



## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

# Encouraging Children & Parents to Live Everyday Captivated & Changed by Jesus

We desire for every child to come to Christ and grow in Christ, so our goals for each child is that he/she will:

- Know God loves them and make their own decision to become a Christian and get baptized
- Demonstrate their love for God through prayer, worship and reading the Bible
- Know how to use the Bible on their own
- Be able to share God's story of salvation
- Love others through serving, giving, displaying the Fruit of the Spirit, and forgiveness
- Know that God has a specific plan for their lives
- Want to attend church regularly

We also desire for parents to be equipped for the job God has given them, so we will provide:

- Parenting classes
- Family classes (baptism and discipleship classes)
- Weekly training through take homes
- Social media helps and training
- Service opportunities in child's classes

And, we believe that certain milestones are a big deal, so we will celebrate

- Parent/Child Dedication
- Transition to the ClubHouse
- Salvation
- Baptism
- Transition to Student Ministry

## **VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS**

- Volunteers are believers in Jesus Christ and demonstrate that in words and actions.
- Lead teachers must be members of River Oak Church. Helpers can be faithful attenders.
- Volunteers must agree to the tenants and doctrine of River Oak Church
- Volunteers should attend church services and participate in a small group
- All volunteers must fill out an application and have a background check done before serving
- Volunteers register into the KidCheck system and in Planning Center
- Volunteers wear their KidCheck nametag and Roc Kids Lanyard
- Volunteers attend training events. (Twice a year)
- Volunteers commit to serve for one-year.
- Volunteers arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of class.
- Volunteers honor and show love to children equally regardless of sex, race, religion or culture.
- Volunteers speak kindly and positive to parents, children, guests and other volunteers.
- Volunteers follow the curriculum provided with creativity and variation.
- Volunteers have approval before including a guest speaker or additional A/V or Smartboard
- Volunteers do not use a cell phone while serving except to communicate in an emergency
- Volunteers commit to read this volunteer handbook and agree to the guidelines

## **YOUTH VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS**

- Youth volunteers will complete a Youth Volunteer application that is signed by a parent
- Youth volunteers are at least 12 years of age. Nursery/toddler volunteers are at least 16.

## **SAFETY & SECURITY**

### **Abuse**

River Oak church maintains a zero tolerance against child abuse and neglect. All volunteers are state mandated reporters and should immediately report any incident of abuse or neglect of which they have knowledge or which they have observed. If at any time, you suspect a child may be being abused, speak to a River Oak staff immediately. Leadership will then address the situation and have any interactions with the parents according to the policy laid out by River Oak Church.

**It is our responsibility, both to God and parents, to provide a nurturing and safe environment. We have developed safety policies and procedures for all staff and volunteers.**

- There will never be a volunteer alone with a child
- Two or more volunteers must always be in a classroom and one must be over the age of 18
- Children will never be left unsupervised

**Staff/Volunteer shall not in any way abuse any child, including:**

- **Physical** – strike, spank, shake or slap
- **Verbal** – humiliate, degrade, threaten, compare, criticize, curse at or yell
- **Sexual** – inappropriate touch or verbal exchange
- **Mental** – shaming, withholding love or cruelty
- **Neglect** – withholding food, water or basic needs, etc.
- **ANY** type of abuse or corporal punishment is not tolerated and is cause for immediate dismissal.

### **Check-in**

- Parents or guardians check their child into the KidCheck system and receive a nametag for their child and a matching guardian ID tag for them when picking up.

### **Check-out**

- The volunteer will check the security number on the parent or guardian's tag and match it to the child's, even if the volunteer knows the family personally. Once the tag has been confirmed a match, the volunteer in the classroom will take the sticker. NO CHILD is permitted to leave the Children's Wing if they still have a sticker on their person. In the event this occurs, kindly ask the parent or guardian to see their sticker and match it to the child.

### **Security**

- All main entrance doors of the Children's Wing are manned always or closed and locked
- Only those with security stickers and/or staff nametags can enter/exit
- Parents with lost stickers should go to the Welcome Desk in Children's wings for help

### **Classroom Safety**

- Greet each child as they come into the classroom and make sure they have a Kid Check tag
- Check in or record each child's name on attendance sheet
- Check all belongings are labeled with child's name (diaper bag/cup/bottle/pacifier etc.)
- Volunteers should throw away any broken toys and report any broken equipment
- Check all outlets have covers and all cabinets are locked
- When applicable, make sure the bottom of a split classroom door is locked from the outside
- No photographs (no Facebook, Twitter, etc. posts) can be taken of the children in any of the children's ministry except from photographers who have been given permission
- Volunteers are not allowed to leave the Children's Ministry wing with children
- Texting and phone use during class time is only for emergencies
- The Welcome Areas are always staffed to help you if needed

### **Snacks/Food Allergies**

Children with food allergies must bring their own snack. We will not provide them with any snack.

