



# **Kids Ministry Policies and Procedures**

## **CrossRoads Church Helpers,**

At CrossRoads Church, we take our responsibility to care for kids and students very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which students can begin and grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for CrossRoads Church staff members and helpers. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for kids, students and helpers while supporting the mission of CrossRoads Church to Come as you are, Contribute where you can, and Connect with a community group. The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced.

After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.

Sincerely,  
*CrossRoads Church Leadership*

## **Kids and Youth Staff**

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# Kids Ministry Policies and Procedures

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# Overview of Helper Safety System

Because we love students and desire to protect them, CrossRoads Church requires all staff members and helpers working with children or students (and other vulnerable populations) to complete THREE SAFETY STEPS before ministry work or helper placement begins.

## **STEP ONE: Screening Process**

Staff members and helpers are required to complete the CrossRoads Church Screening Process, which requires a staff member or helper to:

- complete an Employment Application (employees only)
- complete the Helper Application (helpers only)
- complete a face-to-face meeting (employees and helpers)
- provide references to be checked (employees only)

## **STEP TWO: Policies & Procedures**

Staff members and helpers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page indicating that he or she has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

## **STEP THREE: Criminal Background Check**

CrossRoads Church requires that all staff members and helpers working or volunteering in kids or student activities undergo a criminal background check. The background check must be completed before service can begin. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required.

# Ministry Areas

## **The Nest- South Branch**

The Nest- South Branch consists of all children birth through 23 months old. This area is characterized by gentle play and a place where faith is introduced to babies and toddlers through music, books, and interactive play by caring adults.

## **The Nest- West Branch**

The Nest- West Branch consists of children 24 months through Pre-K. This area is characterized by active play and where the Bible is taught through age-appropriate curriculum.

## **Kids Church**

Kids Church consists of Kindergarten through 3rd graders. This area is characterized by engaging hang-out time with peers and helpers, fun and interactive teaching, worship and intentional small groups.

## **Zone 456**

Zone 456 consists of 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> graders. This area is characterized by small groups beginning to learn to dig into the Bible in a safe environment. This is a place to ask questions, grow in faith and build relationships.

# Helper Expectations

## **Appearance**

All helpers are encouraged to wear their CrossRoads ministry issued shirt (where applicable). All other clothing should be appropriate and tasteful. **All helpers are required to wear a nametag while in a classroom in The Nest or Kids Church.**

## **Arrive on time**

All helpers should arrive at their assigned volunteer time.

## **Be prepared**

Please come fully prepared and ready to go. That means lessons, readings, or whatever else is needed to present, play or teach. Go to the restroom prior to entering your volunteer area. Also take a moment to prepare your heart for service through prayer.

**Absences**

If you're going to be absent, please call your director as soon as possible. You are needed and necessary for the function of your ministry and your communication allows leadership to find a replacement helper. With the exception of an emergency, a minimum 24-hour notice is requested for any absences.

**Friends**

Helpers may not bring friends with them to serve.

**Phones**

Helpers should not be on their cellphones for any reason while serving, unless for ministry purposes or an emergency.

**Develop**

We want to foster the spiritual growth of kids. We expect all helpers and leaders to be living out CrossRoads' mission:

**Come As You Are**

Serving is great, but it doesn't take the place of attending a service. Stay connected to how God is leading our church by participating in Sunday morning services.

**Contribute Where You Can**

Christ wants his church Body to be fully resourced so the many ministries of the church can continue to expand and serve others. Be willing to ask God how he wants you to use your finances, resources and time to further His work.

**Connect to a Community Group**

We believe that life-change happens best in the context of relationships. This could include a small group, having an accountability partner or just getting connected to someone who will help you grow spiritually. Model for kids what it looks like to be in authentic relationships.

# Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

## **Zero Tolerance on Abuse**

CrossRoads Church has **zero tolerance for abuse** in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff and helper at CrossRoads Church to act in the best interest of kids in every program.

## **Reporting Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors**

CrossRoads Church is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to the CrossRoads Church Safety Committee and the Police Department, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency.

**The Child Abuse Hotline** at 1-800-362-2178 (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week). *Iowa Department of Human Services*

## **To report suspected abuse**

In the event that staff or helpers observe any inappropriate behaviors or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is their personal responsibility to immediately report their observations to the Nest Director, Kids Director, Youth Pastor, other CrossRoads Leadership, or Elders.

\*If a helper or staff are a mandatory reporter due to their profession and are required to report suspected abuse to the proper authorities immediately, or if any staff or helper chooses to directly report abuse or neglect to the appropriate law enforcement agency, they must also inform church leadership. **Reporting abuse needs to occur immediately after inappropriate behaviors are observed.**

## **Response to Report of Abuse**

All reports of abuse will be directed to The CrossRoads Church Safety Committee, which will take appropriate action on behalf of the church when a report of abuse occurs.

