

**Collegeside
Church of Christ**

Safety Guidelines

April 2024

Safety Guidelines

Collegeside is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for our children and their families.

Safety Steps:

- **Sexual Abuse Prevention Training:** Adults working with minors will complete a sexual abuse prevention training and are expected to follow the guidelines suggested in the training. A list of those who have completed this training will be kept in the church office.
- **Criminal Background Check:** Adults working with minors will undergo a criminal background check. Depending on the position, differing levels or intensity of background checks may be required. Background check information will be kept private in a secure location in the church office.
- **Safety Guidelines:** A written set of safety guidelines will be posted for those working with minors to follow.
- **Volunteer Minimum Age:** All lead volunteers must be 18 years of age or older. Younger persons may assist the adults, but may not take the place of adult volunteers or workers. The church may utilize responsible teens (under the age of 18) in positions with and under the direct supervision of an approved adult volunteer.
- **Supervisory Guideline:** It is the goal of Collegeside to maintain a minimum of two adult volunteers in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during a church activity, regardless of the number of participants, location, or activity. If only one adult is in attendance in a classroom, then the classroom door must remain open unless another volunteer joins the classroom.

Abuse Tolerance & Reporting

- **Zero Tolerance:** Collegeside has zero tolerance for abuse in ministry programs and activities. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer at Collegeside to act in the best interest of all children in every program.

- **Reporting:** Our staff and volunteers are to be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission or situation that is violated in these guidelines to the Children's Minister. In addition, it is the volunteer's responsibility to report any suspected abuse to the TN Abuse Hotline at **877-237-0004**.

Safety Team Responsibilities

- **Applying Procedures:** The safety team will apply existing policies and procedures related to children's safety and risk management issues.
- **Monitoring Programs:** The safety team will monitor all Children's programs for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
- **Making Recommendations:** The safety team will make recommendations to the leadership regarding safety issues.

Check-in Procedures

- **Times:** Kidside doors open each Sunday at 8:15 AM and on Wednesday at 6:15 PM. Drop-off for school age children is in the Gap where children are to be seated at the assigned class's table. Students in preschool or younger should report directly to the classroom. Parents are to ensure that their child is with the appropriate adults before leaving. Kidside doors close at 11:15 AM on Sundays and 7:45 PM on Wednesdays.
- **Kidcheck:** The Kidcheck Station is open on Sundays. There will be a volunteer available each week at the Kidcheck station to assist with check-in procedures. Parents are to check-in their children and place the sticker on a place that can be easily viewed. Parents are asked to make sure that the information on Kidcheck is up-to-date for each child. Teachers will use their classroom clipboards to keep track of attendance on Wednesdays.
- **Rosters:** Each classroom should have a printed roster as well as parent contacts located on a clipboard hanging by the classroom door. Attendance should be checked or completed as children enter the classroom.
- **Parental Involvement:** Parents have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in which their child is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their children's programs will be required to complete our volunteer application and screening process.
- **Parent Access:** Parents/guardians should remain on the church premises while their child is checked into the children's ministry. If a parent or guardian needs to leave for any reason, they should notify the children's minister or the child's teacher.

Check Out Procedures

- **Sunday/Wednesday Class Time:** Parents of students K-4 are asked to pick their children up from the Gap on Sundays between 9:10-9:20 and Wednesdays from 7:15-7:25. Parents of children PreK and younger will pick up their children in their assigned classroom. PreK and younger children are not to be released with older siblings.
- **Worship Dismissal:** Focus (K-2) and Children's Worship (3 year-PreK) dismissal is located in the Gap. Parents are asked to wait in the hallway outside the Gap until their child's name is called. Parents are asked to pick up children within ten minutes after worship has been dismissed. First Steps (2 year class) and Nursery babies will be picked up by a parent in their classrooms.
- **Parent/Volunteer Guidelines:** Parents should check in with the teacher before removing the child from the room. Volunteers should verify the parent or approved guardian is present before releasing the child. It is presumed a person who drops off a child or student has authority to pick up the child. The parent's cell phone number is located on the child's sticker if volunteers have questions.

Photos

- **No Photo List:** Volunteers are asked to not take pictures of children and post online (this includes BeReal, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.). Collegeside utilizes a social media team to promote events and sometimes uses pictures taken from the Children's Ministry. If you would like your child to be added to our NO PHOTO list, please contact the church office.

Sickness

- **Contagious Period:** Parents are asked to refrain from bringing their children to any children's ministry programs if a child has experienced any symptoms related to a contagious illness 24 hours previous to an event.
- **Ministry Events:** Volunteers should contact the parent and separate a child if they begin showing signs of sickness.

Food Policies

- **Parent Responsibility:** Parents are asked to keep an up-to-date record of any food allergies for each child on the Kidcheck Portal. Any food allergies are clearly printed on the child's sticker.
- **Teacher Responsibility:** Age appropriate snacks are provided for PreK and younger classes. Teachers should check each child's sticker before distributing any food or drink to the class. On Sundays, the child's name will be highlighted in black if there are any known allergies or special accommodations. On Wednesdays, please check the class roster for a list of known allergies for each class. If you have any questions, please contact the child's parent first (number listed on the clipboard).
- **Nursery Volunteers:** Please check with parents before distributing any of the provided snacks.

