will refer the parent to the coordinator or Children’s Ministry Pastor. It is not appropriate to “debate” the policy or the decision to not accept the child during check-in in front of other parents.

If a child’s sickness is discovered, or he/she becomes sick, after check-in, the children’s ministry team member will consult with another team member in the classroom, and together they will decide on one of the following options:
1. Page the parent to come and check the child out immediately.
2. Isolate the child from the other children.
3. If possible, send one team member to get the parent.
4. Let the child remain; give the parent a *We’re Sorry Your Child Is Sick* flyer explaining our sick child policy.
All children’s ministry team members will use latex gloves when changing diapers or handling soiled clothing, sheets, or bedding which may contain blood or bodily fluids.

All used latex gloves, dirty diapers, dirty sheets, dirty bedding, or children’s dirty clothing items must be disposed of, or stored in protective containers away from the children. Children’s dirty clothing must be returned to the parent(s) in plastic trash bags.

Every children’s ministry team member must use caution when exposed to children’s blood or bodily fluids. Whenever possible, latex gloves must be used in these situations. Hands must be washed with disinfectant soap immediately after changing diapers, assisting children with the toilet, or handling clothes or other materials containing blood or bodily fluids.

Latex gloves must be changed after every diaper change, or after handling blood or bodily fluids.

**Diaper Changing**

To ensure the safety of the child and the leader the following standards have been set for diaper changing:

- A male leader may never change a child’s diaper.
- A female adult leader over 18 years old may change a diaper.
- You may only change a diaper in the presence of another leader
- Never leave a child unattended on a changing table
Blood & Bodily Fluids

General Policies / Guidelines

After a thorough review of current medical research and in consultation with county health professionals, and legal advisors, we have established the following policy guidelines.

1. All contact with bodily fluids or blood must be treated as potentially dangerous. All children’s ministry team members who change diapers, or come in contact with blood or bodily fluids must use latex gloves, dispose of dirty gloves and diapers correctly, wash hands thoroughly afterward, and disinfect all related surfaces immediately after a diaper change or exposure to blood or bodily fluids.

2. The parent(s) of the children who are exposed to another child’s blood or bodily fluids must be advised of such an exposure when they come to pick up their children. An Incident Report must be filled out for each child exposed. The parent(s) of the child whose blood or bodily fluid contacted other children must be asked if that child has any communicable disease or virus. If a communicable disease is present, the parents of the exposed children must be advised to contact their family physicians immediately.

3. Gloves must be changed after each diaper change or exposure to blood or bodily fluids.

4. Hands must be washed with disinfectant soap after the removal of gloves before touching another child or surface.
5. All used latex gloves, dirty diapers, dirty sheets, dirty bedding, or children’s dirty clothing items must be disposed of, or stored, in protective containers immediately away from the children. Children’s dirty clothing must be returned to the parent(s) in plastic trash bags.

6. No children’s ministry team member who has an exudative or weeping skin sore shall be permitted to serve in the children’s ministry unless the sore is covered completely. The Children’s Ministry Pastor may request that the team member refrain from service until the sore is healed.

7. Those who assist children with using the toilet must use latex gloves and wash their hands with disinfectant soap after removing the gloves.

**HIV / AIDS**

It is not the intention of Centerpoint Church to discriminate against any person with HIV/AIDS. We desire to avoid reactions based on exaggerated fears and prejudice. We do, however, have the responsibility to be wise and protect the health and safety of the children who attend our classes and events, our children’s ministry team, and all who attend our church.

We believe education is the greatest “tool” to use in not only protecting those who are not infected with HIV, but also in making sure the “doors of ministry” are open to those who are infected with HIV. To this end, we will include HIV awareness sessions as part of our on-going children’s ministry training process.

In the event that a child, who has the HIV virus, expels bodily fluid or blood, this situation must be dealt with seriously, as with all exposures to blood or bodily fluids. The presence of the HIV virus should not change how we treat such a
situation. All exposures to blood or bodily fluids must be treated as potentially dangerous for all involved.

Children with the HIV virus, who do not have open skin lesions, should be permitted to participate in children’s ministry events or classes. Any child with open skin lesions should be restricted from such participation until the lesions have healed or are adequately covered to prevent exposure to others.

Adults with the HIV virus, who do not have open skin lesions, should be permitted to participate in children’s ministry events or classes. Any adult with open skin lesions should be restricted from such participation until the lesions have healed or are adequately covered to prevent exposure to others.

Any restrictions to participation suggested by the children’s ministry team may only be in the best interest of the infected person (to prevent contact with other illnesses).

**Child Discipline**

It is our desire to create, and preserve environments in which children feel safe, secure, and loved. Because of this goal, we believe we must do all we can to maintain control in every children’s ministry class or area.

We believe that children need boundaries, which are created and reinforced with gentleness and understanding. We also believe that there will be certain children who need extra attention and encouragement in the area of discipline.
It is the focus of our policy to protect the ministry environment while still being sensitive to the needs of each individual child.

We believe there are three critical components to an effective discipline process: the teacher’s personal relationship with Jesus, the classroom environment (classroom management), and the treatment of the children. Our discipline policy / procedures will be divided into these three areas.

**The Teacher’s Personal Relationship With Jesus**

We believe a person’s actions are determined by his or her emotional/spiritual health. Jesus said, “...the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. For out of the heart comes evil thoughts, murders...” (Mt. 15:19). We believe that, as a person becomes more acquainted with the grace and mercy of Jesus, that person will treat others with more grace and mercy (Col. 3: 12-17).

It is the policy of Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry, that all those who serve in the children’s ministry must attend church services regularly, and be devoted to growing in their own personal relationship to Jesus. This consistent spiritual growth will have a positive effect on the treatment of the children in our ministry.

**Classroom Management**

We believe the classroom environment effects every child in that classroom. An environment that is “out of control” more-than-likely began that way long before the first child arrived. An effective children’s ministry team plans for a controlled, yet enjoyable environment. The children’s lack of discipline problems is simply a result of that planning.
It is our policy that each children’s ministry team member accomplish the following:

1. Pray regularly for the children (especially for the “challengers”).

2. Be “child-targeted,” instead of “lesson-targeted.” Be aware and involved in the world of today’s child by watching their television shows, listening to their music, reading about them, and by being actively engaged in listening to their conversations.

3. Review the lesson (if a teacher) several days before the presentation to become familiar with it, and to let the Lord begin to prepare his/her heart.

4. Complete any craft preparation before class time so the children can be the focus of attention when they arrive.

5. **Arrive at least 15 minutes before service time** so the room and lesson supplies can be arranged.

