

VALLEY KIDS TEAM HANDBOOK 2021-22

TIMES
OF
refreshing
SHALL
COME FROM



THE
presence
OF
THE *Lord*

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Welcome!

Welcome to the Valley Kids Ministry Team for the 2021-22 year! Through all the changes we've been through in our society in the last few years, many around us could feel weary or disconnected, even some of the kids. So, as we start this year, let the word **refresh** stick in your heart and mind! The Lord wants to refresh us and help us bring refreshment to others. As you interact with others on this team, you have the chance to bring refreshment to them, just as Paul desired to visit the Romans, trusting he would be refreshed by their company. (Romans 15:32). You also have opportunity to refresh the children and their parents as you spend time with them.

So, how do you refresh others? You do so by being refreshed first and then letting the Holy Spirit use you to pour out His refreshing through encouraging words, acts of kindness, imparting truth, being a true friend, etc. How do you get refreshed yourself? Here are a few key verses that give us insight on how that happens:

Psalm 19:7(NIV) The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple."

Spending time in God's Word (the law of the Lord) will refresh our soul. It is clearly stated as a promise! Try to find time where you are alone with God and sitting in his presence, and you will feel that refreshment!

Psalm 23:3(NIV) ...he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.

This famous chapter reminds us that the Lord is our Shepherd. He will refresh us as he leads into green pastures and by still waters. He promises to care for our soul if we let him lead us. Follow His leading when he is trying to take you to a place for rest, and there you will find refreshment. It could be by the ocean, at a library, or next to a fireplace. The Lord knows your heart and what will refresh you!

*Proverbs 11:25(NIV) A generous person will prosper; whoever **refreshes** others will be **refreshed**.*

One other way to be refreshed is to refresh others! As you minister to the kids each week and pour out your love on them, you will find that you are refreshed. And as you seek to refresh others on our team, you will realize the promise in this verse!

What a blessing for us to be able to help kids come to know and follow Jesus! And as we are working to accomplish that mission, we will find we are refreshed! Have fun along the way, and may you find great times of refreshing throughout this year!



Prayer Is the Foundation

We value prayer as the foundation of our planning and preparation, connecting us with the will of God. However, prayer is not just part of preparing; it is also the work of the ministry. As we pray, the Holy Spirit is working in our hearts and the hearts of the children and their parents, protecting us from things unseen.

There are many things to pray about related to your ministry to children. Here are a few things to remember to pray for:

- Preparation of your heart for ministry
- Each child by name
- Parents of the children
- Good relationships between all the children
- Other team members

Also, don't forget to pray with the children, for those of you working with kids old enough to pray! Make time in each class to teach them how to pray and praise God!

Working on a Ministry Team

The most important tool in the hand of God for spiritually influencing a child is not the curriculum, not the building, not the snacks, but you, a member of the ministry team! Although the parents have the greatest influence in their child's life, you can have a huge impact on a child by the way you let the love of Christ come through you!

It is our hope that as you connect with the Lord, you will exhibit Christlike attributes such as: a sincere love, commitment to your role, speaking and acting in encouraging and respectful ways, and being prepared, teachable, quick to forgive, and one who worships regularly.

Remember, you don't do ministry alone! You are part of the larger Valley Kids Ministry Team, formed of many smaller teams. Each role on each team is vital! When we all do our part, we function together to carry out God's ministry to the children. Here are some ways to be a good team member and fulfill your role:

- **Let others get to know you**, especially your team leader or the staff person you are working alongside. The role of your team leader is to lead your team. He or she has been given authority and training by the Valley Kids Staff. He or she is there to encourage you and your team to communicate with one another, and to grow to be

more mature Christians and more skillful ministry servants. In some cases, a staff person will serve in this role.

- **Attend all meetings and fellowship opportunities.**

Throughout the year, there will be trainings, fellowship, or informational meetings. Be sure to make your best effort to attend.

- **Respond to communication.**

Most communication happens via email, but sometimes we use texts, calls, postcards, or handouts. Be sure to let your team leader know what the easiest way is to reach you, and then respond quickly.

- **Give advance notice when you can't fulfill your role.**

If you will be unavailable or are sick, please notify your team leader, or if you don't have a team leader, your staff person. He or she will look for a substitute for you. Be sure you have your team leader's contact information.

Creating the Right Environment

We want our church environment to be safe, accepting, caring, and supportive for the children and the team of workers. We are referring to the environment both in the church building and during any group outing. There are many factors that help create the proper environment.

Set the spiritual tone for your classroom or work area by praying when you arrive and asking God's presence to fill the place, asking for hearts to be receptive and asking for God's guidance as you carry out your role for the day. Playing praise music is a great help to set the right atmosphere.

To ensure we have safe adults who will help set the right tone, we require all rooms to have two ministry team members who have completed the KidSafe Process and who are wearing the appropriate nametag. If you are the only one in a room, join a neighboring class.



Adult KidSafe Process

- Complete a KidSafe application online at <http://avon.valleycommunity.cc/faith-steps/serve-others/opp-detail/430735/kidsafe-process/> including your references' email addresses. Read through Policies and Procedures and our Statement of Faith.
- Complete the Active Screening Faith background check. An email from Secure Search will be sent to your email address. Please complete in a timely manner.
- Once both of the above are completed, someone from the Valley Kids office will contact you to make an appointment to discuss your testimony and interests/gifts for serving in Valley Kids. The next step to get connected with the ministry will be provided at that time.
- Watch the MinistrySafe Sexual Abuse Awareness Training video and complete test.

Teen KidSafe Process

To be a teen with a safety approved status, he or she must:

- Be at least 16 and be considered exceptionally mature by the staff person.
 - Have completed the KidSafe Teen Application.
 - Have two references checked.
 - Interview with a Valley Kids staff member.
 - Have parent approval sheet signed.
 - Watch the MinistrySafe Sexual Awareness Video and complete test.
- To apply go to <http://avon.valleycommunity.cc/faith-steps/serve-others/opp-detail/430735/kidsafe-process/>

Keep the environment emotionally safe by demonstrating to all children that they are accepted and loved, and by facilitating kindness and relationship building among the children. Be sure to demonstrate kindness and gentleness in your speech. ***Kids don't care how much you know until they know how much you care!***

Classroom Expectations

Respect each other, teachers, and property.

