



Dear Creek Kids Leader,

Welcome to Creek Kids children's ministry at Creekside Church! We are excited to have you on our team. Our vision is to lead every child we encounter into a lifetime relationship with Jesus and with you on our team, we can make that vision a reality! No part is too small. If you greet children, you are part of that vision. If you rock babies in the nursery, you are part of that vision. If you teach every week, you are part of that vision. As we work together as a team, we can effectively bring children into a lifetime relationship with Jesus. Isn't that exciting?

I am passionate about children's ministry because I fully believe in Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." We have a part in training up children to follow Jesus. If a child strays from God at some point in his/her life (although we pray that this will not happen), I believe the child will come back to God because the truth is in his/her heart and simply because Proverbs 22:6 says so!

Some other scriptures to illustrate the value of children include:

Matthew 19:14 But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."

Deuteronomy 6:7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

Matthew 18:10 "See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven."

Psalms 8:2 Out of the mouth of babies and infants, you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger.

Psalms 127:3 Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward.

Matthew 18:1-5 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me."

I know you will be blessed as you serve in children's ministry and I am committed to help you be the best leader you can be.

Thank you again for joining our team. Now let's get busy leading children into a lifetime relationship with Jesus!

God bless you.

Carrie Patch
Children's Pastor



Our Vision & Mission Statement

Vision: To lead every child we encounter into a lifetime relationship with Jesus.

Mission: The mission of Creek Kids, the children's ministry at Creekside Church, is to partner with parents and lead children into a lifetime relationship with Jesus.

We will accomplish our mission through:

- **Prayer** - Consistent Prayer
- **Teamwork** - A committed team of loving, equipped, growing and Godly leaders
- **Safety** - Safe, fun and kid-friendly environments
- **Salvation** - Sharing the Gospel and inviting children to receive Christ
- **God's Word** - Presenting the Bible in fun and creative ways
- **Life Application** - Showing kids how to apply Biblical truth to their daily lives
- **Worship & Response Time** - Allowing time for children to hear God and experience His presence and power
- **Relationships** - Shepherding children in small groups and mentorship
- **Kids Serving** - Equipping children to do the work of the ministry
- **Families** - Focusing on building strong faith in families
- **Excellence** - Doing everything with excellence

We measure success through life-change

- Kids making decisions to follow Jesus
- Kids baptized in the Holy Spirit
- Kids reading God's Word
- Kids obeying their parents
- Kids operating in the gifts of the Spirit
- Kids showing the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control)
- Kids praying for others
- Kids worshipping
- Kids voluntarily doing acts of service
- Kids thinking of others
- Kids giving
- Kids leading others to Jesus
- Kids bringing friends to church
- Kids making right choices
- Kids admitting when they are wrong and asking for forgiveness
- Kids serving at church

Parent/Pastor conferences will be scheduled each year to discuss children's progress in their spiritual growth.



Creek Kids Adult and Student Leader Guidelines

At Creek Kids, we want to do everything with excellence. Colossians 3: 23,24 says, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."

The following guidelines are required of all leaders in Children's Ministry at Creekside Church.

1. Arrive on Time

Please arrive 30 minutes before service begins for set-up and to receive children. There should always be a leader in the children's room ready to welcome them as they arrive. We don't want any child to walk into an empty room. An empty room communicates we are not ready for the children and they are not important. If there is a problem you cannot control and you will arrive late, please notify the Children's Pastor so we can have a leader ready to receive the children.

2. Be Prepared

Please come fully prepared and ready to go.

3. Communicate

We want to hear from you. If you are going to be absent, please inform the Children's Pastor and give 48 hours notice if possible. In addition, we value your constructive feedback.

4. Develop

We know how much fun it is to serve in Children's Ministry, but it's also very important you are growing spiritually and attending adult service. You will be scheduled in such a way where you are able to attend at least two Sunday adult services per month. We want you to stay connected with the body and participate in what's happening in Sunday adult services.

Dress Code

The following dress code guidelines are to be followed by all leaders:

1. Wear comfortable but modest attire; no short shorts, short skirts, low cut tops (revealing cleavage) or crop tops (revealing belly).
2. Avoid excessive jewelry that small children could latch onto.