The Safety Committee will be comprised of the following members:

- Lead Pastor
- Associate Pastor
- Youth Pastor
- Kids Church Director
- At least one Elder

**See It... Say It to Staff... Report It**

# Kids Church and the Nest Policies & Procedures

## Helper Positions

### Teen Helper

Is an individual under the age of 18 who volunteers in the The Nest Branches or Kids Church area.

### Helper

Is an individual over the age of 18 who volunteers in The Nest Branches or Kids Church and falls under the guidance of the Lead Teacher.

### Lead Teacher

Is an individual serving in The Nest or Kids Church who leads helpers in the room and the children.

### Coordinator

Is an individual serving to oversee an area of The Nest or Kids Church. They help guide all helpers and Lead Teachers in that area.

## Helper Frequency

As a rule, helpers are asked to serve a maximum of two (2) Sundays a month, providing them the opportunity to attend CrossRoad services. Exceptions can be made by Directors.

## Appropriate Interactions

It is our hope that CrossRoads is a warm, welcoming and friendly place. We greatly value the safety of our kids, failure to comply with these guidelines are grounds for immediate termination of the helper relationship. One basic safety guideline that we strictly enforce: **Never be alone with a child.**

### Proper touch

- Physical contact should be age and developmentally appropriate and is **only** appropriate when done publicly.
- Hugging can **only** be done if the child initiates the contact. Never allow full contact (body to body) hugs. Rather distance your body from the hug or give the



child a side-to-side hug. Whenever possible, initiate a high-five rather than invite a hug.

- Tickling, extended hugging, or prolonged physical contact of any kind is not appropriate.
- A light touch to a hand, shoulder or back when encouraging is acceptable.
- Lap sitting is only appropriate for children in The Nest branches. If a child is insistent in sitting in your lap, move them to sit next to you or sit on your knees so they are not able to sit in your lap.
- Many children who are sad or upset can be comforted best by being held. Holding children is only appropriate in The Nest Branches.
- Never touch a child in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit (except when changing a diaper).
- Never allow a child to touch you in a way that is inappropriate.
- Physical contact should be for the benefit of the child, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or helper.
- Do not force any physical contact, touch or affection upon a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.

\*When serving as a helper, you must observe these policies even with your own children who may be in your class (other observers may not know that you are the parent and we want to display excellence even in appearances.)

## **Well Child Policy**

In order to promote health and wellness in all children, do not admit a child if they have any of the following symptoms in the last 24 hours:

- Any degree of fever (99 degrees +)
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Unexplained or contagious skin rash
- Bleeding/wet diaper rash
- Chronic cough
- Runny nose (yellow/green discharge)
- Eye/ Ear infections
- Pink Eye
- Parasites (nits, lice, mites, ring worm, etc.)

If a child enters Kids ministry, and one of the above symptoms are found, contact the Director immediately. They will communicate with the parent and will explain why they are being contacted and invite the child back when he/she is well.

## Bathroom Policies

Parents are encouraged to take their children to the bathroom prior to checking them into service. However, there will be kids that need to use the bathroom while with helpers. Please abide by the following policies:

- Avoid taking only one child to the bathroom by yourself. See if there are other children that also need to go for the same visit.
- Accompany the children to the bathroom and wait in the sink area while they are in the stalls. **You are never to be in a bathroom stall with a child.**
- Never are you to touch a child in the bathroom, unless helping them with basic functions, such as washing their hands.
- Make sure all children are accounted for prior to returning to the classroom.

\*For older children, stand outside the bathroom in the hallway. We want to ensure an environment safe of inappropriate situations for our children and helpers, but also recognize the challenges of being in a community building, where strangers are also using the bathroom facilities. Use your best judgment with these situations.

## Hygiene

Please help us prevent the spread of illnesses by washing or sanitizing your hands:

- When you first arrive in a room
- After a diaper change
- After contact with body fluid (wiping a child's nose, etc.)
- Before handling food
- Whenever else is needed

Please instruct children to wash their hands:

- After using the restroom
- Wiping their nose
- Before eating

## Diapers

Only adult females, 18 years or older may change diapers. It is preferred that diapers only be changed when necessary. Upon pickup, helpers should communicate to the parent that a child's diaper has been changed.

# Child Drop Off

## The Nest

- Drop-off needs to be done at the door of the classroom.
- Lead teachers need to be at the door, checking in children and greeting parents. Helpers are to be available to receive the children and engage with them as they come into the room.
- Room leaders/teachers must fill out the appropriate Attendance Form as they are checking in the students. Allergies are listed on the child's nametag and should be communicated to other classroom helpers.
- Never let unauthorized adults in the room, including parents. (On some occasions a parent can stay for a few minutes to help their child settle in, but only approved helpers are allowed in the rooms 15 minutes after service begins.)
- Only allow children into the room if their nametag matches the room you are in. Otherwise, direct the family to the correct location. If the child was assigned the wrong room, contact the Director before admitting them to your room.
- If you suspect that a child is in the wrong age group, or you are concerned with the amount of children in your class, admit them to your room and then contact the Director, who will work out the details and alert the parents if the child needs to be moved.