Listen. Be a good listener and don't interrupt.

Join. Take part in class activities.

Set classroom expectations to maintain respect and order in your room. If you do have behavioral challenges, follow the guidelines below:

Guidelines for Behavioral Challenges

- a. **Pray** and ask God for wisdom.
- b. **Remind** the child of the expectation and if necessary, **redirect** his/her actions.
- c. If the child continues the action after another correction, tell the child he/she will have to take a **timeout** to think about the action. Sit the child down in a different part of the room and ask him/her to ask God to help him/her have self-control.
- d. If the child is continually not cooperating after correction, have the other teacher or helper **call the cell phone of the CM staff person on call at that hour**. Cell phone numbers should be listed in the class notebook or folder.
- e. **Partner with the parent(s)**. Tell the parent what happened during class that day. The teacher could say, "I really enjoy your daughter in class. I have noticed I am having a challenge in (this particular area) and I would like to partner with you so that your child has the best possible experience in class. This is the behavior I am observing (describe). Do you have ideas for me that you think would work? Will you pray with me on this? Thanks for your help!" Depending on the situation and the timing of the ministry, this conversation might also work in a phone call.
- f. If a particular child continues to be challenging, **consult your team leader**. If further resources are needed, the team leader will be in contact with the Director of Children's Ministry.
- g. Teachers, please **avoid talking about a particular child** with whom you are having a challenge. Rather, be proactive. If you feel unsure in handling the situation, talk with your team leader in private (not in the hallway where a conversation could be misinterpreted).

Keep the physical environment safe by following the instructions below:

Maintain the Appearance of Your Classroom.

Be sure to have a clean and child-friendly environment as it communicates to children and parents that we highly value them. Try to make your room a great place to be just by looking around.

- Bulletin boards and tack strips are mounted in the classrooms for this purpose.
- Please do **not** use thumbtacks on the walls, only on the bulletin boards. Sticky tack is available in the Resource Room for you to hang things on the wall.
- For displays outside the classrooms, there are bulletin boards outside each classroom doorway. Please contact Carroll Cyr, our Valley Kids Coordinator at 860.673.6826 x117 if you have any questions about the bulletin boards.
- If you feel you need additional space after these resources have been used, please contact your team leader to discuss your needs.

Have Clean-up Routines

We expect that a clean-up routine will be utilized each time that the classroom is used. It is a blessing to have a great facility available for ministry with children and families and we want to teach children to be good stewards of this resource. We want to be sure that the rooms are cleaner when we leave than when we arrived.

At the end of each class time, make sure that:

- The tables are cleaned off, all glue or sticky stuff is wiped off.
- Toys are put away and supplies are returned to the closet or Resource Room.
- Most classes have a bin labeled for storing supplies/books in the closet. Please use these bins to make the rooms and closets organized and user-friendly.
- No food or drinks are left on the floor or tables. Sweepers are located in the Resource Room, upstairs kitchen, and various closets in rooms.
- If you are the last class in the room, please make sure chairs are stacked against the wall, windows are closed, and lights are turned off.
- If you are using paint, playdough and other messy (but fun to use) items, please use common sense along with the following procedures:
 - Plan ahead to make sure you have smocks for the children and materials for covering the tables and carpet before your ministry begins.
 - Please cover tables and use plastic tarps for the carpet below the table.
 - If the carpet has visible evidences of the messy items—such as popcorn or sawdust from a project, use a vacuum so these items do not get ground into the carpet.

Know Who Is in Your Room

- Be sure you have an accurate attendance sheet and are always aware of the children in your room. Maintaining accurate attendance records promotes safety and allows us to plan for growth, as well as follow up with children.
- Attendance sheets will be printed out after kids have checked in via our computer system. The sheets will be delivered to you at the start of each ministry time.
- Be sure you and all children are wearing nametags that match the attendance sheets.
- Don't switch kids or let parents switch kids to rooms other than what is printed on the child's name tag.

Follow Proper Check Out Procedures

- At check-out time, check parent's label and see that the alpha numeric code matches the child's name tag or the number on the attendance sheet.
- Never release a child without the parent having the proper label! If they have lost their label, send them to the Check-in Desk to get a new one. Do NOT release the child to a sibling under the age of 18.
- Have parent sign next to their child's name.

Maintain Proper Bathroom Protocol

When a child is uncomfortable because they have to go the bathroom, their learning can be disrupted. They want to feel it is okay and safe to go the bathroom. Children should be able to go to the bathroom whenever they ask. If a child repeatedly asks during one class, pull them

aside to see if there is a problem or if they are just trying to roam the halls. Be sure to ensure they come back in a proper amount of time.

Procedure for Preschool Children

- 2-and 3-year-olds may need more assistance, so always leave the door open if you need to go into the bathroom with a child.
- The child should always try to toilet himself/herself—this includes wiping and pulling up underwear.
- If a 4 or 5-year-old asks for help, the teacher may help with outer clothing.
- In the case of an accident where the child does not get to the bathroom in time, contact parents for assistance. (Nursery and Preschool rooms are equipped with extra clothes in the closet.)

Procedure for Children Kindergarten through Forth Grade

- The bathrooms for school-aged children are in the hallways near the classrooms.
- Dismiss child from the classroom and stand in the hallway, keeping bathroom door in sight, and wait for the child's safe return.
- Stay there with bathroom door in view until child returns to classroom.

Follow Snack Guidelines

- Each time a class meets, the teachers are to check each child's name tag and attendance sheets for allergies, being careful not to serve food to which a child may be allergic.
- For nursery classes, see the nursery section regarding snacks.
- If you do bring in a snack, remember Valley Kids Ministry is a ***nut-free environment***. Peanuts and nut products can be fatal to children with peanut and/or tree nut allergies. We maintain a nut-free environment in Valley Kids which means that no peanuts of any kind will be used in snacks or project materials.
- When a special snack is being provided, please put the orange "Special Snack" sign on the classroom door or the note board outside of your door, to indicate there is a special snack that the parents need to be made aware of.