6. Greet each child as he/she enters. This lays a foundation of love and trust, which greatly effects discipline.

7. Be excited about the lesson, the children, and the Lord! Children will “mirror” our feelings. The more we are “into” the lesson, the less problems we will have with the children’s attitudes as well.
8. Plan for variety, and child interaction. Movements, activity changes, the use of audio/visuals, the use of drama, all draw the children into the lesson.

9. Give positive “rewards” to those who behave or participate. Rather than focusing on the “problem child,” focus on the children who are good examples!

We understand that life isn’t always predictable, and that family needs and personal matters may effect the successful accomplishment of the above preparation. We simply desire consistent effort toward these goals.

The Treatment of Children

It is our policy that the children who attend our ministry classes or events will leave better than they arrived. It is also our policy to not permit a few children from ruining the learning environment for the rest of the class. The blending of these two policy statements requires a God-given wisdom!

Ministry environment discipline begins before the children enter the room. The children’s ministry team members’ and the children’s attitudes prior to the service time effect what happens during the service. We cannot control what happens in the children’s home before class. We can control how we treat them in class. We must be ready for all actions and reactions.

It is very important to clearly state the rules or standards. Most children want to do what is right. If we do not tell them what we expect, we cannot expect them to do what we want. If we have clearly told them what we expect, and they fail to do it, we can assume it is a choice on their part (unless they are too
young to make such a choice). The following is a brief description of our discipline policy / process:

1. **Make every child feel loved and welcome.** This happens as soon as they enter. Eye-contact and smiles work wonders!

2. **Clearly state expectations.** Make sure directions and expectations are clear and understood. Speak slowly and friendly. Give examples if needed.

3. **Reinforce positive behavior.** Compliment children who do what you expect. Say, “Good job,” “nicely done,” or “thank you.”

4. **Correct negative behavior.** Verbally correct the wrong behavior, clarify the standards, compliment the positive behavior if / when it happens. **DO NOT TOUCH A CHILD IN ANGER!** If you must touch a child to separate him/her from others, be very careful not to squeeze or shake a child. **Hitting, squeezing, slapping, pushing, or shaking a child may result in the children’s ministry team member’s immediate removal from ministry.** See the “Removal From Ministry” policy section. Reinstatement to ministry may be accomplished through the process outlined in the “Reinstatement To Ministry” policy section.

5. **Separate disruptive children from others.** If a child continues to misbehave, regardless of all attempts to positively encourage the right behavior, separate the child from the rest of the children. **NO CHILD WILL EVER BE SENT OUTSIDE THE ROOM ALONE.** Children may be separated within the room only. Children must always be within the direct supervision
of the children’s ministry team members. No team member will be permitted to be alone with a child.

6. Communicate with the parent(s) regarding the child’s behavior. Remain positive and hopeful while still being truthful. Make sure another team member is present when a parent is talked to about the child. If the child is an extreme, consistent challenge, the team member may refer the matter to the Children’s Ministry Pastor.

Emergency Response

It is the policy of Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry that the safety of each individual child is our highest priority. Although we have policies and procedures for various emergency situations, we realize that each situation may warrant unique, specific reactions. We expect all who serve on the children’s ministry team to follow the given procedures; but we also permit the team members to work together in reacting to each situation. If special actions are required which do not “fit” the given procedures, but are necessary for the protection of the children, the team members have the freedom to make those decisions. Full reporting, which explains the actions taken and the justification for those actions, will be expected following every emergency situation. Reporting will be conducted using the Emergency Situation Report. This report will be made to the Children’s Ministry Pastor. Copies of this report will be made available to the parents of the children involved as well as to the Executive Pastor, Senior Pastor, and Centerpoint Board of Administration as requested.
See the expanded policies and procedures for the following emergency situations:

1. Fire
2. Earthquake
3. Sick child
4. Fights
5. Serious injuries or death
6. Lost child
7. Intruder (angry parent, other)
8. Bomb threat
9. Extreme weather
10. Presence of weapon

Events

It is the policy of Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry that we offer a variety of events for the children and families to enjoy. We believe that communication, teamwork, and advanced planning are essentials to a safe, successful event. The Children’s Ministry Pastor must approve all events sponsored or created by Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry. **All events must be approved at least one month prior to being advertised.** This approval process includes clearing the date(s) on the church calendar. The earlier the clearance, the more likely the date will be approved. **If printing is involved, two months advance notice is required!** No letters, phone calls, or notes will be sent out prior to the event being approved by the Children’s Ministry Pastor. The Event Planning Guide will be followed by the event planner. The Children’s Ministry Pastor must approve any variance from this guide.
All those who serve in any event involving children must be approved by the children’s ministry through the application process. No one may serve in the event, or come in contact with children as a volunteer, without being approved through the application process.

It is the policy of Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry to provide safe transportation for all children to all off-campus events. This commitment will usually be expressed in our contracting with a local bus company for the event rather than the use of personal cars. In the unlikely event that personal drivers and cars are used those who drive children must be approved through the children’s ministry application process. In addition to the children’s ministry application process, those who wish to transport children in private vehicles must fill out the Children’s Ministry Driver Application Form. Background checks will be conducted through the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for all those who wish to drive children. Any one who has had an accident or moving citation within a year prior to the event must give the details of the accident or citation to the Children’s Ministry Pastor prior to being approved to drive. The Children’s Ministry Pastor may, based on the details, refuse to permit the person to drive children.

All children, under the age of 18, who attend an event must have submitted an Event Release form for that specific event and have an Emergency Release form on file with the children’s ministry office, both forms must be signed by a parent or legal guardian. No child will be permitted to attend an event without both forms being submitted and signed by a parent or legal guardian. A children’s ministry team member who attends the event with the children must carry copies of both forms. Complete rosters of the children attending the event, must also be carried by the children’s ministry team member who carries
the copies of the “Event” and “Emergency” forms. If the children are divided into groups, a children’s ministry team member who stays with a group of children must carry the copies of the “Event” and “Emergency” forms for the children in that group. If the groups rejoin, all forms must be returned to a single children’s ministry team member who will carry the forms for all the children.

