

VOLUNTEER POLICY & PROCEDURE

At Cornerstone our desire is to partner with families in raising children that love God and love others. We know this is no small task, so together we work to create space for our children to encounter Jesus through God's Big Story and step into their role in it. We give space for the Spirit to meet us as we laugh, explore, grow, love and learn alongside one another.

Cornerstone is committed to providing a safe, secure and nurturing environment for our kids to learn and grow. Our top priority is the safety and protection of our children. We work to create an environment where children are fully known and fully loved by our team of leaders and develop friendships with other Cornerstone kids. We create this environment through not only implementing the policies and procedures laid out below, but also in fostering a community that is educated, transparent and empowered around the topic of sexual assault and prevention.

We recognize that formal and written policies and procedures help prevent the opportunity for abuse to occur. These policies and procedures are implemented for the protection of our children, youth, employees, volunteers and church community as a whole. Cornerstone has established the following policies and procedures to be implemented by all those employed by or volunteering in service of the church. These guidelines apply to all Cornerstone staff, pastors, recognized leaders and volunteers working with children birth-18 years of age who participate in the events and activities provided by or sponsored through Cornerstone Church.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Serve Together-

- For the protection of you and Cornerstone's children, there must always be two unrelated workers (at least one being an adult volunteer) present in any room where there are children. If the volunteers are related (parent/child or husband/wife) an additional volunteer must be present at all times.
- **Never be alone with a child.** Do everything possible to never place yourself in a position where you are alone with a single child.
- If this situation does arise, make every effort to keep doors open and another volunteer nearby.

Appropriate/Inappropriate Affection

- Cornerstone is committed to creating a safe and nurturing environment for our children that protects them from abuse and adults from misunderstandings. Stating which behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate means (1) decisions are not left up to the individual, (2) allows volunteers to comfortably show positive affection, and (3) helps identify individuals who are not maintaining safe boundaries with children.
- **Appropriate Affection-** Love and affection are part of life together. Some positive and appropriate forms of affection include:
 - Brief Hugs
 - Pats on the head, shoulder or back
 - Handshakes, high-fives or fist-bumps
 - Verbal praise
 - Putting arm around shoulders
 - Holding hands while walking with a small child
 - Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children
 - Holding hands during prayer
 - Bending down or sitting to meet a child at eye level
 - Gently holding a child's shoulders to redirect behavior
 - Holding a preschool/nursery-age child when crying
 - A child under 4 may sit in a volunteer's lap for a few minutes and then be moved to a seat beside the volunteer.
- **Inappropriate Affection-** The following forms of "affection" are unacceptable in the church ministry setting.
 - Embracing a child for extended amounts of time
 - Kissing
 - Holding children over 4 years old on the lap

- Holding or carrying a child over 4 years old who is not in need of physical help
- Touching bottoms, chests or genital areas, other than for appropriate diapering, toileting or dressing
- Showing affection to a child in an isolated area
- Caressing knees or legs
- Wrestling and/or tickling
- Any type of massage by an adult to a child or child to an adult
- Any form of unwanted affection
- Snapping bras, giving wedgies or similar touch of underwear where or not it is covered by other clothings
- Occupying a bed with a child
- Private gifts of money or toys directly to a child

Bathroom/Diapering Policy

- **Diaper Changing-**

- Only trained female adult volunteers may change diapers.
- All children wearing diapers should routinely be changed mid-morning in addition to any other needs that arise.
- Gloves are provided in an effort to eliminate the transfer of germs. A disposable glove needs to be worn on the hand you will wipe with and thrown away after each diaper change.
- Please wash hands or use sanitizer after every change.
- Never move away from the changing table without taking the child with you.
- There must be two people present when changing diapers.
- Diapers must be changed with a paper towel under the child.
- Make sure to put on an "I've Been Changed" sticker on the child's new diaper.

- **Preschool Bathroom Policies-**

- An adult female volunteer will escort the child to the bathroom. **Student volunteers may not escort children to the bathroom.**
- When you are leaving the classroom notify the hall monitor or another available volunteer that you are taking a child to the bathroom.
- If more than one child needs to go, have them wait outside the bathroom, only allowing one child in the bathroom at a time.
- The adult volunteer will stay outside the bathroom door unless child asks for help.
- If assistance is needed the volunteer should offer necessary assistance with the door open, but not linger in the bathroom. If help with wiping is needed, talk with the child about what they are doing.

- **Elementary Bathroom Policies-**

- If an elementary child needs to use the bathroom you may let them go to the restroom alone, but monitor them from the doorway of the classroom or notify a hall monitor so they can monitor the child.
- If the child needs help, the female hall monitor will assist. **Never escort a child to the bathroom alone.** Adults are to stay outside the restroom when an older child is using it.

