

The Children's Ministry is a vital part of Grace Church of Mentor. We would not be able to function on Sundays or Wednesdays without people interested in caring for little ones and ministering to children. Our desire is that we have a Children's Ministry that exists not only for the sake of tending to children, but also for the nurturing and salvation of their souls and the mentoring of their spiritual walk. We pray that as you assist us in tending to the littlest lives at Grace you will grow spiritually, develop friendships with whom you serve, and find a great blessing from the Lord.

In our effort to make every area of Grace Church of Mentor's Children's Ministry safe and secure, we have several guidelines and procedures that we ask all workers to follow:

- **We enforce a two-adult rule.** This rule states that two adults must be present during any activity that includes children. An adult is never to be alone with a child unless parental permission is obtained.
- **We have a Restroom Policy.** Female caregivers may take either boys or girls to use the restroom. Male caregivers may only take boys to the restroom. For children ages four and above, please do not enter the restroom except under extreme circumstances. No person under the age of 18 may take a child to the restroom. If a child needs assistance, the adult should leave the door opened. Otherwise, adults should remain outside the restroom.
- **All newborns through Kindergarten aged children are to be signed in by a parent or guardian.**
- **Two matching security (numbered) tags are issued for each child ages newborn to Kindergarten.** One is clipped to the back of the child and the other is given to the parent. In order for the child to be released, the parent must return the matching security tag. **NO CHILD WILL BE RELEASED WITHOUT THE CORRECT SECURITY TAG**, regardless of the familiarity of the parent and worker.
- **If the security tag has been lost, a member of the security team must come to the classroom to authorize release of the child.** The parent must provide valid ID to release the child. There are no exceptions to this rule.
- Children who attend Little Lights (4 year olds to 2nd grade) on Sunday Evening will not have a security tag. The children begin the service with their parent in the auditorium. Each child will be marked present on the attendance sheet at the beginning of the Little Lights class. The parent must sign the attendance sheet to release the child from the Little Lights program.
- **Under no circumstances should a worker discipline a child by physically striking or touching the child in an inappropriate manner. A worker is never to spank, hit, grab, shake, or otherwise physically discipline anyone.**
- Touching a child as necessary for hygienic care, as in changing a diaper, is permitted when necessary.
- Adult workers should immediately report any behaviors that seem inappropriate or abusive to their ministry leaders, who will then report the behavior to a Pastor.
- Additional security guidelines and classroom management procedures can be found in the Children's Ministries Handbook: Newborn-Kindergarten. This handbook must be read to complete an application.

In an effort to reduce the risk of sexual abuse to children, to protect those who serve in Children's Ministries from false allegations of sexual abuse of children, and for liability coverage for insurance purposes, all workers must complete the Children's Ministries Worker Application forms in order to be considered for service in Children's Ministries at Grace Church of Mentor. Persons who are known to have committed criminal acts or acts of misconduct are prohibited from serving with children.

Please note that the purpose of this policy and screening application is to protect both the children and the workers in the ministries at Grace. All information obtained in the application will be held in strict confidence.