**Horizon Christian Fellowship Children’s Ministry Volunteer Handbook**

**Children’s Ministry Vision:** To love, serve and shepherd children so that they are encouraged to choose a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, to grow in their relationship with Him, and to be equipped to live a life committed to serving Him.

**Children’s Ministry Directors:**

Todd and Jessica Vessey

Email: hcflaxchildren@gmail.com

Todd(c): 608-304-0877

Jess(c): 608-304-0252

**Sunday Curriculum:** Answers in Genesis(ages 4-12), CEF Little kids can know God for toddlers(ages 2-3) Little Sprouts for nursery(ages 0-1)

**Wednesday night curriculum:** Awana

**Classrooms include:** children will be allowed to move up to the next level classroom upon turning the desired age prior to Sept 1st each year. For nursery only, we will consider a child to move up if 2 by Sept 1st and again by Jan 1st.

**Nursery**: ages 0-1

**Toddlers**: ages 2-3

**Age 4-6yr** classroom

**Age 7-12yr** classroom

**Duplicate classroom(**ages 4-12**)-** 2nd service for volunteers children that have already attended cm class or service.

**Expectations for HCF CM volunteers:**

* Volunteers must be at least 13 years of age and be able to help vs be a distraction in the classroom. All volunteers(18+) must give written consent for a background check(paid for by HCF) and have a HCF volunteer form completed and reviewed.
* Volunteers are expected to be an example to the children and are expected to be living out their faith in a Christ honoring way. Attending regular HCF church services outside of serving is encouraged and expected.
* Volunteers are expected to follow the HCF’s child protection policies listed below.
* Volunteers are asked to communicate honestly and timely with directors and other volunteers. Please bring problems with equipment issues/needs, a child’s behavior or other team member issues directly to the Children’s ministry directors attention.
* Volunteers are asked to be punctual for a shift. Teachers, please be prepared and arrive early enough to gather materials needed for the day. Volunteers are expected to be in the rooms as the children arrive.
* Please contact another volunteer and try to switch ahead of time if possible.  **If a volunteer switches shifts with another- please communicate this with the directors and/or make this change on the main schedule in the children’s ministry hallway.** This helps us keep things running smoothly and be prepared.
* Volunteers are asked to communicate absences to the Children’s ministry director by calling, texting or emailing as soon as possible so alternative coverage can be arranged.

**Discipline:**

Our emphasis is on positive discipline, where children see Godly role models in their teachers and leaders. We love “catching kids being good!” However, if a child struggles with disruptive, disrespectful or dangerous behavior, the following protocol will be used.

The child’s leader, after determining that the behavior/discipline issue cannot be resolved by simple methods(redirection, changing seating arrangements, etc.) we will give the child a “one” count- a warning that the next offense will bring greater consequences. If a second offense occurs that day, the child is given a “two” and taken out for private counseling by a leader. ( a parent will be notified if the child should get to this point.) If the child demonstrates continued willful defiance in attitude or action, they are given a “three” count(make Todd or Jess aware) and a parent will be called to take the child home early or to sit in the middle area with the parent/guardian(at which time the problem will be discussed with the parent by Todd or Jess).

* Bullying or violent behavior will not be tolerated and the child should be removed and parents made aware.
* **SAFETY, SECURITY and ILLNESS**
* Each child should be checked in and checked out by a parent or guardian(please no siblings unless discussed w/CM directors).
* We maintain well child rooms. No symptomatic children including:

-**-Fever- 100 degrees or higher within the last 24hrs**

**-Vomiting within the last 24 hrs**

**-Diarrhea within the last 24hrs**

**-Rash suspected to be contagious**

**-If child was prescribed antibiotics they should be on them for a minimum of 24hrs prior to attending club.**

**-conjunctivitis(pink eye)-can return 24hrs after treatment or symptoms subside**

**-lice/ringworm- can return after treatment**

**-consistent yellow/green nasal discharge**

**-any possibly contagious symptoms**

Should these symptoms develop during the child’s time in class:

-remove the child from the room and make them as comfortable as possible

-contact directors or parents to make them aware of the situation.