Follow Health Guidelines

- Children with allergies or special health concerns must have a health form. Parents will complete this health form and turn it in to the administrative assistant. If the child requires an EpiPen, the parents will provide the form, the permission slips and the EpiPen in a Ziplock bag. See example form at the back of this handbook.
- Infectious diseases can be spread easily among young children because they mouth objects as part of their developmental learning stages, do not have control of body fluids, and are in close contact with children and adults for long periods of time. Infection control practices can help protect the spread of all infections, whether they are spread by respiratory, intestinal, direct contact, or bloodborne routes.
 - No one with any infectious illness may attend classes.
 - **Children with a short-term infectious illness, or any symptom of illness such as fever, sniffles, cough, diarrhea, skin eruption or**

bloody sore, or obvious malaise indicating a possible onset of illness should be kept home until fully recovered.

Ensure Playground Safety

Be sure to check with your staff member for specific COVID guidelines according to our church guidelines.

The playground is a great environment to connect with the children and build relationships with them. Use extra precaution when on the playground and follow the guidelines below:

- Leave a note on the doorway of your classroom indicating that your class will be on the playground.
- During regularly scheduled class times, limit time on playground to ten minutes.
- Secure the key from your team leader or staff and inform him or her that your class will be going to the playground. Be sure to return the key when finished on playground.
- Be sure to enforce proper use of equipment and don't allow roughhousing. For example, no climbing on the roofs of the little buildings or letting big kids on equipment that is too small for them.

Emergency Response Guidelines

If there is an emergency, such as an injury or sick child, please follow the Emergency Response Guidelines provided in the back of this handbook and those provided in the Child Protection Training video. If there is any question regarding care for a serious injury, call 911 immediately.

After an accident happens, such as a child bitten by another child, a scraped knee, or some other injury, please complete an Incident Report Form and return it to the Director of Valley Kids. Forms can be found in a plastic wall hanger in the hallways or obtained from a team leader.

Evacuation Procedure

For emergencies where evacuation of the building is necessary, emergency exit routes are posted in the classrooms. Teachers have the responsibility of being familiar with the emergency exit routes. A practice evacuation will occur at least once a year. Follow the guidelines below during an evacuation.

- Calmly gather all children:
 - In the nursery, use the evacuation cribs and have the staff hold all remaining children in their arms.
 - For preschool classes, use the ropes to help the children stay together.
 - For elementary-aged children, have them line up.
- The designated teacher/leader should take the attendance list and count all children as they exit the room.

- The designated teacher/leader should check room, if safe to do so, to make sure all children are accounted for, take attendance list, and shut door of room upon exiting.
- Follow posted fire evacuation plan to nearest exit. Keep in mind that if the exit is blocked you may need to seek an alternate route. Please go to the designated spot on the fire evacuation route plan.
- Once outside and away from the building, the teacher/leader should take attendance once again to ensure all children are accounted for.
- Please keep the children with you and ask parents to wait to sign them out until the “all clear” has been given and it is safe to re-enter the building.
- Should it not be possible to re-enter the building, parents will be asked to sign their children out before taking them.

For fire drills, hand bells will be used instead of the actual fire alarm. The bells will ring at the scheduled times. You will be notified ahead of these times.

- Go to grassy areas and hold up class sign when all kids are accounted for.
- Stand quietly until the bell rings again to signal that you may return to the building.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse As someone who works with children, it is important to be familiar with signs of abuse. There are four types of abuse. Following are the definitions of child abuse as defined by *The National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse*:

- **Physical Abuse** – Non-accidental injury, which may include beatings, violent shaking, human bites, strangulation, suffocation, poisoning or burns. The results may be bruises and welts, broken bones, scars, permanent disfigurement, long lasting psychological damage, serious internal injuries, brain damage or death.
- **Neglect** – The failure to provide a child with basic needs including food, clothing, education, shelter and medical care; also abandonment and inadequate supervision.
- **Sexual Abuse** – The sexual exploitation of a child by an older person as in rape, incest, fondling of the genitals, exhibitionism or pornography.
- **Emotional Maltreatment** – A pattern of behavior that attacks a child’s emotional development and sense of self-worth, such as constant criticizing, belittling, insulting, manipulation; also, providing no love, support, or guidance.

In the event you suspect abuse of a child:

- Immediately or within six hours, notify a Valley Kids Staff person
- Do not interview the child regarding the suspected abuse.
- Do not discuss with or notify other volunteers.
- Do not approach the parents.
- Valley Kids Staff will interview the person who suspects abuse has occurred and complete a confidential report.
- Valley Kids Staff will consult senior leadership regarding further action.

Planning the Ministry Time

Since we have the children for such a short time each week, we want to make each moment count! It is our desire to see **Scripture-based, creative and fun learning** that challenges the children to think and grow in their understanding of God's view of the world, and teaches them how to listen to God and how to live as a disciple of Jesus, including being able to share the *good news* with one another, give of their resources, and use their gifts to serve. Here are things to consider when planning the ministry time.

Curriculum

Remember, you are a curriculum, as kids watch you. So, preparing your heart is key and preparing in advance helps the lesson come from your heart! Secondly, keep the Word of God at the central part of each class, but be sure to use a sense of humor and activities that engage the children. Follow the provided curriculum as it has age appropriate ideas. Use the time each week to go over the memory verse. Distribute take-home sheets to each child and encourage them to work on memorizing the verses at home and to discuss their lesson with their parents.

Parents

Parents are the primary ones to help their children come to know and follow Jesus. They have their children all the time, while we only get to be with them a few hours a week. Therefore, it is really important that you get to know the parents, make them feel welcome, ask for their feedback and keep in good communication with them about what is happening with the class and their child.

Offering

To help children learn stewardship of their gifts, we collect an offering each Sunday in the preschool classrooms and as appropriate in the elementary classes. A special container is provided to collect the offering that children give. The teacher in the last hour should bring the offering bucket to the Valley Kids offices to give to a staff person.

Resources

Be creative and make use of the resources we have available. There is a great **Resource Room** with many wonderful supplies. You are welcome to use any of the supplies in this room for your class. If you'd like us to check for supplies in advance, complete the appropriate form and place it on your attendance sheet at the end of the class.

YouTube and other online visual and audio resources such as RightNow Media, along with DVDs, can be a valuable tools to reinforce Bible lessons with children. Be sure the material is

age-appropriate. You may sign up for an account with RightNow Media by contacting Mary Swank at mswank@valleycommunity.cc.