### **Playground Guidelines**

All children must wear socks - no shoes and no bare feet. Playground is designed for children 6 years and under. The playground closes at 12:30 on Sunday afternoons

### **Restroom Supervision**

- Volunteers only aid a child using the restroom if the child is 3 years or younger or needs special assistance.
- The bathroom door remains open while the child is being helped
- Volunteers make sure a child washes their hands after going to the bathroom or having their diaper changes.
- If a child in Acorn Alley has a bathroom accident a volunteer assists them while wearing disposable gloves and places wet or soiled clothes in a plastic grocery bag.
- Volunteers clean up any bodily fluid on the floor or toilet while wearing gloves. A paper towel and disinfectant cleaner is used, keeping the cleaner away from the child.
- All ROC Kids bathroom doors remain open. Adults do not enter the bathroom except in an emergency. They may stand in the hallway and direct the children from there. No adults may use the children's bathroom.

## Medical

- First Aid kits: Kits containing gloves, band aids, and incident reports are located in each classroom to use for minor injuries. If a child requires more than a band aid, please notify your coordinator.
- Biting: Please inform your coordinator immediately in the case of a biting incident. Comfort the hurt child and wash the area. Separate the child who bit and the coordinator will contact both children's parents. A parent must remain with the child that bit, if they are to remain in the classroom.
- Medical emergency: Notify the coordinator immediately if you have a medical emergency in your classroom/nursery. The coordinator will call 911 and contact the Medical team, Security team, and parents. One volunteer will move the other children to another classroom or the indoor playground.
- Epi-Pens: Our children's safety is our upmost concern. If an Epi-Pen needs to be administered the teacher will **immediately** notify the coordinator to administer.
- For ANY incident, other than a minor first aid need, an incident report, available in the classrooms, is filled out with details, given to the coordinator who will copy and send home with the child. For all injuries and incidences, please notify the coordinator.
- Volunteers never dispense medication even with parent permission.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

**Emergency Evacuation** – The evacuation procedure should be used for a fire alarm, a bomb threat, and any other times deemed necessary by a Pastor or his designee.

**Children's Rally Point** – Parking Lot B far corner, on grass between white house and garage.

- All nursery children (babies-Ones) are placed in rolling cribs and evacuated.
- All walking children are lined up and counted by an adult volunteer. Preschool children are led out of the room with a Walking Rope (located in the Jack/Jill bathroom or behind the classroom door)
- An adult volunteer is the last to leave the classroom and close the door.
- All children and adult volunteers evacuate through the closest exit and proceed to the Children's Rally Point located at the farthest part of the parking lot near the church garage.
- Parents are not allowed to take their children until everyone is accounted for at the Rally Point and we have been cleared to leave.
- Volunteers take the class roster with them to the Children's Rally Point.
- Once at the Children's Rally Point, adult volunteers assemble children together by classroom/age group, take a head count, and report to the Children's Ministry Director.
- As adults are cleared to leave their rally point, they may pick up their children using their KidCheck guardian tag.

**Lockdown Procedure** – If there is a serious emergency (i.e. active shooter), the church will initiate the lockdown procedure using the following guidelines:

- The following announcement should be paged using the building Public Address (PA) system: "ATTENTION PLEASE. WE ARE EXPERIENCING AN EMERGENCY SITUATION AND NEED TO LOCKDOWN THE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY. SECURE THE CHILDREN'S WING. LOCK ALL DOORS AND STAY INSIDE CLASSROOMS UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE."
- Proceed to a room with a door, close all the windows and doors, and turn off all the lights.

Close top of Dutch door and lock. Cover large windows. If possible, get everyone down on the floor and ensure that no one is visible from outside the room. One person in the room should call 911, advise the dispatcher of what is taking place, and inform him/her of your location; remain in place until the police, or a church leader known to you gives the "all clear".