Restroom & Diaper Guidelines

- **Diaper Changes/toilet training:** Only females will change diapers and assist with toilet training. Diaper changes should be done in the presence of another adult.
- **Diaper Changes:** Children should be changed on sanitized changing stations. Please resanitize the station when finished.
- **Diaper Changes:** Please wipe thoroughly (front to back) using diapers and wipes provided by the child's parent or guardian and reclothed immediately upon the completion of changing the soiled diaper.
- **Diaper Changes:** Any special diaper changing procedures requested by the parent should be completed in the child's KidCheck profile and will be printed on the child's sticker.
- **Toilet Training:** Parents are asked to take their children who are being potty trained to the restroom before class. However, if a child needs to use the restroom, volunteers should keep the door open while assisting the child in the presence of another adult.
- **Special Needs Diaper Changes:** Parents will offer instruction to volunteers to change the diapers of special needs children. After the age of 4, parents or legal guardians will change the diapers of all special needs children.
- **School-age Children:** If a school-age child (Kindergarten-2nd grade) needs to use the restroom, one volunteer will remain in the classroom with the door open while the other volunteer walks with the child and stands outside the restroom to monitor. If the child needed any physical assistance, such as straightening or fastening any garments, this should be done in the presence of another volunteer. Please send only one child at a time to the restroom.
- **School-age Children:** 3rd-6th graders are permitted to walk to the nearest restroom independently. The classroom teacher will keep the classroom door

open to monitor. If a child is taking longer than expected in the restroom, one teacher can knock on the restroom door to check on the child. If assistance is needed, the parent will be contacted.

- **Accidents:** If a child has had an accident, teachers should contact the child's parents to assist.
- **Sanitation & Hygiene:** Volunteers should wash their hands with warm soap and water after using the restroom or diapering. Children should also wash their hands after using the restroom. Tables, chairs, and toys should be properly sanitized after each class period. Cleaning wipes should be located out of reach of children.

Discipline:

- **Physical Discipline:** Volunteers should never physically discipline a child. No form of physical discipline is acceptable.
- **Babies and Toddlers:** Separation anxiety is common with children this age when they are first being dropped off. Volunteers will attempt to comfort, distract, and engage the child. Parents should communicate their preference on when they should be contacted. Generally, if the crying escalates or continues longer than 5-10 minutes, the parent will be contacted.
- **Preschool and Younger:** Disruptive behavior cannot be allowed to take over the class. Teachers will attempt to redirect, comfort, or distract children who are disruptive due to (tantrums, crying, or screaming). When necessary, one volunteer may take the child in the hallway while the other continues teaching with the door open. If the volunteer determines that the child is willing to return to the classroom, they may return. However, if the child is unwilling to return, the parent will be contacted and the child will remain with the parent for the remainder of that class period.
- **School Age Children:** Disruptive behavior cannot be allowed to take over the classroom. Teachers are to remain in control of their classroom at all times. After two verbal warnings, the child must be removed from the classroom and one teacher will handle the situation while the other continues teaching with the door open. If the child is willing to correct the behavior, they may return to the classroom. If behavior does not change, a parent will need to be contacted and the child will remain with the parent for the remainder of the class period. If a child is continually disruptive, parents must be notified.
- **Physical Altercations:** Children involved in physical altercations must be removed immediately. Parents should be contacted. Students will be permitted to return to the classroom after the situation has been resolved among the students, parents, teachers, and church leaders.

- **Praise:** Teachers will praise children when they correct their misbehavior.
- **Uncontrollable/Unusual Behavior or Threats:** Any uncontrollable or unusual behavior or threats should be reported immediately to the parent and to the Children's Minister.

Transportation

- **Drivers:** All drivers should have completed the necessary paperwork and be on the approved driver list at least 48 hours prior to driving a church vehicle.
- **Collegeside Church of Christ is NOT responsible for private travel arrangements to attend church related activities.**
- **Guidelines for Transporting Children:**
 - Children should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided.
 - We recommend two adults per vehicle and no child being alone in a vehicle with an adult. *There are times, such as WAS events, where the ministry team will communicate any exceptions.
 - Drivers should ensure all passengers are wearing seatbelts and using age appropriate restraints before transporting passengers.
 - Passengers are expected to respectfully ride in a safe manner in order to maintain transportation privileges.

Sleeping Arrangements

- It is anticipated that certain Children's Ministry activities may occasionally require that overnight sleeping arrangements be made for children and staff/volunteers (i.e. camps, mission trips, etc.). In the event an activity requires sleeping arrangements, staff members and volunteers will strictly observe the following rules:
 1. 2 adult leaders must accompany on any overnight trips. These adults must be on the approved list kept by the safety team.
 2. Plans for overnight trips will be communicated to parents/guardians with contact information on how to reach the child if needed.

3. *As long as any children are awake, one of the leaders must also be awake and monitoring children to ensure safe behavior.*
4. *Leaders should check with parents and use good judgment regarding movies shown.*
5. *Appropriately modest sleeping attire must be worn.*
6. *In the event of a sleepover on campus that involves both boys and girls, boys and girls must sleep in separate rooms, properly supervised by children's leaders of the same gender.*
7. *Staff and volunteers will monitor sleeping children by periodically conducting visual bed checks to ensure that sleeping children remain in designated sleeping places. During bed checks, staff and volunteers should never physically touch a child.*
8. *In the event that overnight arrangements do not include single beds, each staff, volunteer, and chaperone will not share a bed with a minor without obtaining permission from the parent.*

First Aid

- *First aid kits are available at Collegenide to treat minor injuries. Volunteers should have access to a first aid kit when taking overnight trips.*
- *Before taking overnight trips, **parents should clearly communicate any medical needs for their children to the appropriate adults under the child's supervision.** Depending on the medical needs, parents may be asked to provide a medical designee.*