Child Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

- To insure the safety of our children, parents are to personally drop off and pick up children from their classrooms. Children can only be released to an adult or older sibling (middle school and older).
- Only individuals with a security tag are allowed into our children's area. All adults entering our children's area must present their security tag to our hall monitor.
- We use a security tagging system for babies through 5th grade such that each child can be easily identified with their parent and, in case of an emergency, the parents can be paged in the main service.
- We use a two part name tag system. One tag is attached to the child, and the other is to be taken by the parent. Each tag has a unique number and the parent must have the matching tag in order to pick up their child.

VOLUNTEER POLICIES

Volunteer Application Process

- All persons volunteering to work with children at Cornerstone are required to go through an application process. No person will be accepted for volunteering before their application has been received and reviewed.
- The application process used to screen volunteers and staff is:
 1. All persons interested in volunteering to work with children are asked to first attend Cornerstone for a minimum of 6 months to get to know and establish a relationship with our community.
 2. Then the interested individual will meet with the Children's pastor to get to know their story, their past experience with children and their reasoning for wanting to get involved with our Cornerstone kids.
 3. They will then be asked to fill out and sign our Volunteer Application Form online. All online applications utilize electric signatures for agreement to terms.
 4. As part of this application, each person will provide 3 references that can speak to the individuals character and ability to work with children. One of these references must be a Cornerstone leader or a ministry leader from a previous church.
 5. Once the application is reviewed then the individual will submit a request for a State-wide and National criminal and sex offender background check.
 6. Once approved, the individual will meet with the Children's Pastor and be trained on and provided a copy of this policy as well as our Cornerstone Leadership Covenant and will be required to sign both.
 7. The new volunteer will then be issued a name tag and set up on the scheduling system.
- The information obtained from these forms/background checks will remain confidential.
- Background checks will be rerun on each volunteer every 2 years.
- A criminal background check showing any history of violent behavior or child sexual abuse is an immediate disqualifier for volunteering with children.

Volunteer Training Process-

- Once volunteers have completed the application process they will attend a training meeting prior to beginning service. This training will be provided by a Cornerstone Children's Ministry staff.
- The initial training will cover all the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook as well as training on the curriculum and the Cornerstone Leadership

Covenant. Should the need arise supplemental training will be offered and may be required.

- There will also be various mandatory trainings for the volunteer team at large throughout the year.

Volunteer Age Requirements-

- Teachers and leaders in our ministry must be at least 18 years of age (unless the children's pastor deems a younger individual fit).
- Youth may serve as Jr. Assistants once they are 12 years of age. There must be one grade level gap in-between youth assistants and the children they are working with.
- Age requirements are subject to change based on ministry staff approval.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting-

- The following are guidelines for reporting child abuse and neglect, taken from the Colorado Statute 19-3-304 (<http://lpdirect.net/casb/crs/19-3-304.html>) and Department of Education.
- Any persons in a position of trust, which includes adults working with children or youth in a church ministry, believing that there has been any form of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect by any paid staff, volunteer or parent against a child or youth are required to report to the authorities. By law any persons in a position of trust are required to report their suspicion.
- **As a rule, when in doubt, report.** Reporting is anonymous and an investigation will take place. Failure to report can result in a criminal or civil liability.
- Volunteers/staff who know or reasonably suspect an incident of abuse and/or neglect or who observe abuse/neglect or who have an incident reported to them should:
 - Remain calm. Assure the child/youth that telling was the right thing to do. As much as possible, put the child at ease and let him/her know that this concern will be addressed. Do not question or interview the child/youth. This is an investigation procedure to be completed only by trained professionals.
 - Immediately document as much factual information as possible. Physical indicators, behavioral indicators, comments made by child, etc.
 - Following documentation, report immediately to any Cornerstone staff member who will, jointly with the individual making the report, report to the Department of Human Services. The report will be made together to the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-844-CO-4-KIDS (1-844-264-5437). All calls are confidential and will be routed to the county where a child resides. If it is an emergency or you are witnessing a child in a life-threatening situation, call 911 immediately.