- If an active shooter enters your classroom, try to remain calm. Listen and obey all commands by the shooter. DO NOT TRY TO STOP NOR INTERFERE THE SHOOTER. Dial 911, if possible, and alert police to the shooter's location; if you can't speak, leave the line open so the dispatcher can listen to what's taking place. Normally the location of a 911 call can be determined without speaking. If there is absolutely no opportunity for escape or hiding, it might be possible to negotiate with the shooter; attempting to overpower the shooter with force should be considered as a very last resort, after all other options have been exhausted. If the shooter leaves the area, proceed immediately to a safer place and do not touch anything that was near the shooter.
- No matter what the circumstances, if you decide to flee during an active shooting situation, make sure you have an escape route and plan in mind. Do not attempt to carry anything while fleeing; move quickly and quietly, keep your hands visible, and follow the instructions of any police officers you may encounter. Do not attempt to remove injured people; instead, leave wounded victims where they are and notify authorities of their location as soon as possible. Do not try to drive off the church grounds until advised it is safe to do so by police.

### **Missing Child**

Time is critical if a child is reported missing. Volunteers contact the coordinator as soon as possible with the following information:

- Name
- Age
- Gender
- Color of hair
- Color of clothes

Immediate procedure will be followed as set forth in the River Oak Church Emergency Plan.

### **HEALTH**

#### **Hand Washing**

- Volunteers should wash their hands when entering the classroom, after changing a diaper or helping a child in the bathroom, after wiping a child's nose or mouth, and before leaving the classroom.
- Children should wash their hands after going to the bathroom, before and after snack, and whenever their hands touch bodily fluids.

#### **Diaper Changing**

- Only change diapers in designated changing areas
- Wear disposable gloves
- Use disposable liners under each child while changing them
- Do not leave child unattended
- Place wet or soiled diaper in plastic bag and discard in trash can at changing area
- Remove gloves and wash hands
- Use clean gloves and liners for each diaper change
- Male volunteers are not permitted to change diapers or help children in the bathrooms.

## **Illness Policy**

- Children who exhibit signs of illness will not be allowed into the classroom. Signs to look for include: fever of 100 or more, diarrhea or vomiting, severe coughing, red eyes or eye discharge, rash, head lice, open skin lesions
- Children should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to class
- Children should be on prescribed medication for 24 or more before returning to class
- Children should be free of vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to class
- Parents should be notified immediately to pick up their child from class if symptoms appear during class time
- Parents will be notified via email of contagious disease contact using KidCheck system

## **Cleaning and Sanitizing Procedures**

- Nursery toys should be washed with provided disinfectant cleaner after each use. For larger toys, wipe down with a paper towel saturated with the cleaner
- Nursery equipment should be wiped down with the provided disinfectant cleaner at the end of each day and as necessary during the day if contaminated
- All fabric toys should be washed each week in the washing machine
- Trash is taken out at the end and placed in the large rolling garbage cans in the hallway
- Chairs should be stacked, and tables and chairs wiped off with disinfectant

## **SPECIAL NEEDS:**

We recognize that each child is an individual and there will be times when specific children will have a special need. We will do all we can to accommodate. We recognize and believe this is a partnership with the family and an opportunity to minister.

At present, we offer a Buddy Program where one-on-one attention is given to the child who has need. We also have a "Retreat" room for those who need a quiet place to regroup. If we have a child with established significant needs, the coordinator will meet with the parents to discuss specifics of needs and how we can minister. Typically, we will recruit and equip a buddy for that child for each hour the family attends River Oak.

## **ROC KIDS STAFF TEAM:**

### **Director of Children's Ministry**

Sue Hilton - sue.hilton@riveroakchurch.org

### **Weekday Preschool Director**

Katie Tucker - katie.tucker@riveroakchurch.org

### **Acorn Alley Nursery Coordinator**

Donna Pendergrass - donna.pendergrass@riveroakchurch.org

### **Acorn Alley Preschool Coordinator**

Gina McCarthy – gina.mccartney@riveroakchurch.org

### **Acorn Alley Admin**

Kathleen Fitzgerald - kathleen.fitzgerald@riveroakchurch.org

### **ClubHouse Small Group Coordinator**

Darcy Fulcher - darcy.fulcher@riveroakchurch.org

### **ClubHouse Large Group Coordinator**

Phaedra Link - phaedra.link@riveroakchurch.org

### **ClubHouse Admin**

Kelly Miller - kelly.miller@riveroakchurch.org