After the event has been approved, and prior to that event, an event director will create Scoop Sheet. The Scoop Sheet will be distributed to the parents prior to the event as well as to all the children’s ministry team members who serve on the event. Copies of the Scoop Sheet will also be given to the church staff and Life Stages Pastor. The Scoop Sheet will contain the following information:

1. Date of event
2. Ages/grades of children involved
3. Location of event with map in relation to church
4. Event times
   a. Child drop-off time (at church?)
   b. Departure time from the church
   c. Actual event times
   d. Departure time from the event location
   e. Arrival time back at the church
   f. Child pick-up time (from church?)
5. Emergency contact information
   a. Pager number for church-based person
   b. Cell phone number for church-based person
   c. Pager number for person at event location with children
   d. Cell phone number for person at event location with children
Removal From Ministry

It is the desire of Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry that all who serve in the children’s ministry be dedicated to that service, and that they take seriously the commitment and related responsibility. We will do all we can to support and equip each team member in the hopes that this will produce a deepening sense of personal dedication. If, however, the Children’s Ministry Pastor, or the department coordinator have reason to question a team member’s commitment, the following steps will be taken to determine the status of the team member's service:

1. The Children’s Ministry Pastor and department coordinator will consult together regarding the team member’s “observed” behavior.

2. If the team member’s commitment is questionable, the department coordinator will discuss their observations with the team member. The team member will be given an opportunity to explain his or her actions. The department coordinator will reinforce the value of commitment and the correct procedures or policies as well as encouraging the team member. The conversation will be documented on the Children’s Ministry Team Member Review Report. A copy of the report will be mailed to the team member and kept on file in the children’s ministry office. All personnel reports and forms are considered confidential, and are available to only the Children’s Ministry Pastor, and the coordinator for that specific area. The information may be available to others only at the request of the Lead Pastor, or Life Stages Pastor.
** If the team member’s actions are determined to be physically, emotionally, or spiritually harmful to the children, the team member's service will be immediately terminated. Possible steps for reinstatement will be considered based on the Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry “Reinstatement To Ministry” policies.

3. If the team member’s actions or signs of commitment do not change as a result of the meeting with the coordinator, the Children’s Ministry Pastor will join with the department coordinator in the next meeting with the team member. At this meeting, the team member will be placed on “probation” for a period of three months. It will be explained to the team member that if his or her signs of lack of commitment don’t improve during this probationary period, he or she will be removed from the children’s ministry for a period of one year. The conversation will be documented on the Children’s Ministry Team Member Review Report. A copy of the report will be mailed to the team member and kept on file in the children’s ministry office. If the team member wishes to challenge or change the information recorded on the report, he or she must do so in writing within 48 hours. No changes will be made after 48 hours. Copies of this report and any previous reports related to this team member will now be sent to the Life Stages Pastor.

4. If, after* three months of probationary service, the team member's actions fail to indicate an increase in commitment in the area specifically mentioned in the two previous meetings and reports, it will be determined that he or she is unable or unwilling to change. Provisions will be made for replacing him or her immediately. The team member will be removed from service for one year. At the end of that one-year period, the team member may apply for
reinstatement based on the policies and procedures for “Reinstatement To Ministry” contained in this manual.

*If, during the probationary period, the team member’s actions constitute a direct threat to the unity or health of the entire children’s ministry team, the Children’s Ministry Pastor together with the Life Stages Pastor may decide to discontinue the probationary period before its completion and remove the team member from service immediately.

5. If, at any time during this process, the team member wishes to appeal the decisions being made on his or her behalf, he or she may request an audience with the Centerpoint Board of Administration. A copy of the Appeals Policy and Process form will be given the team member in preparation for the meeting. Prior to the appeals meeting with the Centerpoint Board of Administration being scheduled, the team member must sign the statement at the bottom of the Appeals Policy and Process page(s) stating that he or she has read the policy and agrees to abide by the process. No appeals proceedings will continue without this statement being signed. If the team member refuses to agree to the appeals process, he or she waives his or her right to such an appeal.

6. If a team member is accused of child abuse or neglect, he or she will be removed from service immediately while his or her situation is considered by the Life Stages
Pastor. His or her return to service will be governed by the “Reinstatement To Ministry” policies and procedures.

Absence From Service

It is the desire of Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry to provide for, and support, each team member’s freedom to be absent from service when necessary. We believe that, in a “healthy” team environment, the joy of serving the Lord together with fellow team members should be a natural incentive for commitment and faithfulness. We also recognize that a team member’s family and personal needs, if not cared for, can eventually cause frustration in ministry, which will negatively effect his or her service. It is because of these beliefs, that we have created the following procedure for caring for one’s absence from service:

1. At least one week prior to the planned absence, the team member is to contact the department coordinator regarding the desired absence. When possible, the team member should attempt to “cover” his or her own absence within his or her own classroom teaching team.

2. The team member must take responsibility for doing all he or she can to assure that his or her “role” is cared for during the absence. This may mean preparing supplies or other lesson-related materials for the “substitute” team member. It is not the responsibility of the coordinator to carry the team member’s responsibility simply because of the absence.

3. The coordinator will find a replacement from the list of team members “on rotation” who have stated that they will serve as substitutes.
4. In the event of a last-minute emergency, a team member may contact the coordinator with less than one week prior to the absence. The coordinator will be sensitive to the “emergency” situation, and will do all he or she can to provide a substitute. If the coordinator determines that the situation is not an “emergency,” and indeed the team member could have contacted the coordinator sooner, the coordinator may, at his or her discretion, refuse the request for a substitute.

5. If a team member’s commitment is questioned based on frequent absences or repeated poor planning, the coordinator may discuss his or her concerns with the team member in accordance with the policies and procedures for “Removal From Ministry.”

**Reinstatement To Ministry**

When faced with the choice between a team member’s “feelings,” or “reputation” and the safety of the children, Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry will always act in favor of the children’s safety. When a team member is removed from service, he or she may be reinstated based on the following policies and procedures:

1. No one who is convicted of child abuse or neglect may ever serve in Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry, or be permitted to have contact with any children in any event connected with Centerpoint Church.

2. Any one who has been **FALSELY** accused or arrested for child abuse or neglect may apply to be reinstated to service only after all of the following conditions are met:
a. All charges are dropped and the team member’s record is “cleared" by the police department or prosecuting agency.

b. A completed Request For Reinstatement form with attached personal statement of growth and commitment from the team member to the Life Stages Pastor

c. A meeting between the team member, Children’s Ministry Pastor Life Stages Pastor to discuss the situation and the team member’s Request For Reinstatement form.

* If, after reviewing the team member’s Request For Reinstatement form, the Children’s Ministry Pastor Life Stages Pastor so decide, a mandatory leave of absence" of six to twelve months may be required prior to reinstating the team member to service. At the conclusion of such a mandatory leave of absence, the team member may be required, at the Children’s Ministry Pastor or Life Stages Pastor’s discretion, to submit an updated Request For Reinstatement. Prior to being reinstated, the team member must meet with the Children’s Ministry Pastor and Life Stages Pastor.