There is Audio Visual (A/V) equipment located in each classroom. This includes a large screen TV, DVD machine, and cable-ready connection. The cords are found in the classroom closet. Instruction sheets for using this equipment can be found in a pocket holder in the Resource Room.

Holidays

Halloween

Some view this holiday as innocent fun, a time when kids dress up and get free candy. More often, decorations and activities connected with this tradition involve witches, devils, ghosts, black cats, and other modern evil characters associated with the Satanic realm, which must definitely be eliminated.

As an alternative, emphasize the harvest aspects of the season and autumn in general. Pumpkins, gourds, apples, leaves, corn husks, etc. are all a part of our celebration of harvest time and demonstrate the cycle of creation and the bounty provided by God. You can also discuss the roots of this holiday from a historical perspective. But please, do not decorate with Halloween decorations or celebrate it in any way at church.

Christmas

Our central focus must always be on the birth of Christ. Media stimuli are strong and can confuse children by presenting similar yet conflicting stories of Christmas. Celebration of this holiday must be designed so that the children we minister to may anticipate with joy and excitement the remembrance that God came in the form of a little child (much like the children themselves) to live among us, bringing salvation and new life.

Yet cultural traditions run deep. Views of Santa Claus vary from seeing him as a demonic competitor stealing Christmas from Christ, to a welcome friend who stimulates a child's imagination and only complements the message of Christmas. We do not intend to create an emotional issue causing controversy and forcing parents into pro or anti-Santa camps. That would only push Santa to become the central focus.

We have chosen to eliminate pictures of Santa, Rudolph, etc. from our rooms as well as teacher-initiated "Santa activities" but with the understanding that, should a child initiate conversation, suggest a song, or bring an object related to the secular celebration of Christmas, his or her input should be lovingly accepted but not dwelt upon.

Easter

The question of Easter and the Resurrection versus the Easter Bunny should be handled in a similar manner as Christmas and Santa.

Offsite Ministry

If you want to conduct ministry time off-site, follow the steps below:

- Contact the Director of Valley Kids Ministry to obtain approval for any off-site ministries, at least three weeks prior to event.
- Distribute Release of Liability forms (complete with information about your specific event) to the children (forms are available in the Resource Room by the copier).
 - a. Distribute Motor Vehicle Transportation forms to adults who will be driving and turn them in to the Valley Kids Ministry office one week prior to the event.
 - b. Teachers or chaperones for events are responsible for keeping the Release of Liability forms for each child with them during the off-site event. ***A child without a signed Release of Liability form will not be permitted to go to the event.***

Purchases

If you have to purchase something for your lesson, check with ministry staff or your team leader for approval, and be sure to submit a Request for Payment (RFP) form to your team leader or directly to the Valley Kids Ministry Department. If purchasing additional supplies is approved, we will reimburse you. Reimbursement is for Valley ministry-related expenses only.

To receive reimbursements, follow these steps:

- Save your original receipt. We cannot reimburse you without proof of your purchase. Get a copy of the church's tax-exempt form to use when purchasing taxable items.
- Receipts should be submitted no later than a month after a purchase has been made.
- Obtain a ***Request for Payment*** (RFP) form from a staff person or from the Resource Room plastic hanging bins.
 - a. Staple your receipt(s) to the RFP.
 - b. Write your name and address on the RFP in ink.
 - c. On the form, under Purpose, write in the ministry area (i.e. BLAST!, GEMS or Valley Kids Church, etc.) for which you've purchased resources along with other detailed information about the purchase. Enter the amount to be reimbursed.
 - d. Leave your completed form in one of the following places:
 - In the box marked *Caroll Cyr Valley Kids Coordinator* outside of the Valley Kids Coordinator's office next to the Resource Room.
 - In the church's mail room in Caroll Cyr's box.
 - e. Requests for Payment are due on Tuesdays. Checks are mailed on Friday.



Special Nursery Team Section

Discipline Procedures

Discipline means teaching, the very kind of teaching Jesus did with His disciples. The purpose of this teaching is to immediately stop inappropriate behavior (behavior that might hurt a child, destroy materials, or disrupt the group) and to help the child find a more appropriate way to behave.

Procedure:

- **Prevent Problems:** Set up a safe and trouble-free environment where young children can explore with as little restraint as possible. Put things out of reach (pocketbooks, pencils, personal items, etc.), keep cabinets latched, and remove unsafe, inappropriate, and broken toys/equipment.
- **Set Clear Limits:** Save the word "NO!" for when there is clear danger, or someone could get hurt. For example, if the child throws a toy at another child or, tries to hit or bite – say "NO!" When circumstances allow, you can say "no" but explain gently what the alternative behavior should be. For instance, you could say, "We do not throw food on the floor, please keep it on the table or in your cup." Another example is "That is not your cup. Please don't drink from it, you have your own cup to drink from."
- **Redirect Behavior:** Change activities/toys, to get the child excited about another toy if that is causing an issue. If it is an issue with another child, redirect the behavior by distracting the child and get them interested in a book, a toy, or playing an age-appropriate game with them.
- **Acknowledge Feelings:** Show the child or children you understand that they are hurt or have been hurt by someone else or feel sad.
- **Talk Through Problems:** Describe what you see and how the children are reacting as you help them solve the problem.
- **Unacceptable:** Discipline of babies and toddlers should never include any negative physical touching (spanking, slapping, swatting, tapping, shaking, or biting back). It never includes ridicule, sarcasm, threats, or withholding care from the child.
- **Inform Parents:** Parents love to know how their children were in the classroom and the nursery. It is important to give them feedback on any positive behaviors as they leave.

Staffing Reminders and Guidelines Policy

Here at Valley, we highly value our precious children. Our aim is to provide a safe and loving environment, so parents feel at ease about leaving their little ones in our care. Following these simple guidelines will reassure parents and promote a calm and peaceful atmosphere.

Procedure:

- Arrive 15 minutes before service/event/program starts.
- Put all personal belongings away in the cabinets and keep the countertops free of unnecessary clutter.
- Wear a nametag so parents can know your name and identify you as a nursery worker.