* We strive to have two volunteers for each age group (this is not always possible-volunteers should always maintain visibility with unblocked doors/windows and never be alone with a single child in a non visible area).
* Volunteer illness-use your judgment but guidelines should be similar to children’s. If you know you are ill in time to switch with someone, please try. Otherwise, please text Todd or Jess ASAP.

**Restroom policy:**

1. **ALL children should use the restroom with parents prior to being checked in to children’s ministry.**
2. Only fully toilet trained children will be taken to the restrooms by a volunteer. Please stand outside the restroom with the main door open and wait for the child to finish. A Volunteer can enter to help children wash their hands. Children under the age of 7 should not be sent to the restroom alone(we have public restrooms downstairs).

\*Parents should be made aware that if their child is potty training they may get a text message or have someone come get them to take their child to the restroom should they need to go during their time in children’s ministry.

Volunteers are allowed to change diapers at their discretion when another volunteer is present in the room unless told otherwise by the parent.

**Movies and Media use:**

* PG-13 and R rated media are not allowed. PG ratings should be ok’ed with directors and/or parents
* Please make sure other forms of media are age appropriate and content conforms to HCF’s mission and vision. We have a library of appropriate movies in the children’s ministry closet.

**Incident and Emergency Procedures:**

INJURIES:

- Minor injuries can be treated with first-aid(first-aid kit is available in the children’s ministry closet and in the upstairs classroom).

- for more serious injuries: separate the child from the group, administer first-aid, contact directors or other HCF staff(you may send an older child to get a needed adult). Call 911 if the incident is life threatening. Complete an incident report form. There is an AED and a Lifevac(used for choking) located by the main entrance.

SEVERE WEATHER:

- move children to an area away from windows

-keep calm, keep the children calm and occupied(sit down games, music, etc), wait for further instructions from leadership.

IN CASE OF FIRE/FIRE ALARM: (Please familiarize yourself with the posted evacuation route(on CM board in CM hallway) and designated meeting area when starting a volunteer position)

- count your children

-follow evacuation route or move to nearest building exit

-re count your children

- regroup-keep calm and keep the children calm

- parents will be reunited with children at designated meeting place(large tree by the amtrak sign in parking lot)

**CLASSROOM RESOURCES:**

* Each classroom is supplied with Bibles, crayons, markers, and glue. ( If you need something let us know:)
* There are also lots of craft supplies stored in the children’s ministry closet. Please let us know if you are needing something else or have used the last of something. We do have a budget to purchase needed supplies upon approval-ask Todd or Jess if something is needed.
* There are also appropriate games and DVDs in the children’s ministry closet for your use.
* The active game supplies are kept in the gymnasium storage closet. Please ask if you are not able to find something needed or just need to check out what we have available!
* Teachers will get an email the Monday before teaching with the Answers lesson and resources to prepare. Please pray and seek the Lord as part of your preparation each week.

**SCHEDULES:**

-Please communicate areas of interest in serving, frequency of serving and any questions about scheduling to Jess

-We will try to get the month's schedule out at least 1 week in advance. Schedules will be emailed to each volunteer and a main schedule will be kept on the bulletin board in the children’s ministry hallway.

**Communication:**

* We strive for open and honest communication
* Feel free to share ideas and/or concerns with the children’s ministry directors.
* If you are experiencing a problem with another team member, a particular child, or an element of one of the programs you are encouraged to communicate your concern with the children’s ministry director.
* Email is our primary means of communication. Please make sure the director has a valid email and check your emails regularly for information about events, lessons, schedules, and program information. Urgent/time sensitive communication is best communicated by face, by phone or by text.
* Personal issues should be handled in person or by phone.

**Thank you for serving the Lord and His children at Horizon Christian Fellowship!!!**

**HORIZON VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT FORM**

Please fill out this form and return to the children’s ministry director before volunteering.

I have been given a copy of, have read, understood and agreed to the policies and procedures given to me by the children’s ministry leaders at Horizon Christian Fellowship.

Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name(printed):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_