- The senior pastor will then be notified and will make the Elder and Executive Team aware of the situation. If the accused person is one of the above mentioned staff, the reporting staff person must report the suspected abuse to one of the Elders who will, jointly with the individual making the report, report to the Department of Human Services.
- Do not notify the alleged offender of the allegation. Allow the pastoral staff, leadership team and law enforcement to make decisions around appropriate notifications.
- **Colorado Statutory Definitions of Child Abuse**
 - "Abuse" or "child abuse or neglect" according to Colorado's Title 19 Children's Code 19-1-103 means an act or omission in one of the following categories that threatens the health or welfare of a child:
 - Physical: Any case in which a child exhibits evidence of skin bruising, bleeding, malnutrition, failure to thrive, burns, fracture of any bone, subdural hematoma, soft tissue swelling, or death and either: Such condition or death is not justifiably explained; the history given concerning such condition is at variance with the degree or type of such condition or death; or the circumstances indicate that such condition may not be the product of an accidental occurrence;
 - Sexual: Any case in which a child is subjected to sexual assault or molestation, sexual exploitation, or prostitution.
 - Neglect: Any case in which a child is a child in need of services because the child's parents, legal guardian, or custodian fails to take the same actions to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision that a prudent parent would take.
 - Emotional: Any case in which a child is subjected to emotional abuse. As used in this subparagraph (IV), "emotional abuse" means an identifiable and substantial impairment of the child's intellectual or psychological functioning or development or a substantial risk of impairment of the child's intellectual or psychological functioning or development.
- **Common Physical and Behavioral Indicators**
 - **Physical Abuse Indicators-**
 - Suspicious wounds, such as surface injuries, the imprint of an instrument, burns, wrapping or bondage injuries, and unusual bruising patterns that appear on areas of the skin that are less likely to be bruised accidentally.
 - Multiple wounds in different stages of healing.
 - Bruises in clustered patterns.
 - Suspicious fractures (especially to the nose or face).
 - Overall appears to be in poor health.

- The child isn't able to tell you how they got injured, or their story is not believable in relation to the injury.
- The child may be either aggressive or withdrawn.
- The child is jumpy, on edge, or fearful.
- The child seems overly eager to please adults or wary of adults.
- Child seems very afraid to go home or frightened of their parents.
- The child seems very afraid of getting in trouble.
- **Sexual Abuse Indicators-**
 - Pain, itching, bleeding, swelling, or bruising in the genital or anal area.
 - Blood in the child's underwear.
 - Frequent bladder infections.
 - STDs
 - Pregnancy in pre-teen girls.
 - The child complains about headaches and sickness.
 - Sudden change in the child's normal behavior, starts acting different.
 - Depression or suicidal, running away.
 - Regression to more childlike behavior.
 - Changes in relationships to adults, such as becoming more clingy or more avoidant.
 - Lower school engagement and lower achievement.
 - Exhibits sexually provocative behavior or becomes promiscuous.
 - The child has or talks about friends that are unusually older.
 - The child talks about having sex or being touched.
 - The child is extremely avoidant of undressing or physical contact at school.
- **Neglect Indicators-**
 - Gaunt, underweight, bloated stomach, pale, flaky skin.
 - Unattended health concerns or medical problems, such as skin infections or coughs.
 - Poor hygiene, body odor, or unkempt appearance.
 - Inappropriate clothes based on the weather (e.g. doesn't own a jacket in a snowy climate)
 - Lack of supervision or abandonment.
 - Fatigue; falls asleep in class or seems listless.
 - Clinginess
 - Depression
 - Begs and steals (food or property).
 - Says there is no one home to take care of them.

SUNDAY GATHERINGS

Here is a typical Sunday routine for those serving in Cornerstone Kids ministry.

Before Class

- Plan to arrive at your classroom 15 minutes prior to the service of which you are scheduled to serve.
- Put on your nametag. All volunteers are required to wear a nametag while serving. These allow our parents to get to know you, and know you are a part of our ministry team.
- Check to ensure that your room is in order and your needed materials are in place.
- Prepare to receive students immediately. Two volunteers (at least one being an adult) are required in order for you to begin receiving children into your classroom. Let a Children's Ministry staff know if you are alone.

During Class

- Warmly greet each child that enters into your classroom. Get to know their name if you don't already.
- Guide your class through the lesson. Remind children when necessary that we are a part of a family and so treat each other with respect, so listening respectfully to leaders and other children is expected.
- If a child becomes ill or does not stop crying after 10 minutes you should inform a staff/hall monitor who will take immediate steps to contact the parent.
- If child needs to use the restroom or have their diaper changed, please see those policies stated above in the "Safety & Security" section.
- To prevent illness, please be sure to wash hands after a diaper change, after accompanying a child to the restroom, and before handling food. Make sure children wash their hands after using the restroom, using a tissue, and before eating. Hand Sanitizer is located in each classroom.
- If a child puts a toy in their mouth, please set aside to be cleaned.
- Before giving out snacks to your children, please take note if there are any allergy specifications on the child's nametag. Each classroom is stocked with alternative snacks.
- **Class Size Limits**
 - Our goal is to strive, whenever possible, for the following ratios of adults to children:

0 through 24 months	-	1 adult to 3 children
2 years to 4 years	-	1 adult to 5 children
4 years to 6 years	-	1 adult to 7 children

Kinder to 5th grade - 1 adult to 10 children

- **Children's Behavior and Conduct-**

- We strive to show God's love to children in all situations including the way we engage in various behaviors. We practice a grace-based approach that seeks to do more than modify behavior. We seek to transform the heart and mind.
- All behavior is a form of communication, therefore it is important to listen to what a child is saying through their actions.
- The following are some recommended guidelines for engaging children whose conduct is disruptive, disrespectful, or dangerous.
 1. Re-direct - Using a positive tone, re-direct the child's interest, if possible.
 2. Affirm - At every opportunity, affirm acceptable behavior.
 3. Give Perspective - Seek to understand the child's perspective. Ask the child to use their words to describe why they are behaving poorly. Help the child see the situation from the other's point of view (especially when an act of violence has occurred against another child).
 4. Get Help - If a child becomes belligerent or fails to respond to simple directions by you, contact a staff member or hall monitor immediately. That adult will deal with the child so you can focus on your class. As a volunteer, you are always to be a child's safe place. It is never your role to use physical, emotional, or psychological force on a child unless they are a danger to themselves or others. Never touch or speak to a child in a disrespectful manner.
 5. Pray - Praying for the child or class in the moment will aid in defusing the situation and allowing the Spirit to lead you as you handle the behavior.

After Class

- Verify parent security tags and remove the tag from the child. No child is allowed to leave unless picked up by a parent or older sibling (middle school and up).
- If parents have not arrived after 10 minutes, escort the child to their parents or hall monitor.
- Put supplies away and make sure there is enough for the next service.
- Clean your rooms. Spraying down tables with sanitizing spray.
- Once children have left, following the last service spray the following with Steramine: all toys, counters, tabletops and door handles.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Sickness/Illness-

- If you or your child is sick, please stay home and get well. Call your ministry lead as soon as possible.
- We ask that parents keep their child home if they have any of the following symptoms/or illnesses:
 - Fever
 - Runny Nose (anything other than clear)
 - Cold symptoms
 - Persistent Cough
 - Questionable rashes
 - Diarrhea
 - Lice
 - Pink Eye
 - Active Chicken Pox, Measles, Mumps
- Please do not accept any children into your class with these symptoms. If a child becomes ill during class, contact a staff member or hall monitor. They will page the parent to pick up the child.

First Aid

- If a child needs simple first aid, a first aid kit is located under the bathroom sink. For slight scrapes there are bandaids in each classroom. There are ice packs in the front office refrigerator.
- If, however, a child needs advanced medical attention, consider the following steps.
 1. Stay calm.
 2. One volunteer should stay with the child to provide comfort. The other volunteer should notify the staff member or hall monitor and return to the class immediately. The staff member/hall monitor will page the parents.
 3. Call 911 if immediate attention is necessary.

Reporting Accidents

- Accidents include, but are not limited to incidents involving: cuts, bruises, concussions, sprains, broken bones, and allergic reactions.
- If a child is involved in an accident, an Accident Report must be filled out. These forms may be found in each classroom. The form must be signed by the witnessing volunteer and the parent.

- The witnessing volunteer should notify the parent(s) of any accident as well as a staff member.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I acknowledge that I have received, read, understand and agree to the Child Protection Policy of Cornerstone Church. Further, I understand and agree to the procedures for reporting inappropriate behavior and suspected abuse.

I agree that it is my responsibility to read and comply with any future updates of the Child Protection Policy or the reporting procedures.

I understand the procedures for reporting reasonable suspicion of and/or allegations of misconduct and agree to pursue a culture that protects children and youth.

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge I have not been accused of, been investigated for, or prosecuted for instances involving any form of abuse or inappropriate behavior with a minor.

I agree not to engage in behavior that is abusive to a minor.

I further agree that as an individual who serves in a position of trust in ministry to children/youth, I will not tolerate the physical, emotional, or sexual abuse or neglect of a child/youth.

I agree to immediately report any reasonable suspicion of, or disclosure of, inappropriate behavior between adults and minors, or between an older youth and a younger child, to the appropriate leadership immediately and cooperate in helping assist the children and youth of our community to remain safe.

Printed Name

Applicant Signature

Date