- Only those assigned to work in the nursery (names on white board) should be in the room. All nursery workers need to have been through the KidSafe process as well as Ministry Safe's Sexual Abuse Awareness Training
- Hot coffee/tea is discouraged. If it is a must, please use covered cups for your hot beverages.
- Check to be sure that the child has a nametag from the computer check-in system. If they do not, the parent must return to the computer kiosk to check them in. If the child is attending for the first time, please refer the parent to the Check-In Desk so that the child can be registered in the system.
- Children will only be released to the parent once the security sticker is presented. If the parent doesn't have their sticker they have to go to the Check-In Desk.
- Straighten up the rooms 15 minutes before parents arrive. This will help decrease the chaos of transition at pick-up-time.
- Wear shoes with low heels, dress comfortably and modestly. Avoid low-cut shirts, short skirts, and leggings or yoga pants unless worn under a long shirt. Please keep jewelry to a minimum.

Diaper Changing Policy

There should be two people in the room when changing occurs.

Procedure:

1. Wash hands and gather needed supplies (disposable diapers, wipes, gloves and a disposable liner) prior to placing the child on the changing table. Gloves are provided for the workers' protection and not as a replacement for hand washing.
2. Put disposable liner down and place child on liner. Talk to the child about what you are doing, stay close, and never turn away or leave them unattended.
3. Remove wet/soiled diaper and clean diaper area with disposable wipe going front to back. Place wipe in soiled diaper, wrapping diaper into bundle using the diaper tapes.
4. Nursery staff should not apply ointments and/or powders. Nursery staff is not expected to change non-disposable diapers.
5. Put clean diaper on, dress the child, and place him or her back in the play area.
6. Put dirty diaper in designated diaper container.
7. Wash hands in sink or use waterless soap product after handling each child.
8. There are stickers provided to indicate that a child was changed. You can place the sticker on the child's back or on the diaper bag.
9. If a child is in the nursery for both services, please be sure to check if they need a diaper change prior to parent pick-up.
10. After the last service, the walker nursery's diaper containers will be emptied, triple-bagged and left in the bathroom. Diaper containers will be cleaned, emptied, and changed by housekeeping staff during the week.
11. Extra diapers are located in the nurseries.

Toileting Toddlers and Preschoolers

1. Our walker nursery and two's room have their own bathrooms. Prop the bathroom door open.
2. Wait by the bathroom door.
3. Maintain a conversation with the child so he/she doesn't feel alone.
4. Assist potty training per parent instruction.
5. Encourage the child to wipe him/herself, support as needed making sure to use the gloves.
6. Assist the child with pulling up any underwear or outer clothing.
7. In the case of an accident where the child does not get to the bathroom in time, contact the parents for assistance.

Snack Guidelines

It is clearly a preference and decision made by parents that they choose when and what goes into their babies' mouths. It is our belief as nursery staff that we are here to serve the parents and follow their wishes as best we can.

Procedure:

- Please ask the parents at drop-off if their child can have a snack.
- Confirm any allergies, and if there are allergies, *Allergy* labels are available to place on child's back.
- Never give snacks to infants/walkers without the parent's permission.
- The nursery stocks Cheerios and Rice Chex (both are gluten free) and Goldfish. No juices are stocked.
- Label all bottles, cups and personal snacks.
- Extra sippy cups are available when forgotten.

Toys and Equipment Policy

Nursery equipment and play items frequently end up in babies' mouths. It is very important to clean and disinfect these items in order to prevent the transfer of germs.

All surfaces (swings, play equipment, tables and counters) that have been used will be cleaned at the end of nursery sessions or weekday childcare programs. Toys that have been used can be placed in a bin labeled "dirty" until ready to be cleaned.

Cleaning Procedures:

1. Small toys will be placed in the dirty toy bin to be washed with soap and water. After air drying, the toys will be sprayed with a child safe disinfectant/sanitizer. Once dry, the toys will be returned to the classroom.
2. Larger toys & equipment will be cleaned with soap and water and sprayed with a child safe disinfectant/sanitizer and allowed to dry for a few minutes before going back into the play area.
3. Snack areas, play tables, and diaper changing tables cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected/sanitizer.
4. If sheets, blankets, burp cloths, bibs or washcloths are used, please place them in the hamper to be laundered.

5. Team Members can remove inappropriate/broken/dirty toys & equipment from the play area. Please let the staff know that a toy needs to be removed.

Toys and equipment donations are welcome and a blessing to receive. Call the Nursery Coordinator at 860.673.6826 x124 to arrange for drop-off time and place. Items should be clean and in good condition. Stuffed animals are not accepted due to the difficulty of keeping them clean.

Moving Up Guidelines

The nursery is a busy place and it's always changing! As new babies are born, others begin to roll, creep, crawl, and finally walk. The nursery rooms are designed with toys/equipment appropriate for their development level. Readiness to move to the next room is determined by parents and the nursery staff.

Procedure:

- Children will move into the Walker Nursery when they master walking, if space is available.
- Moving to the two year old room is normally done in September (we follow the same guidelines used in many Connecticut preschools).



Appendix

- Emergency Response Practices
- VCBC Injury Response Guide
- Incident Report Form
- Valley Kids Health Form/ Health Information and EpiPen Policies
- Valley Kids Team Commitment Form

Valley Kids Emergency Response Reminders

We understand that you as teachers and helpers are not necessarily trained medical personnel, but we do want you to know some basic things to look for and do in the case of emergencies.

Weekly practices that help us be prepared:

1. Always carry your phone and know the cell phone number and location of each parent.
2. Familiarize yourself each week with the allergies or health concerns of each child. If a child has an EpiPen, be sure you have had a discussion with the parents and know what symptoms to look for in the case of a reaction.
3. Be sure you are aware of the location of the first aid kit.
4. When you go outside or away from the classroom, always take your clipboard and first aid kit.
5. Be sure you are maintaining classroom control and good supervision on the playground.
6. In the case of blood or bodily fluids, put on gloves and dispose of towels in separate plastic bag.
7. Always be prepared to tell the parent what has happened when an injury has occurred.

Know the general steps to follow in the case of the incidents below:

Falls (Minor) - Look for swelling and bruises. Call the staff on duty. Put ice pack on swelling. Call parent on their cell phone.

Falls (Major) - There should be an immediate response when a child falls. If you saw the fall, you will know how to report that to the parent. If you did not, ask the child what happened and where they are hurting.