** If, after reviewing the team member’s situation, the Children’s Ministry Pastor, or Life Stages Pastor decide that reinstating the team member may place the children or Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry at risk, they may choose to refuse to reinstate the team member to service in the children’s ministry. The team member may, or may not be invited to become involved in service in other areas of the church.
3. Any one who has been removed from service in the children's ministry based on an apparent lack of commitment or dedication to the children's ministry may apply for reinstatement only after all of the following conditions have been met:

a. The completion of the mandatory one year leave of absence

b. A completed Request For Reinstatement form with attached personal statement of growth and commitment from the team member. This form is returned to the Children’s Ministry Pastor for review.

c. A meeting between the team member, the department coordinator, and Children’s Ministry Pastor to review Request For Reinstatement. This can only take place after the completion of the mandatory one year leave of absence.

d. If the Children’s Ministry Pastor, and the department coordinator determine it, to reinstate the team member, the team member will be placed on a three-month probationary period. During this period, the team member’s actions, which would indicate improvement in commitment or dedication to the children’s ministry, will be evaluated.

e. If, after the three month probationary period, the team member’s commitment or dedication is no longer in question, the team member must meet with the department coordinator and the Children’s Ministry Pastor to discuss what was learned during the reinstatement process. After this meeting, probationary team member will be returned to full,
non-probationary status and will be given equal support and encouragement as other team members.

f. If, during the three-month probationary period, the team member’s commitment or dedication is still in question, the team member will be removed from service immediately and permanently. The team member may never re-apply to be reinstated to any service in the children’s ministry.

**Curriculum**

Everyone who serves in the children’s ministry will be provided with curriculum to use for that ministry. It is the responsibility of Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry not only to provide curriculum, but also adequate training in the use of that curriculum. Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry will also provide the auxiliary supplies needed for the lesson-related crafts, or reimburse team members if they need to personally purchase lesson-related craft supplies.

We believe that the Holy Spirit wants to personally teach each child who attends a children’s ministry event or class (II Chron. 16:9; Heb. 4:12) We also believe that the Holy Spirit wants to use, and personally work through the hearts, minds and spiritual gifts of each of our team members (Mt. 10:20; II Tim. 3:16). Because of these convictions, it is our policy to permit, and encourage, each teacher or team member to seek the Lord’s leading regarding each moment with each child. The curriculum is a tool that the Lord can use, but we know there may be “special lessons” the Lord may want us to teach.
If a teacher desires to add to, or subtract from the printed lesson included in the curriculum he or she may do so as long as the original lesson topic or concept is still taught. This change is considered a “minor” change, and doesn’t need to be “approved.” If, however, a teacher wishes to teach a lesson which is not related to the curriculum provided, he or she must get approval for such a “major” change from the department coordinator at least two weeks prior to teaching the lesson. The lesson with the “major” change must have provisions for the following items before it can be approved:

1. Clear Biblical standards
2. Clear application to the children
3. Clear lesson objective
4. Student activity or discussion questions
5. Some form of “take-home” activity or family application

Teachers may propose two “major” changes per curriculum quarter, and each “major” change unit may not exceed two lessons in length.

**Team Members’ Children**

The children in the class or event must receive the complete attention and focus of each of the team members. Whatever becomes a “distraction” must be dealt with carefully and rapidly to ensure a clear focus on the needs of the children. We believe a team member’s child, who is not of the same age as the children in the group, may become such a distraction. Because of this possibility, team member’s child(ren) may not be permitted to join the team member in the class or group while it is in “session.” This decision will be left to the discretion of coordinator under the direction of the Children’s Ministry Pastor.
If a team member desires to serve in his or her child’s ministry area, that request will be considered by the department coordinator. The coordinator will approve the request if the following conditions can be guaranteed:

1. The team member will be able to give his or her full attention to the other children, while still being “mom” or “dad” to his or her own child.
2. The team member’s child will participate with the other children and not “cling” onto the team member during the service.

If, after approving the team member’s placement in his or her child’s ministry area, the coordinator becomes aware of either of the above two conditions not being fulfilled; the coordinator will discuss the matter with the team member and possibly require a “transfer” to another area. The team member may be permitted to remain in his or her child’s room if the team member agrees to make adjustments that would guarantee the fulfillment of both of the above conditions.

**Check-in, Check-out Procedures**

All children must be checked-in using the central check-in system by their parents. After the children are checked-in and the nametags are printed, the parents take them to their classroom. Adults who check children into a ministry area will either be given a “parent pager” in the nursery areas. Children can only be checked-out by the same adult who checked them in, unless the adult has a matching parent pager or the security tag that is issued with the name tag, or unless specific permission is granted by court papers which list those adults who may or may not gain custody of the child. **No child will be permitted to leave a classroom without being “checked out” or picked up by an adult with a matching pager number or security tag.**
Nursery Check-in / Check-out

If a parent wishes to check a child into the nursery, and there is no number on the child’s label or no parent pager present, the check-in personnel must politely request that the parent returns to the check-in area to either label the child with the correct information or get a parent pager and then label the child correctly. **No child will be permitted to be checked into the nursery areas without being properly labeled (name and pager number).**

If an adult wishes to pick up a child from the nursery without a parent pager, the personnel monitoring the doorway must not permit the child to leave the room. The team member monitoring the doorway must get assistance from another team member, replace his or herself at the door monitor position, and ask the parent and child to step aside, away from the doorway, to deal with the situation. Once away from the check-out door, the team member should inquire about the whereabouts of the pager that corresponds with the number on the child’s label. Regardless of the “story,” the team member must require that the pager be presented before a child is permitted to leave the room. If the pager is “lost,” the team member must contact the coordinator or Children’s Ministry Pastor for further assistance. **Below are some suggested procedures to follow in this situation:**

1. While the adult is in the room, page the pager number that is on the child’s label.
2. Notice the interaction between the child and that adult (familiar, fearful, unknowing?).
3. Notify the Children’s Ministry Pastor
4. Wait for 10 minutes to verify that no other adult comes for the child.
5. If the child knows his or her last name, compare that with the adult’s drivers license.
6. Record all the information from the adult’s drivers license.
7. Call a phone number that the adult gives you to verify the child’s name and description.
8. If the pager is still not “found,” and no other adult comes to pick up the child, and you have done the above steps, the Children’s Ministry Pastor, at her discretion, may involve other church staff members for counsel, or release the child to the adult.

