

Kids Volunteer Handbook

Our goal is to create an excellent weekly environment where kids are sitting in circles with the same leader who knows them, cares about them, and who is leading them into a growing relationship with their Heavenly Father.

To ensure that we provide an excellent, safe, and memorable experience for every kid and their family, be sure to follow these simple procedures every Sunday you serve!

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

To serve with the KidsCreek Team, you will need to submit to a background check and agree to the family ministry covenant. If there is any reason you believe you may not be the best fit for the KidsCreek Team, please contact your campus kids director.

1. Attend Consistently

We believe that one of the greatest influences in a child's life is their group leader. Outside of parents and friends, few people are as instrumental in inspiring personal faith as a group leader. The time you spend with your few, and the relationships you build with them, will have a deeper and greater impact than you realize.

Because your relationship with your few is so important, we require all group leaders/kids volunteers to serve on a regular basis. Each campus and service area of KidsCreek will define this differently, but for most that means weekly or bi-weekly. If you are unable to serve that frequently, there are several other areas at The Creek Church where you could use your gifts and talents to help make our church and its various environments excellent.

You will be scheduled to serve via Planning Center Services (which is a website with an app you can download to your smartphone) and will receive scheduling requests via text and email. We ask that you respond to these requests by either accepting or declining. If you are unable to serve for any reason, please let us know as soon as possible by contacting your coach. If you know in advance that you won't be able to serve a given date, black it out in advance on Planning Center. If possible, try to find a replacement to cover your position while you are unavailable. Work with your coach to make sure any replacements are properly background checked and trained before they serve.

In addition, we ask all volunteers to arrive on campus at least 30 minutes before the start of their service time, and to be in their classroom, ready to serve, 15 minutes before the start of their service time. (i.e. volunteers should be in their room, ready to serve by 11:15am for the 11:30am service.)

SAFETY AND SECURITY

1. Drop Off and Pick Up

During drop off, have at least one group leader greet families at the door of your classroom while others engage the kids with activities. If you have a first-time-guest, be sure to introduce yourself to the parents and take a moment to get to know them and answer any questions they may have. Ensure each child is wearing a security tag.

During group time, it is your responsibility to ensure that each child remains in the kids area and are in the expected place for pickup. Never leave the kids area with a child, or allow a child to leave the kids area on their own. If instructed to do so by a parent, remind them it is a matter of security that they come and pick up their child and present their security tag and for the safety of their child, you are unable to allow the child to leave until they are retrieved by a parent/guardian. If at any time you believe you are missing a child, alert your coach immediately.

During pick up, stand in the doorway of your classroom and ensure that only the child being picked up leaves the classroom. Match the child's security tag to the parents' before releasing the child.

Stay in your room until all children have been picked up and the next volunteer team arrives. If you need to leave early, notify your coach as soon as possible.

2. Emergencies

Evacuation or a fire alarm:

1. The Kids Director or another staff member (identifiable by their staff name tag) will immediately come to KidsCreek and begin evacuation procedures. Wait for their say-so to begin evacuating.
2. Evacuate children through the back emergency exits. DO NOT enter the foyer.
 - a. For infants and toddlers, use rolling cribs to help transport and contain them.
3. Only go through the foyer if a fire is blocking the evacuation route. Stay with children in the parking lot until they are reunited with their families or an all-clear is given.

Tornadoes or inclement weather:

1. A staff member or the kids director will inform leaders of the circumstance.
2. Children should be moved into an inner room with no windows, if possible.
3. Have children remain calm and lay down, covering their heads.
4. Wait until the all-clear is given.

Intruder / Suspicious person:

1. If you notice a suspicious or unauthorized person in the kids' area, it is your responsibility to ask them who they are and why they are in the kids' area.
2. Be kind and courteous. It's possible that they are lost, checking on a child, or they might be a member of our security team patrolling the area.

3. If it turns out that they do not belong, kindly let them know that the kids' area is a secure area and for the safety of our kids we do not allow anyone who has not been background checked to remain in the kids' area after the start of each service. Kindly ask them to leave the area. If possible, escort them out and make sure the area is locked down behind them.
4. If they refuse, keep children in the classroom and contact a staff member or the host team immediately. Wait in the classroom with the children until the security team has handled the situation.

Intruder / Active Shooter:

1. Leaders and children should remain in their classrooms. Minimize noise and keep kids calm.
2. If a staff member or the security team initiates an evacuation, please evacuate using the same procedures as a fire alarm. Keep children together with their group, remain with them in the parking lot until they can be reunited with their families.

3. Open Door Policy

Two volunteers should be in each room at all times. In the event that a room is short-staffed, the door should be left open. Coaches will be walking through the kids' area, and they will perform random checks in these rooms. Should you require further assistance, contact your coach.

4. Age Requirements

Because we believe that group leaders are so important to a child's faith, we enforce certain age requirements for leaders.

1. Middle school students (6th - 8th grade) can serve in Infants, Toddlers, and Preschool, or as a Large Group volunteer in KidsCreek.
2. High school students (9th - 12th grade) can serve in any area of KidsCreek.

