

KIDS OF GROWTH

Safe Sanctuary Mission-Policies and Procedures

KIDS OF GROWTH takes seriously the responsibility to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children and youth who participate in our ministries. In keeping with our covenant relationship with God, we honor our Lord and all who seek Him, by doing justice, loving kindness and walking humbly with Him. (Micah 6:8) The disturbing and traumatic rise of physical and sexual abuse of children and youth has claimed the attention of our nation and society. The following statements reflect the commitment of Kids of Growth to provide a safe environment for all children and youth church workers who participate in sponsored ministries.

In an effort to provide a safe community, Kids of Growth requires all church employees and volunteers to commit themselves to the Safe Sanctuary Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults. As participants in the program, we pledge to conduct ourselves in a manner consistent with the teachings of Christ and that we will guard our thoughts and tongues, will refrain from any behaviors which corrupt our witness for Christ, and that our actions and choices will reflect prudence, purity of heart, and an earnest love for the will of God. Children and youth are defined as minors that are anyone under the age of 18. Commitment to this policy will require workers/volunteers to provide personal information, review Safe Sanctuary policy and understand that they will be under the supervision of their respective leaders.

The Safe Sanctuary Policy is a comprehensive effort for the benefit of the children, volunteers, and entire community in which we reach out to. Every worker/volunteer will be expected to conduct his/her duties with strict adherence to the guidelines outlined within this manual. The Manual will be maintained and updated by the director of Kids of growth and formally reviewed yearly.

Definition: Abuse is defined as any sexual contact, indecent exposure, or communication for immoral purposes, as well as physical abuses such as corporal punishment or physical assault.

Protection Procedures

A. Drop-off and Pick-up:

1. Parents have given permission for children to walk to the program and home from the program unaccompanied.
2. All parents or custodians are to complete a registration form. The form will ask for the child's name, parent or custodian name, home address, phone number, allergies, and emergency contact.
3. The parents have been given contact information for Memorial Westside Health Center and are given the Director, Amy Covington's personal cell phone number for immediate contact when requested.

B. Restrictions:

1. Only trained, assigned workers/volunteers will be allowed to work with children. No other individuals will be allowed in these areas without an identified need and the approval.
2. No worker/volunteer may take a child to an unsupervised area without permission from the parent/custodian.

C. Providing Adequate Personnel:

1. **On-site** programs that involve Elementary age children will include supervisory personal according to the following ratios:

Children Kindergarten – 5th Grade

- 2: max of 24
- 3: max of 36
- 4: max of 48, etc.

Children 1st – 5th Grade

- 2: max of 16
- 3: max of 24
- 4: max of 32, etc.

II. Rules of Behavior – Nursery/Children’s Division

A. *Two Adult Rule* -Whenever practicable, a minimum of two teachers shall be present during any children’s activity. We will strive to never have a teacher working alone with any children.

B. *Open-door-policy* - All children’s classrooms will have either a viewing window that will remain free of covering or a dutch door where the top door will remain open at all times. If the classroom does not have a dutch door or viewing window, the door must remain open at all times. The teachers/volunteers shall never be in a closed-door situation with any children.

C. *Restroom Policies*: All trips to restroom require an escort, as no children are to be in the hallways unsupervised. A teacher will stand outside the restroom and only assist the child if needed. Whenever a teacher is in the restroom with a child the door will remain open. The teacher shall never be in a closed door situation with a child. If a child soils themselves during the program, two adult volunteers will be present while cleaning up the child.

D. *Discipline*: Corporal punishment, of any kind, is never appropriate. Teachers are asked to redirect a child if they should display inappropriate behavior.

E. *Staff and Administrators*: As appropriate, a staff member or administrator will supervise ongoing programs and may make unannounced visits into classrooms or other program sites.

III. Training

A. All staff and volunteer workers will receive training in these policies and procedures in either verbal or written form.

B. Background checks will be completed every five years.

Volunteer Covenant

Kids of Growth is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities. The following policy statements reflect our program's commitment to preserving a safe place where one can experience God's love through fellowship and growth in Christ.

- 1) Persons who have been convicted of child neglect or abuse (sexual, physical, and/or emotional) shall not volunteer to work with children or youth in any Kids of Growth sponsored activity or in any activity to which Kids of Growth is providing volunteers or participants;
- 2) Adult volunteers with children, youth, and vulnerable adults shall observe the "Two-Adult Rule" (as defined in the Safe Sanctuaries manual) at all times so that no adult is ever alone with a child, youth, or vulnerable adult.
- 3) Adult volunteers with children, youth, and vulnerable adults shall attend regular training and educational events provided by Kids of Growth to keep volunteers informed of policies and state laws regarding child abuse and neglect.
- 4) Adult volunteers shall immediately report to their supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.
- 5) Don't let a child leave the classroom, unattended.

Please answer the following:

- 1) As a volunteer of Kids of Growth, do you agree to observe and abide by all the church policies regarding working in ministries with children and youth? ____ Yes ____ No
- 2) Do you understand and agree to observe the Two-Adult Rule at all times? ____ Yes ____ No
- 3) Have you been trained in the Safe Sanctuary program and agree to abide by its dictates, expectations, and requirements? ____ Yes ____ No
- 4) Do you agree to promptly report to your supervisor any observance, awareness or suspicion of abusive or inappropriate behavior as defined in your training? ____ Yes ____ No

I have read this Covenant/ Kids of Growth Policies and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date Completed Training: _____