The above process must also be followed if a pager number doesn’t match the child’s label.

Preschool & Elementary Check-in / Check-out

No child will be permitted to enter a ministry area without being checked in with a numbered hand stamp that corresponds to the same numbered hand stamp on the adult who brought the child to the room.

If a child “arrives” to the room without an adult to check the child in, the first concern is the child’s safety. The adult team member who is monitoring the check-in door, should get assistance from another team member to follow the procedures below:

1. Ask the child where the parent is.
   a. If the parent is on-campus, check the child into the room.
   b. If the parent is not on campus and the child came to the church on his/her own (walked, bike, skateboard, etc.) ask the child for his/her
phone number. Attempt to make contact with the parent for permission to check the child into the program. Tell the parent that we need an adult to come to pick up the child at the end of the program or service. If you cannot reach the parent contact the coordinator or Children's Ministry Pastor. That person will determine whether to check the child into the program, or not.

2. Inform the coordinator of the situation, even if the parent was contacted.

When an adult comes to pick up the child without a matching security tag, once again, the protection of the child is our primary concern, our secondary concern is the smooth flow of the parents through the door. The adult team member who is monitoring the check-in door, should get assistance from another team member to follow the procedures below:

1. Ask the child for his/her last name.
2. Ask, the child “Who brought you here today?” If the adult beside him/her is identified, go to step 3.

If the child does not identify the adult beside him/her, do not release the child into that adult’s care, contact the Children’s Ministry Pastor for assistance. If the connection between the adult and child cannot be verified, and no other adult has come to pick up the child, the Children’s Ministry Pastor may call the Life Stages Pastor for assistance. The Life Stages Pastor may contact the police. If the police are called, the coordinator will record the details of the situation on an Incident Report.
3. If the child says that the adult present is the one who brought him/her to the church, verify the adult’s identity with the driver's license, and match it to the last name the child gave. If the last name on the adult's driver’s license doesn’t match the last name that the child gave you, call the coordinator for assistance. Gently review the check in/out procedure.

**Child Abuse Recognition And Reporting**

It is the desire of Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry to create an environment, which is safe and secure for all children. We must be prepared to take an active role in recognizing, and reporting possible signs of child abuse if we should encounter them. We also realize that we are bound by the law to report suspected child abuse within a limited time. Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry will operate within the reporting standards set forth for Riverside County as stated in The California Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Law handbook. The required time for reporting is immediate (or as soon as practically possible) by phone, with a written report forwarded within 36 hours of receiving information about, or observing, the alleged abuse.

In conjunction with the above state law, Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry has the following policies regarding the procedures for reporting suspected child abuse:

1. **No one may report a suspected child abuse situation without first notifying the Children’s Ministry Pastor.** If there is an immediate threat and the Children’s Ministry Pastor is unavailable the Life Stages Pastor should be notified. If the Life Stages Pastor is unavailable then the Lead Pastor should be notified. This is for communication purposes only, and to prevent

2. The person who first “observes” the suspected abuse, or sign of abuse, must contact the Children’s Ministry Pastor, Life Stages Pastor, Lead Pastor, or the person in charge of the event immediately. The person in charge of the event must contact the Children’s Ministry Pastor. Details of the suspected abuse must only be shared with these people who are directly responsible under the Children’s Ministry Pastor. No information about the suspected abuse may be shared with any other members of the children’s ministry team.

3. It is the responsibility of the person observing the suspected abuse, or stories of abuse, to report such observations to Child Protective Services. This reporting will be made with the use of the Suspected Child Abuse Report provided by the Riverside County Social Services Department. We are bound by state and county law to make a phone report of the observation or suspicion to Child Protective Services immediately (as is practical), and to file a written Suspected Child Abuse Report within 36 hours of observing or receiving information about the suspected abuse. If the person observing or receiving information about a suspected abuse refuses to file the report within the time limit, it is the responsibility of those church officials who are aware of the matter to file such a report. In the event that a teen volunteer observes or receives information about a suspected abuse, he or she must also abide by these procedures. It is recommended that the Children’s Ministry Pastor be contacted prior to a report being filed.
4. Prior to filing the Suspected Child Abuse Report, the following process must be followed:

   a. Immediate discussion regarding the situation between the team member who observed or received the information, the service supervisor, the department coordinator, the Children’s Ministry Pastor, and the Life Stages Pastor. Not all of the above people must be present at the meeting, but all must be briefed and consulted prior to reporting. The Lead Pastor may also be invited at the Life Stages Pastor’s discretion.
   
   b. Phone consultation with Child Protective Services will be considered for clarification or counsel regarding our observations, procedures, etc.
   
   c. Detailed records of observations, conversations, and meetings will be made using the Sensitive Situation Report. These forms will all be kept locked in the children’s ministry office. Access to these reports will be restricted to only those directly involved in the situation (as listed in 4a above).

5. The parent or guardian of the child “victim” will not be notified or consulted with prior to reporting unless we are otherwise counseled by Child Protective Services.

6. Relatives, or friends of the child “victim” will not be notified or consulted with prior to reporting unless we are otherwise counseled by Child Protective Services.
7. Other Centerpoint Church pastors or staff will **not** be notified or consulted with prior to reporting unless we are otherwise counseled by Child Protective Services, or unless those other ministries or positions are directly effected by the suspected abuse or abusers.

8. The identity of the person making the report to Child Protective Services is protected. At no time will that identity be made known to the alleged abuser unless instructed to do so by Child Protective Services or other prosecuting agencies.

9. Someone from the children’s ministry may remain in close contact with the child and famil(ies) connected with the abuse throughout the process unless otherwise advised by Child Protective Services.

**Expanded Policies and Procedures**

**Fire Procedures**

When the fire alarm sounds, the children’s ministry team members will cease classroom or event activities and instruct the children to calmly line up at the door. One team member will lead the children out of the classroom, following the posted evacuation route. Another team member will assure that all children are in line, pick up the check-in roster, turn off the lights, close all windows and doors, and follow the last child out of the classroom. **It is vital that the last adult out of the classroom confirms that no child is present in the room when the door is closed.**

If the class is outside the building, or on the playground when the alarm sounds, the children’s ministry team members must escort all children to the nearest safe area. This area may be the parking lot, playground, or grass area. Children
should be instructed to walk in line behind an adult leader, and stay in line at the safe area. A children’s ministry team member should assure that all children are in line before following the last child to the safe area. If the children are in the fenced playground area, the children’s ministry team members must move the children as far away from the building as possible while staying in the playground area. The children will stand against a fence or wall. While two team members stay with the children, another team member should return to the room to verify that no children are present in the room unless flames are visible, and doing so would place the team member in danger.