5. Appropriate Classroom Ratios

Class	Ratio	Promotional Marker
Infants	2:8	Developmental
1s (Walkers)	2:8	Developmental
2s	2:12	Upon turning 2
3s	2:12	When 3 years old
4s	2:18	When 4 years old
K/5s	2:20	Grade level
Elementary	2:20	Grade level

GROUPS

1. Wellness / Medicine

To ensure the health of children and volunteers, we ask that sick children do not attend KidsCreek. Gently explain to parents that, for the safety of others, the sick child may not stay in KidsCreek until they are well or fever-free for 24 hours if they display any of the following symptoms:

- Fever (over 100.5 degrees)
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Any symptom of childhood diseases, such as chicken pox
- Common cold (from onset through one week)
- A sore throat
- Croup
- Any skin infections (head lice, boils, ringworm)
- Pink eye or other eye infection
- Dark-colored and excessive mucus
- Any communicable disease

Any volunteers displaying these symptoms are asked not to serve until they are well and fever-free for at least 24 hours.

If a child becomes ill during KidsCreek services, isolate the child immediately and contact your coach. The child's parents should be paged and the child removed from KidsCreek as soon as possible.

In addition, staff and volunteers do not administer medication to children, even if directed to by a parent. If a child needs medication, please page their parent/guardian.

2. Restroom Breaks / Potty Training

There is a boys' and a girls' restroom located in the KidsCreek hallway. Some classrooms have additional restrooms located inside. Children are to use only those restrooms; ***they should never travel outside of the kids' area to use the restroom.***

Children should be accompanied to the restroom by an adult. The adult should wait outside the restroom until the child is finished. The adult should ensure that the child has washed their hands upon exiting the restroom.

Adults should never enter the restroom with a child, except in the case of an illness where the child must be assisted. If assistance is required, first try verbally instructing the child. If that fails, make sure another adult is aware and paying attention to the situation for safety, and enter the restroom, but stand with the door open (one foot inside the restroom, the other foot outside) and assist only as much as needed until the child is dressed.

Since children who are potty training often require a lot of assistance during restroom breaks, in this situation volunteers should enter the restroom with the child, as needed, but have another volunteer standing at the restroom door, with a foot in the doorway. Be mindful of

both the child's modesty and the adult's safety. Only adult females should assist in potty training.

3. Injury / Incident Reports

Working with children, incidents and injuries are unavoidable to a certain extent. We encourage group leaders to minimize behavior that could lead to injury as much as possible. However, if an incident between children or an injury occurs, take these steps:

- Comfort the child and tend to any injuries as much as possible (first aid kits are available. Contact your coach to find out where they are in your campus).
- If there is a severe injury, contact your coach and the child's parents/guardians immediately.
- Explain the incident to parents.
- Fill out an Injury/Incident Form (located at check-in) and turn in to the Kids Director.

4. Behavior Issues

1. Verbal warnings should always be the first response to misbehavior. Calmly point out to the child the inappropriate behavior.
2. If the misbehavior continues, remove the child from activities for a "time-out" period not longer than one minute per year of the child's life. After the time-out, the child may resume class activities.
3. If this is not effective, the next step is to contact your coach and have them talk with the child. If the bad behavior persists past this point, page the parents and explain the situation. The child should be removed from the classroom for the remainder of the service.
4. Children who bring out misbehavior in each other should be separated.
5. A child should never lose eating, drinking, or restroom privileges. Nor should a volunteer institute corporal punishment such as spanking or smacking.

5. Clean Up

At the end of your group time, please wipe down surfaces with Clorox wipes and throw away any trash. If you serve with infants or toddlers, be sure to wipe down all toys that have been tasted or chewed and wash any cups and bowls used during snack time.

Bissell vacuums are located in each classroom. If you require a more powerful vacuum, please alert your kids' director.

PARTNERING WITH PARENTS

Each year, on average, a small group leader will have 40 hours with any given student. That's one hour per week, minus weeks for vacations, sickness and holidays. To be effective champions of the next generation, we must partner with the loudest, most consistent influence in their lives — their parents.

Our goal is to help parents become clearly focused and invested leaders in the lives of their children by cueing them to connect to a community of faith and to be more intentional at home.

There are a few key ways we do this:

- ❑ **Cue parents to download the Parent Cue App.** This app integrates with the curriculum we use every Sunday and gives parents talking points to help keep the conversation going at home.
- ❑ **Cue the parents with monthly handouts.** Every month each class will receive a handout meant to go home with children. This handout has an overview of what we're talking about in church and gives parents specifics about how they can emphasize the lesson at home.
- ❑ **Honor the parents.** It can feel like the obvious relational move to join in when a child complains about their parent, but the better move for all involved is to honor the parent and the parent's wishes. When we honor the parent, we prove we are for the family as a whole and we build the trust of the parents.
- ❑ **Give parents talking points as they leave your classroom.** Be sure to take a few minutes to talk with parents as they pick up their children. Let them know what you covered in class that day, and tell them something their child said or did that was funny, kind, or helpful.
- ❑ **Be an ally.** Let parents know that you are on their side and praying for their child. Give them your phone number. Be available to help as a parent reveals areas of need.

Handbook Agreement

In effect: _____ until further notice:

I have read and been informed about the content, requirements, and expectations of volunteers of the KidsCreek program at The Creek Church. I have received a copy of the policies and handbook and agree to abide by the policy guidelines as a condition of my continuing volunteerism at The Creek Church.

I understand that if I have questions, at any time, regarding the KidsCreek handbook, I will consult with the Campus Kids Director.

Please read the policy document carefully to ensure that you understand the policy before signing this document.

Volunteer Signature: _____

Volunteer Printed Name: _____

Date: _____