- b) You should be observing and asking about possible head injury, broken bones, bleeding, severe pain and breathing issues.
- c) If there is pain from the neck down the spine or there is loss of function of arms or legs, DO NOT MOVE the child!
- d) If a bone is protruding, blood is spurting or the child is having problems breathing or can't move, call 911 immediately.

- e) Call the staff person on duty.
- f) Call the parent on their phone.

Bleeding (Minor) - If the knee or arm is scraped and there is minor bleeding, RINSE OFF THE WOUND WITH CLEAN WATER, pat dry, and put a Band-Aid over it. Be sure to watch the child periodically to make sure the bleeding has indeed stopped. Ask the child if any other part of their arm or leg hurts. If he complains of other pain consistently, call the parent right then. If not, tell the parent about the scrape when the parent picks up the child.

Bleeding (Major) - If the bleeding doesn't stop within a few minutes of applied pressure, it is major.

If there is a lot of blood coming, grab paper towels or a clean cloth and apply pressure to where the blood is flowing.

- If BRIGHT RED BLOOD is spurting excessively from a major ARTERY, call 911 immediately.
- At the same time, have your assistant call the staff on duty on their cell.
- Call the parent on their phone.

Choking – If a child is choking on a piece of food, follow the directions on the poster in the classroom (HEIMLICH MANEUVER).

- If the food does not release, call 911 immediately.
- Call the parent on their phone.
- Call the staff on their phone.

Seizures – If the parent has reported seizures, follow the instructions given by parents and notify the parent immediately. If this is a first-time seizure for a child without a special health form, follow the steps below.

- Ease them to the floor if they are on a chair so they won't fall if they go unconscious.
- Let them have their seizure, but gently roll them to their side.
- Call 911.
- Call the parent on their phone.
- Keep other kids away as it is embarrassing. Sometimes the child having a seizure will wet his pants.

Head Injury - If there isn't any bleeding, there is still a chance of concussion or internal bleeding.

Vomiting can set in and is a sign of a concussion. If the child is acting abnormally, that can also be a sign of a concussion.

- Call parents on their cell phone if the child's head was banged.
- If there is broken skin and major bleeding in the head OR ANY LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS, call 911.

Insect Bites – There are many types of insects, but bees and wasps are the most problematic.

- For a bee sting, be sure to check if a child is allergic and call parent.
- If the child has a severe allergy, has gone into anaphylactic reaction, and has a signed

- permission form to administer an EpiPen, give them the EpiPen and call 911.
- If there is **NO** EpiPen with a signed permission form do **NOT** administer anyone else's EpiPen!
- Other bites, watch for swelling. Alert parent when they arrive for pickup.

Bites by other children –

- Comfort the child.
- Call staff on duty and the parent.
- Wash with mild soap and water and apply ice to the bite.

Every time there is an emergency, use caution and always call 911 when in doubt.

Complete an *Incident Report form* and give it to the Valley Kids Staff.

Use the following as a reference tool.

VCBC INJURY RESPONSE GUIDE

for Children and Students

We understand that volunteers are not necessarily trained medical personnel, but we do want them to know some basic steps to take in case of emergencies. Adults should always err on the side of caution and not guess when responding to an injury.

Level 3 Serious Injuries or Medical Conditions Needing Emergency Professional Care

(Brain, Spine & Throat Injuries, Trouble Breathing, Fainting, Severe Bleeding, etc.)

- Call 9-1-1 and ask for "paramedic."
- Apply emergency first aid care (see First Aid Chart).
- Contact parent/guardian repeatedly until they are reached.
- Communicate injury to ministry leader as soon as possible.

Level 2 Moderate Injuries Not Affecting Vital Organs

(Rolled Ankle, Bruising/Swelling due to physical contact, etc.)

- Apply first aid (see guide).
- Contact parent for direction. If parent cannot be reached, obtain medical care for student. (Note: a student should only be moved if the injury does not affect a vital organ!)
- Communicate injury to ministry leader as soon as possible.

Level 1 Minor Injuries

(Scrapes, Contusions, Minor Cuts, Nosebleeds, Sprains, etc.)

- Apply first aid (see guide).
- Communicate injury to parent either during or after event as needed.
- Communicate injury to ministry leader as soon as possible.

Additionally, adults should look for and pay attention to emergency medical bracelets.

Practical Guidelines for Handling Injury and Sickness

1. Over-the-counter medications should not be dispensed to children Grade 4 and under.
2. Wear personal protective equipment when contact with an infectious bodily fluid is possible.
3. Wash hands before and after first aid procedures.
4. Don't guess about the seriousness of injury. When in doubt, contact parents and medical professionals.
5. Know where first aid kits and charts are located. (i.e. offices at church)
6. Carry your cell phone and don't be a "lone ranger" with injury response.
7. Familiarize yourself with the allergies and health concerns of the children in the car.
8. Practice safety in everything you do. Don't try to be a "cool" leader by taking risks with kids!



Incident Report Form

Name of Injured Party: _____ Phone: _____
Home Address: _____
Gender: ____ M ____ F Age: _____ Grade: _____
Time accident occurred: Hour _____ a.m. ____ p.m. Date: _____
Place of accident (be specific): _____
Injured during a program activity? ____ Yes ____ No
Ministry Representative: _____ Program: _____

WITNESS TO ACCIDENT, IF ANY:

Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone: _____
Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone: _____

Cause of Accident:

Nature of Injury (what part(s) of body affected):

Action Taken:

Was a parent/legal guardian or other individual on site? ____ Yes ____ No

Was a parent/legal guardian or other individual notified? ____ Yes ____ No When: _____

Name of individual notified: _____ How: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____ Position: _____
(Person Completing Form)

VCBC Follow-Up:

COPY – Business Office **COPY** – Program or Ministry Leader

Complete form and place in Church Administrator's box

VALLEY COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH

HEALTH INFORMATION AND EPIPEN ADMINISTRATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Overview:

Valley's Kids Ministry is dedicated to bringing church and family together for a child's spiritual growth. To do this, we strive to provide a safe environment for the children who attend our programming. One way we do this is to be aware of any medical problems a child has, including allergies. We know that allergies can be caused by various sources such as certain foods (peanuts, tree nuts, milk, wheat, etc.), animal allergies, insect stings or bites, medication, environmental agents, latex, etc. and that reactions range from mild to severe. We also understand that some children suffer from other health issues such as asthma or diabetes which must be taken into account in our programming.