The cement driveway directly adjacent to the classroom building or fellowship center should not be considered a “safe area.” Emergency vehicles will need to use this driveway area freely!

Team members may lead the children back into the rooms when instructed to do so by a fireperson, or the Children’s Ministry Pastor.

If it isn’t safe to return to the rooms, the children must remain supervised and protected until the parents come to pick them up. **The regular check-out procedure must be carried out regardless of the environment.**

If the building is not declared “safe” prior to the next service beginning, the parents will not be permitted to leave their children, and the children's ministry program will be suspended for that hour or day. This is a decision that the Children’s Ministry Pastor will make based on the advice of the fire personnel.
**Earthquake Procedures**

At the beginning of the tremor, the children’s ministry team members will instruct the children to carefully crawl under tables or chairs in the room, away from the glass windows. Once all the children are under the tables or chairs, the children’s ministry team members can also find a safe place in the room (under a table or in a doorway).

Once the shaking has stopped, the team members can permit the children to come out from under the tables or chairs. Classroom activity may resume as normal unless the Children’s Ministry Pastor requests evacuation.

If evacuation of the building is requested, the children’s ministry team members are to carry out an evacuation as outlined in the “Fire Procedures” section. One team member leads the children to the safe area posted on the wall by the door, while another team member assures all children are out prior to following the children to the safe area. Abide by the “never alone” policy as much as possible during the emergency.

If it is not safe to return to the classroom prior to the parents picking up the children, the team members must stay with the children until the parents come to claim their children. Check-out must be carried out as usual.

If the building is not declared “safe” prior to the next service beginning, the parents will not be permitted to leave their children, and the children’s ministry program will be suspended for that hour or day. This is a decision that the Children’s Ministry Pastor will make.
Sick Child Procedures

It is the policy of Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry to not accept children who are sick at check-in time. If a parent attempts to check-in a child who appears to be sick, the children’s ministry team member should:

1. **Remain gentle and understanding!** We should not assume that the parent intentionally tried to check-in a sick child.

2. Calmly call attention to the child’s symptoms and inform the parent of our “sick-child” policy. Hand the parent a copy of the *We’re Sorry Your Child Is Ill* pamphlet, and tell the parent that you look forward to having the child back in the class after he or she is well. **Do not carry on a debate about the child’s condition while standing in the check-in doorway!** If the parent wishes to discuss the child’s condition, or our policy, politely ask the parent to step aside, **with the child**, and wait for the department coordinator, or Children’s Ministry Pastor to come.

The above policy/procedure applies to all children’s ministry events and classes. If a child’s sickness was not noticed during check-in, or if a child becomes ill during a class or event, the following procedure must be followed:

If the child is a nursery age child (0 – 36 months), the parent should be paged to come and pick up the child. Follow the above procedure as you communicate with the parent who was paged. If the child is older, and the parent cannot be reached, the following options must be considered:
1. If the child’s condition is considered contagious (refer to the listing of “contagious illnesses” below), the child must be isolated from the other children. At no time must the child be sent outside the direct supervision of the children’s ministry team members. Isolation within the classroom may be accomplished by placing the child at a table away from other children while still being “included” in classroom activities. If isolation within the classroom cannot be accomplished, contact the the Children’s Ministry Pastor, and another team member or church staff member, come and escort the child to central check-in area. If the department coordinator is available, contact him/her for assistance as well. The “never alone” policy must be abided by in this situation as well. The child cannot be taken to the central check-in area by a single adult! The parents will be instructed to pick up their child at the central check-in area at check-out time. When the parents arrive, gently inform them of our policy, and give them a copy of the We’re Sorry Your Child Is Ill pamphlet.

2. If a child’s condition is considered serious enough, and yet not an emergency, the team member may contact the Children’s Ministry Pastor and request that someone come to take the child to the central check-in area for more personal attention. If the department coordinator is available, contact him/her for assistance. The “never alone” policy must be abided by in this situation as well. The child cannot be taken to the central check-in area by a single adult! The parents will be instructed to pick up their child at the central check-in area at check-out time. Make sure someone speaks with the parents and encourages them. The parents should also be given a copy of our We’re Sorry Your Child Is Ill pamphlet.
Contagious Illnesses

We are restricted by law from administering any form of medication, or applying any form of ointment or cream in response to a sickness. This includes aspirin, cough medicine, throat lozenges, skin cream, antibiotic cream, asthma inhalers, etc. If a child’s parent instructs us to administer any medication, we must refuse to do so, and ask that the parent come to the room and administer the medicine. Diaper areas can only be cleaned with “baby wipes” or water. No baby powder is to be used in changing any child.

A List of Some, Not All, Contagious Illnesses

1. **Chicken pox**: Fever may appear one day prior to observance of skin lesions. Skin lesions are small, clear blisters about the size of a match head. Lesions usually start on face and scalp and move downward. Lesions can often be seen behind ears and neck or under the arms. The blisters can easily be broken and quickly form itchy crusts or scabs. Chicken pox is contagious until all lesions are crusted over.

2. **Cold**: Sneezing, running nose (yellow-colored fluid), flushed cheeks, dull-looking eyes, slight fever, or cough. If a child is teething, the symptoms may appear the same. The drainage from the nose will be clear if it is teething-related.

3. **Pink-eye** (conjunctivitis): Sore, red eyes with yellow discharge. The child will be itching the eyes. Pink-eye is spread through touch. If a child with pink-eye touches a table, chair, or door knob, the illness can be transmitted to the
next person to touch the surface. All surfaces must be disinfected after a child with pink-eye has been present.

4. Diaper rash: Some diaper rash can be contagious. Treat all cases as if they are. Small, red pimples or patches of rough, shiny, itchy red skin. Pimples may develop white heads or become raw. There may be a small amount of bleeding. Diapers have ammonia smell. As with all diaper changes use gloves and disinfect all changing table area after diaper change.

5. Impetigo: Starts as small, runny blister, often on the face. The blister develops into an infected sore. Generally has a light tan, or honey-colored crust.

6. Ringworm: Circular lesions, with the outer part slightly raised. The lesions are very itchy and then painful. Lesions may ooze and lead to a secondary infection.

7. Roseola: Often called “baby measles.” The onset is abrupt, usually accompanied by a high fever for three days. Restlessness, irritability and a poor appetite may be some of the related symptoms. On the fourth day, the fever drops to normal, a then blotchy, red rash appears on the head and trunk. The rash lasts for three days. Convulsions may occur.