## Kids Church

- Greet families at the door and direct kids to the proper hangout areas.
- The Lead Teacher must fill out the appropriate Attendance Form as they are greeting students.
- Never let unauthorized adults in the room, including parents.

# Child Pick Up

## The Nest

- Room leaders/teachers greet parents at the door.
- Room leaders/teachers must check the parent's security tag and match it to the child's tag number. Once this match has been made, they are free to go.
- Never allow access to a child until the Security Tag match has been made.
- If a parent does not have their Security Tag, ask them if they can find it, or they will need to move to the side while you call the Director, who will assist them. You can say something like: *"I am not authorized to release children to parents without a pickup tag. I will find the director and they will be able to help you out. We have security processes in place to protect your children and I am sure you understand the importance of your child's safety"*

- If anyone ever pushes their way in at any time, or takes a child without permission, call for help immediately.

### **Kids Church**

- When the service is over, parents are permitted to pick up their child from their designated pick-up door.

## **Visiting Adults**

- Unauthorized adults are never allowed into a classroom.
- Parents are discouraged from entering classrooms (on some occasions a parent can stay for a few minutes to help their child settle in, but only approved helpers are allowed in the rooms 15 minutes after service begins.)
- Visiting parents must register at the check-in station.

## **Paging/Texting Parents**

If you should need to call a parent at any time during a service, contact the Director.

## **Accidents**

In the case of an accident, regardless of child or adult, inform a Director or staff member right away. All classrooms are equipped with a small First Aid Kit. Along with care, an Incident Form will need to be filled out and signed by the helper that witnessed the event. The Incident Report also requires a parent and staff signature. In the instance a child is injured and a parent's presence is needed, contact a director or staff member to initiate parent communication. All forms will be kept in the lower level storage room files.

If there is a spill of body fluid (due to cuts, nosebleeds, vomit, etc.), latex gloves must be worn (available in First Aid Kit).

# Emergency Procedures

Please familiarize yourself with the following emergency procedures. All of these procedures are posted in all Kids Ministry classrooms.

## Fire

1. **Stay calm.**
2. **Line up all children at the door.** Count children. Lead Teacher should make a sweep of the hallway to check for children.
3. **Lead Teacher will grab the attendance clip-board and walkie-talkie.**
4. **Start evacuating after all children are accounted for.** Direct the children out the exterior door in the West Branch. Take children to the Peosta Elementary School parking lot.
5. **Take attendance.**
6. **Begin check-out process with a Director and/or Lead Teacher when given the "all-clear".** Do not let parents take children until they have checked out with a Director or Lead Teacher.

## Tornado

1. **Stay calm.**
2. **Line up all children at the door.** Count Children.
3. **Lead Teacher will grab the attendance clipboard and walkie-talkie.**
4. **Lead children** onto the track, down the stairs, and into the Kids Church (fitness) room at the bottom of the stairs.
5. **Seat children away from heavy furniture/equipment, glass, and light fixtures.** Wait quietly.
6. **Wait for the "all clear" and direction from a Director**
7. **If there is damage to the building, follow Fire Emergency Procedures Steps 2 through 6.** Watch for hazards.

*\*If a parent wants to take their child during any part of the evacuation process, please explain to them that for safety and security reasons, we need to completely evacuate all children to the gathering area and account for them before they can be checked out. Invite parents to help with the evacuation process if they have an issue with this.*

## **Intruder**

1. **Stay calm.**
2. **Lock the doors.** If you and/or the children are not in room, take cover in a nearby room with a lockable door. If able, barricade the entrance to the room.
3. **Make sure all children are accounted for.**
4. **Be quiet.** If possible, turn out the lights and sit in the back corner of the room near the changing table. Bookshelves can be moved to create a barrier to keep kids contained.
5. **Remain in locked room until an "all clear" is given by police or Director.**
6. **Check-out will begin once the Directors have determined it is safe to do so.**

## **Medical Emergency**

1. **Call 911 .**
2. State your location and medical emergency. (Answer any questions from the dispatcher)
3. **Contact the Directors** via the walkie talkies to assist with your room and station an adult on the track to direct medical personnel once they arrive. Director will also contact parents and initiate an Incident Report at the appropriate time.

# **Policies and Procedures**

## **Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement**

I have received and read a copy of CrossRoads Church Kids and Youth Ministry Policies and Procedures Manual and understand the importance of the matters set forth within the manual. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service at CrossRoads Church.

Violations of these policies, or failure to report a prohibited act, are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from ministry positions for both helpers and staff members. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the church leadership.

Further, I understand that the manual may be modified, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time by CrossRoads Church.

I further acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this handbook in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between CrossRoads Church and me. If I am applying as a helper, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no compensation for hours that I have worked.

Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed as well as manual guidelines that are changed or deleted.

I hereby acknowledge receipt and understanding of the policies and procedures manual.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member or Helpers's name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member or Helper's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date