To help us care for your child, we need you to complete the attached *Detailed Health Form*. If your child has severe allergies and you want our staff to administer an EpiPen in the event of an emergency, you must also complete and return Part 2 of the *Detailed Health Form* as well as the half-sheet *EpiPen Administration Permission Form* which we require to accompany your child's EpiPen in a Ziploc bag. Allergy policies and forms can be obtained from either the plastic holder outside of the Valley Kids office (by the elevator) or by the fish tank. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Lois Hales at 860.673.6826 x115 or lhales@valleycommunity.cc.

Snack Policies:

Our Kids ministry strives to be a "tree nut-free and peanut-free zone." The staff will screen snacks we provide against a list of tree nut and peanut allergens and will ask parents and teachers who may bring in snacks to do the same. We also try to provide a gluten free option as well – Rice Chex.

The following are foods that are generally served at our Weekend Communities:

- g) Infants – Cheerios (If you prefer that Cheerios not be provided, please write your child's teacher a short note.)
- h) Walkers and 2's – Chex, graham cracker bears and Goldfish.
- i) Preschool through Kindergarten – Chex, Graham cracker bears and Goldfish.
- j) First through Fifth Grade – No snack is served on a regular basis.

Parents are welcome to bring snacks for their own child if he or she cannot have any of the above items.

A list of ingredients for snacks usually provided by the church is available at the Children's Welcome Desk.

Outside snacks are sometimes brought in for special occasions. **Parents are responsible for watching for any bright orange "Special Snack" signs outside the classroom door or in large group areas and ensuring that their child may safely enjoy the snack or informing their child's teacher if the snack should not be given.** If possible, original snack packaging for special snacks will be available so that parents may read the ingredient list.

Health/Allergy Forms Information:

1. We encourage any parent or guardian whose child has allergy or health concerns to submit a *Detailed Health Form*. If the child may require the use of an EpiPen, please also complete part 2 of the *Detailed Health Form*.
 - a. Forms can be obtained from either the plastic holder outside of the Valley Kids office (by the elevator) or by the fish tank. If during the year, there is a change in the child's allergies and/or dosage or conditions under which EpiPens are to be given, please submit a new *Detailed Health Form*.
2. A half-sheet *EpiPen Administration Permission Form* should be completed and included in a Ziploc bag with provided EpiPens, consistent with the EpiPen policies below. *EpiPen Administration Permission Forms* may be used week to week.

EpiPen Policies:

1. Valley Kids staff and volunteers are not professional medical personnel.

However, basic EpiPen administration training is offered for staff and key volunteer leaders. While we attempt to have trained individuals present at all times, we cannot guarantee that such an individual will always be immediately available in the event of an emergency.

2. We do not provide EpiPens. They must be prescribed by a physician for a specific child and brought to church by a parent *each time* the child is in attendance.

3. If a child requires the use of an EpiPen, we must have the following:

- a. A *Detailed Health Form* with Part 1 and Part 2 completed and signed by the parent or the legal guardian.
- b. EpiPens (preferably two) inside a Ziploc bag including the completed half-sheet *EpiPen Administration Permission Form*. EpiPens must be properly and clearly labeled with:
 - I. The child's first and last name
 - II. The dosage of Epinephrine
 - III. The expiration date (We will not accept expired EpiPens.)

4. Valley Kids staff and volunteers will not administer any medication except for an EpiPen in the event of an emergency.

Procedures:

1. If your child has any health issues or allergies, pick up an orange "Allergy/Health Issues" sticker for nursery and preschool children at the Children's Welcome Desk or at your child's classroom door. Complete the requested information and place the sticker on the **back** of your child to alert the staff and volunteers. If needed, feel free to use more than one sticker.
2. Remind the classroom teacher about your child's health issues or allergies each time you take him or her to class or an event. We strongly suggest that you attend the same service each week so staff and volunteers become familiar with your child's specific needs and can provide the best possible care for your child.
3. If your child requires the use of an EpiPen, place the EpiPens (preferably two) into a Ziploc bag with the completed half-sheet *EpiPen Administration Permission Form* which may be reused from week to week.
4. The Ziploc bag is to be hand-delivered to the teacher or adult in charge of the classroom or event unless the child is approved to carry his or her own EpiPens.
5. Classroom staff or volunteers will put the EpiPens into the Emergency Containers located inside all classroom doors and large group areas where they can be picked up by the parent at the end of the service/program. A classroom teacher can show you the location of the

- container for your child's specific classroom and/or age group.
6. Should a child stay in the classroom for two services, a Valley Kids staff member or volunteer will be responsible for moving a child's EpiPen to his or her new location, if applicable.
 7. If your child has an anaphylactic reaction and has an EpiPen, the following will occur:
 - a. The EpiPens in their respective Ziploc bag will be retrieved from the Emergency Container.
 - b. A Valley Kids staff member or volunteer will check the half-sheet *EpiPen Administration Permission Form* in the Ziploc bag to determine parent permission and the EpiPen dosage information.
 - c. An EpiPen will be administered by a Valley Kids staff member or volunteer.
 - d. If no trained individual is available, the EpiPen will not be administered until one is present.
 - e. 911 will be called.
 - f. The parents or legal guardian will be called by pager or by cell phone number.
 8. Take your child's EpiPens with you at the end of the class or event. The Valley Kids staff is not responsible for any medication left at Valley and will not store EpiPens. If you accidentally leave EpiPens, you will be called to come pick them up from a locked cabinet located in the Valley Kids Office.



**VALLEY COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH
DETAILED HEALTH FORM (Part 1 – Health and Allergy Concerns)**

Child's Name: _____ Birth Date: _____ Age: _____
Father's Name: _____ Cell Phone: _____
Mother's Name: _____ Cell Phone: _____
Legal Guardian's Name: _____ Cell Phone: _____
Doctor's Name: _____ Office Phone: _____
Please circle: My child has diabetes, My child has asthma, My child has: _____.

My child is allergic to

Food (peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, etc.)

Please specify: _____

Type of reaction: _____

Animals, or Insect Stings or Bites (dogs, cats, bee stings, fire ant bites, spider bites, etc.)