8. Scarlet fever: Sore throat, fever, lethargy, possible vomiting, and a fine, pinpoint rash are visible symptoms. The rash occurs within 24 - 48 hours and is most noticeable under the arms, abdomen and thighs. The face is usually flushed, and pale around the mouth. The tongue has a strawberry-like appearance.
9. **Thrush**: Small, white lesions in mouth or on buttocks. In severe cases, the lesions can be quite painful.

10. **Diarrhea**: Runny stools. This condition can be related to a fever or other illness. It is often not contagious, but it can be in some cases. The illness that may cause this condition can be contagious. Be careful to use gloves, dispose of diapers, and disinfect all surfaces exposed to the discharge.

11. **Flu**: Symptoms may include fever, diarrhea, or vomiting. Various symptoms may be associated with several variations of the “flu.”

12. **HIV**: Refer to the policy on HIV / AIDS contained in the “Blood and Bodily Fluids” section of this manual.

**Fighting Procedures**

It is the policy of Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry to protect the safety of all children and ministry team members at all times. In the event of a physical threat to this safety, every children’s ministry team member must work together toward the common goal of removing the threat from the children, or removing the children from the threat.

Most fights begin with a conflict and escalate over time. It is the responsibility of the children’s ministry team to be aware of the conflict and to prevent an escalation.

When a conflict between two children is recognized, the children’s ministry team member should:
1. Verbally intervene and encourage cooperation and gentleness. If possible, the source of the conflict must be removed or solved. After this intervention, the children’s ministry team member must continue to observe and monitor the situation.

2. If the conflict continues after the initial attempt at intervention, the children’s ministry team member must separate the two children who are at conflict. It is vital that both children are moved to different areas to prevent the appearance of “picking on” one child over the other. The children’s ministry team member must continue to supervise the two children after the separation.

3. If the conflict continues to escalate, even after separation, the children’s ministry team member must contact the Children’s Ministry Pastor and request assistance. Once in the classroom, the Children’s Ministry Pastor may determine that one, or both, of the children involved would be best supervised in the central check-in area for the remainder of the class time. The parents will be instructed to pick up their children in the central check-in area at check-out time. The parents of the child(ren) moved to the central check-in area must be given a copy of the Incident Report form filled out by either the children’s ministry team member involved, the department coordinator, or the Children’s Ministry Pastor.

If a fight occurs between two children without any observed warning, the children’s ministry team member should:
1. Separate the two children immediately.

2. Contact the Children’s Ministry Pastor, and request assistance. Once in the classroom, the Children’s Ministry Pastor may determine that one, or both, of the children involved would be best supervised in the central check-in area for the remainder of the class time. The parents will be instructed to pick up their children in the central check-in area at check-out time. The parents of the child(ren) moved to the central check-in area must be given a copy of the Incident Report form filled out by either the children’s ministry team member involved, or the Children’s Ministry Pastor.

If a fight occurs between two adults, the children’s ministry team member must:

1. Contact the Children’s Ministry Pastor and request assistance.

2. Remove any children from the area to protect them from harm.

3. The Children’s Ministry Pastor should “recruit” some additional male support and attempt to stop the fight. If necessary, the police should be called to assist. The protection of the personal safety for the children is the primary concern. The protection of the personal safety of the adults engaged in the fight is the secondary concern. Care must be taken to also protect the personal safety of those adults who attempt to stop the fight. If the fight cannot be stopped without risking the safety of others, do not attempt to stop the fight. Keep all others away from the fight, and wait for the police to arrive. An Incident Report form must be filled out and filed in the church office.
Serious Injuries / Death Procedures

In the event of a serious injury or death, the three most critical concerns are: treatment of the child, communication with parents, and follow-up afterward.

Our treatment of an injury is limited by law. We cannot administer any medication, such as aspirin, throat lozenges, antacids, etc. The child may be allergic to such medications. We cannot clean a wound with anything other than water. We can do what we can to stop bleeding prior to emergency care is available. For serious wounds, the immediate contact of parent(s) and paramedics is recommended. If parents can be contacted quickly, it is advisable to let them take the next action. The child’s safety is the primary concern. When in doubt, call the paramedics!

Always contact your supervisor, coordinator, or the Children’s Ministry Pastor as soon as possible. This is for your own protection as well as for the church’s protection.

When possible, remove other children from the area while the injured child is being treated. The “never alone” policy must be abided by in this situation as well. It is not safe to leave a team member alone with the injured child. If there are only two adults present, instruct the children to sit down away from the child while you care for the injured child.

Always fill out an Incident Report for every injury! Give a copy to the parent(s), and a copy to the department coordinator, or Children’s Ministry Pastor.
Treatment of the injured child

1. If the injury occurs during a church event, refer to the back of the child’s Emergency Release form or Event Release form for specific physical conditions which may effect your treatment of the child.

2. If the child has fallen, do not attempt to move the child until the paramedics arrive. Further injury due to broken bones can occur if the child is moved incorrectly.

3. If the child is bleeding; do all you can to stop the bleeding while you are waiting for the paramedics. When possible, use rubber gloves while dealing with situations involving blood or bodily fluids. See the “Blood And Bodily Fluids” policy.

4. If there is a suspected broken bone; do not move the child. Call 911, and follow their instructions until medical help arrives.

5. If a child is unconscious, but still breathing, call 911, and follow their instructions until medical help arrives

6. If a child is unconscious, and not breathing; seek someone who knows CPR, and begin CPR while someone else calls 911. Follow the 911 personnel’s instructions until medical help arrives

7. Fill out the Serious Injury Report in addition to the Incident Report for serious injuries. The Serious Injury Report includes detailed information, witnesses’
names, phone numbers, etc. which must be collected at the time of the injury.

Death of a child

Contact the Children’s Ministry Pastor. After contacting the Children’s Ministry Pastor, do the following:

1. Call 911. Follow their instructions until medical or police personnel arrive.

2. Whenever possible, remove the rest of the children from the area.

3. Do your best to collect observations from witnesses to the accident.

4. Do not move the child. Wait for the police and paramedics to arrive.

5. Retrieve the Emergency Release and Event Release forms if the death occurs on a church event.

6. Contact the parents. This may require that you get a message to a church staff person in the adult worship service who will make the announcement on the video screens for the parents to meet you outside. It may require that you call them on the phone and ask them to meet you at the church or event site.

7. Fill out the Accidental Death Report in addition to the Incident Report. A copy of the Incident Report must be given to the parents immediately. Copies of the Accidental Death Report must be given to the parent(s) within 4 hours of the accident. The Accidental Death Report includes detailed
information, witnesses' names, phone numbers, etc. which must be collected at the time of the accident.

Communication with parents

1. Whenever possible, provide the parents with both a verbal, and written account of the situation which caused the injury or death. The written account can be as simple as an Incident Report, or as complex as the multiple-page Serious Injury Report that includes witness accounts, details of the situation, and treatment rendered.

2. Time is critical! Verbal accounts of the situation will most likely occur within minutes of the accident. Complex written accounts will take some time to compile and create. Written reports, either the Incident Report, the Serious Injury Report, or the Accidental Death Report, must be submitted to the parents no later than 4 hours after the accident. The Centerpoint Church Life Stages Pastor or the Lead Pastor prior to being submitted to the parent(s) must read all Serious Injury Reports, or Accidental Death Reports.

3. Copies of all reports will be kept on file in the children’s ministry office.

Follow-up

The purpose of our ministry is to communicate the love of Jesus to those we encounter. To simply file a report doesn’t minister. The reports we write are a formal, legal procedure. The communication and connection after the situation is critical. The children’s ministry team member who was involved in the situation is expected to contact the parent(s) and child several times in the days that
follow the accident. The department coordinator, or Children’s Ministry Pastor will also contact the family soon afterward.

Lost Child Procedures

It is the policy of Centerpoint Church Children’s Ministry to use a check-in / check-out procedure for all children which requires an adult to check-in or check-out a child. This system is designed to protect children, and to provide the parent(s) with a sense of security. In the event that a child is not in the room when the parent(s) come to pick him or her up, the following procedure must be followed.

1. Verify that the parent(s) have a parent pager or numbered hand stamp, which indicates they indeed check the child into the ministry area. If no pager or number exists, ask them what happened when they checked the child into the ministry area. Contact the coordinator or Children’s Ministry Pastor if needed.

2. If the parent(s) have a pager or hand stamp, and the child is definitely not in the room, check any other area to which the child may have gone (bathrooms, closets, under tables, etc.)

3. If the child is not in the room, contact the Children’s Ministry Pastor and alert them of the missing child, and ask them to come to the room.

4. Once in the room, the Children’s Ministry Pastor will determine what action to take next. The options are:
a. Rule out the possibilities of the child being taken to the playground or rest room.

b. Rule out the possibility of someone else checking out the child.

c. Physically check the family car.

d. When all other possibilities are exhausted, contact the police.

e. Contact the Life Stages Pastor.

f. Fill out the necessary forms provided by the police, and also a Centerpoint Church Incident Report. Copies of the forms are given to the parent(s) and kept on file in the children’s ministry office.

Intruder Procedures

If an adult enters uninvited into the classroom or playground area, the children’s ministry team members must work together in protecting the children. The safety of the children is the highest priority. The procedures to follow are:

1. The adult intruder must be approached quickly. It must be determined if the adult is checking-in or checking-out a child. A children’s ministry team member must get up and greet the adult by saying, “Can I help you?”
2. If the adult is not checking-in or checking-out a child, he or she must be asked to wait outside. If he or she refuses to move to the outside, another children’s ministry team member must request that the Children’s Ministry Pastor come to the classroom to deal with an intruder.

3. If the adult appears to threaten the safety of the children, a children’s ministry team member must quickly instruct the children to get up and move to another area of the room or to another room altogether. While the children are moving, get assistance from other adults to deal with the intruder. If the intruder moves toward a children’s ministry team member or toward the children, or if the intruder has a weapon use a cell phone to call 911.

4. As many team members as possible (while still protecting the “never alone” policy) should enter the room to assist in dealing with the intruder, and to protect the children as they exit the room.

5. The children’s ministry team members should join together in telling the adult intruder to leave the room.

6. Once the Children’s Ministry Pastor arrives, it will be determined if other children’s ministry team members will be called on to assist in removing the intruder. The Children’s Ministry Pastor will call for additional help, or call the police (if they haven’t already been called).

7. Even if the intruder leaves “willfully,” it may be best to call the police to make a formal report and to have the person confronted by the police. The Children’s Ministry Pastor will determine this.
8. The children of that room will stay out of the room until it is deemed safe to return by the Children’s Ministry Pastor. If it is not safe for the children to return, they will be checked-out in an adjoining room or outside. The standard check-out procedures must be used.

9. The Children’s Ministry Pastor will report the event to the Life Stages.

**Bomb Procedures**

In the event of a bomb threat, the police will be called and the children will be evacuated similar to the procedures outlined in the “Fire Procedures” section. If a person enters the room and threatens to explode a bomb, contact the security team, and if possible, call 911. If possible, evacuate the children from the room. If this is not possible, wait quietly for help to arrive. It is important not to aggravate the intruder with the bomb!

If the bomb threat comes to the office via a phone call or person in the office, the office will communicate with the entire children’s ministry team to evacuate the children.

As with the “Fire Procedures,” all children will be taken to a safe area. If the building is not declared “safe” by the time the parents arrive for check-out, the parents will be directed to the “safe area” to pick up their children there. The standard check-out procedures must be used.
If the building is not declared “safe” prior to the next service beginning, the parents will not be permitted to leave their children, and the children’s ministry program will be suspended for that hour or day. This is a decision that the Children’s Ministry Pastor will make based on the advice of the police.

**Extreme Weather Procedures**

If, during a children’s ministry event or program, the weather becomes extreme, the safety of the children must be protected. The children’s ministry team members must take their children to nearest safe environment. This safe environment will most likely be their own classroom, but it may also be the fellowship center.

If there are high winds present, and it is determined that the classroom is safe, the children’s ministry team members will instruct their children to stay in the center of the room away from the windows. If the parents arrive and wish to take their children out of the room, the children’s ministry team members are to permit it. It is critical that the child’s name on the check-in sheet be marked to indicate that he or she has been taken by the parent.

If the children’s ministry team member decides to take the children to the Worship Center, some communication should be made with the Children’s Ministry Pastor to inform them of the children’s location. This may be accomplished by posting a note on the inside room wall or door.

**Presence of Weapon Procedures**
In the event of a person entering a classroom or outside area with any weapon, such as a gun or knife, the children’s ministry team members must act quickly to protect the safety of the children. Contact the security team. If the person will not permit the use of a cell phone, great care should be taken to keep the intruder calm. Follow the intruder’s instructions, and pray/wait for help. Continue asking for the intruder to permit the children to leave.

Contact the security team and Call 911.