Please specify: _____

Type of reaction: _____

Drug or Medication (Penicillin, etc.)

Please specify: _____

Type of reaction: _____

Environmental Agents (dust, pollen, mold, animal dander, poison ivy or oak)

Please specify: _____

Type of reaction: _____

Latex

Type of reaction: _____

Other (such as seizures, asthma, diabetes, hemophilia)

Please specify: _____

Type of reaction: _____

If you have checked off any of the above boxes please explain the severity and list the reactions:

My child no longer has allergic reaction symptoms to:

If your child has a severe allergy that requires the administration of an EpiPen, please complete *Part 2 – EpiPen Administration Permission Form* (the next page of this document).

I have read and understand that Valley Community Baptist Church Valley Kids staff will not administer any medication except for an EpiPen by a trained staff member or key volunteer in the event of an emergency.

Parent or Legal Guardian Printed Name

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature

Date

DETAILED HEALTH FORM AND RELEASE (Part 2 – EpiPen Administration Permission)

To be completed by parent or legal guardian and kept on record by Valley's Kids Staff:

Child's Name as it appears on the EpiPen: _____

I hereby authorize the Valley Community Baptist Church Valley Kids staff and volunteers to administer an EpiPen to my child if he or she has known exposure and /or a severe allergic reaction to a specified allergen. I agree to release, indemnify, defend and hold harmless Valley Community Baptist Church and any of its staff, volunteers, or agents from any and all injuries, lawsuits, judgments, settlements, claims, liabilities, expenses (including reasonable legal expenses), demands, or actions against them arising out of their conduct, whether negligent or not, in administering or failing to administer the EpiPen prescribed specifically for my child. I am aware that the injection will probably be administered by a trained staff member or volunteer who is not a healthcare professional, and that if no trained individual is present the EpiPen will not be administered until one is present.

I have read the *Health Information Administration Policies and Procedures* and agree to provide two EpiPens as required.

I understand that 911 will always be called when an EpiPen is administered to my child.

The following EpiPen has been prescribed. Check as appropriate:

- **EpiPen** (the premeasured dose is 0.3mg. of Epinephrine)
Give the initial dose.
Repeat the dose in 15 minutes if a professional emergency team has not arrived.
- **EpiPen Jr.** (the premeasured dose is 0.15mg. of Epinephrine)
Give the initial dose.
Repeat the dose in 15 minutes if a professional emergency team has not arrived.
- My child has received adequate training on how and when to use an EpiPen and can use it properly in case of an emergency. He or she will carry EpiPens **at all times**.

Parent or Legal Guardian Printed Name Parent or Legal Guardian Signature Date

To be completed by a Valley Kids staff member: The above has been reviewed with the parent or legal guardian. Additional remarks:

VCBC Valley Kids Staff Printed Name VCBC Valley Kids Staff Signature Date

EPIPEN ADMINISTRATION PERMISSION FORM AND RELEASE

To be completed by parent or legal guardian and placed in Ziploc bag with EpiPens:

Child's Name as it appears on the EpiPen: _____ Age/Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Emergency Cell/Phone: _____

My child is Allergic to: _____

I hereby authorize the Valley Community Baptist Church Valley Kids staff and volunteers to administer an EpiPen to my child if he or she has known exposure and/or severe allergic reaction to a specified allergen. I agree to release, indemnify, defend and hold harmless Valley Community Baptist Church and any of its staff, volunteers, or agents from any and all injuries, lawsuits, judgments, settlements, claims, liabilities, expenses (including reasonable legal expenses), demands, or actions against them arising out of their conduct, whether negligent or not, in administering or failing to administer the EpiPen prescribed specifically for my child. I am aware that the injection will probably be administered by a trained staff member or volunteer who is not a healthcare professional, and that if no trained individual is present the EpiPen will not be administered until one is present.

The following EpiPen has been prescribed. Check as appropriate:

- **EpiPen** (the premeasured dose is 0.3mg. of Epinephrine)
- **EpiPen Jr.** (the premeasured dose is 0.15mg. of Epinephrine)
- My child has received adequate training on how and when to use an EpiPen and can use it properly in case of an emergency. He or she will carry EpiPens **at all times**.

Parent or Legal Guardian Printed Name Parent or Legal Guardian Signature Date

EPIPEN ADMINISTRATION PERMISSION FORM AND RELEASE

To be completed by parent or legal guardian and placed in Ziploc bag with EpiPens:

Child's Name as it appears on the EpiPen: _____ Age/Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Emergency Cell/Phone: _____

My child is allergic to: _____

I hereby authorize the Valley Community Baptist Church Valley Kids staff and volunteers to administer an EpiPen to my child if he or she has known exposure and/or severe allergic reaction to a specified allergen. I agree to release, indemnify, defend and hold harmless Valley Community Baptist Church and any of its staff, volunteers, or agents from any and all injuries, lawsuits, judgments, settlements, claims, liabilities, expenses (including reasonable legal expenses), demands, or actions against them arising out of their conduct, whether negligent or not, in administering or failing to administer the EpiPen prescribed specifically for my child. I am aware that the injection will probably be administered by a trained staff member or volunteer who is not a healthcare professional, and that if no trained individual is present the EpiPen will not be administered until one is present.

The following EpiPen has been prescribed. Check as appropriate:

- **EpiPen** (the premeasured dose is 0.3mg. of Epinephrine)
- **EpiPen Jr.** (the premeasured dose is 0.15mg. of Epinephrine)
- My child has received adequate training on how and when to use an EpiPen and can use it properly in case of an emergency. He or she will carry EpiPens **at all times.**

Parent or Legal Guardian Printed Name

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature

Date



Valley Community Baptist Church Valley Kids Commitment

I, _____, have read the handbook and will do my best to honor the following commitments I am making:

- I will serve the children and families at Valley with excellence and be an example of Christ to them.
- I will worship regularly with our church family.
- I will support the Affirmation of Faith and the Valley leadership.
- I will pray for the children and take the initiative to build a relationship with each one.
- I will be faithful in attendance and communicate properly when I can't honor my obligation to attend.
- I will comply with all the procedures in this handbook.
- I will complete the MinistrySafe Sexual Abuse Awareness Training video.

Valley Kids Team Member Signature

_____ Date _____