Harassment

Creekside Church is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, our Children's Ministry policy prohibits unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment. It is important for all volunteers to understand that jokes, stories, cartoons, nicknames, and comments about appearance, sexual content, or racism may be hurtful to others.

Alcohol, Drugs, Controlled Substances

The use, sale, transfer, possession, or being "under the influence" of alcohol, drugs or controlled substances when on duty or on church property is prohibited. In addition, off duty conduct, which may adversely affect the reputation or interest of Creekside Church, is prohibited.

Creek Kids Policies and Procedures

General Policy

Classroom policies and procedures have been incorporated to help protect the children and leaders in the Children's Ministry at Creekside Church.

1. There will be a minimum of 2 leaders (at least one adult) in a classroom at all times.
2. 3-person rule. A leader should never be left alone with a child. This is to prevent any type of abuse towards a child and to protect our leaders from false accusations.
3. Only those who have had a background check and received prior approval from the Children's Pastor will be allowed in a Children's Ministry room. The exception will be if a parent wants to stay briefly as a way to bring comfort to their child. The parent must only stay with their child and will not be allowed to participate in activities with other children.
4. The value of each child will be respected in the classroom. All children will be treated fairly and equally, with no special regard to race, creed, color, or economic status.

Children's Ministry Areas

We currently have the following areas available for ministry to children:

Nursery – from birth to age 3

Kid's Church – from age 4 to grade 6

As we grow in numbers and leaders, the structure will change.

Boundaries in Showing Affection

As we care for the children at Creekside Church it is important for us to display wisdom and discretion as we show affection. As you read the following guidelines, focus on the positive. These boundaries are designed to protect you and the kids.

Safe hugs

Hugs are a great way to show affection! Some persons do not like to be hugged and we should respect their feelings. Bend down on their level and keep the hug brief. Avoid full body hugs; side hugs are the best! Leaders should take the lead in demonstrating side hugs.

Safe Hands

High five! Use your hands to say, "I care", "You're important", or "Good job"! A handshake, a pat on the back, and joining hands when we pray helps us communicate important messages. A simple boundary to help: avoid contact to any place where a full bathing suit would cover.

Words of Affection

Be positive, genuine and encouraging. Let your words affirm self-control even in the most trying of circumstances.

Other suggestions

- Be aware of your physical presence. If you are standing or sitting too close to a child and they seem to be feeling uncomfortable, just move back some. Respect their feelings.
- With exception to the nursery, please do not hold a child on your lap.

Hand Washing

Adults must set the example for children in hand washing and are to remind the children to wash their hands. Antibacterial hand wipes are also available in each children's ministry room for convenience.

Hands should be washed:

1. After using the restroom.
2. Before and after eating or handling food.
3. After wiping and blowing noses.
4. After changing a diaper.
5. After coming in from outside.



Restroom Breaks

3-person rule

If a child needs to use the restroom during service, we will keep to the 3-person rule. Children will be taken to the restroom in one of the following manners:

1. 2 leaders take one child (one may be a student leader).
2. One adult leader takes two or more children.
3. One leader takes the entire class.

At the restroom area:

1. The leader must go into the restrooms to make sure they are clear of other people before sending children in. If someone comes to use the restroom, please ask them to wait until the children are finished before going in. This includes Creek kids adult and student leaders.
2. Prop open the entrance door to the restroom.
3. Taking turns, allow only the number of boys into Men's restroom (at one time) and number of girls into the Women's restroom, as toilets are available. Leader should stand outside the propped door to supervise the behavior of the children.
4. Have children wash their hands after using the restroom.
5. Return as a group back to the classroom.

Special Needs

Children with special needs are welcome at Creekside Church! We will meet with each family on an individual basis to find how we can best serve the needs of their child.



Check-In/Out Procedure

To ensure the safety of each child at Creekside Church, all parents must sign-in and sign-out their child at every service and bring their child to the proper children's ministry area.

The current location for the Check-In table is on the second floor outside of Children's Church for children age 4 to grade 6. The Nursery sign-in sheet for children age 3 and under is located in the Nursery on the main floor.

For Sunday School, parents sign-in their child, receive the security bracelet and bring their child to the appropriate Sunday School Class. After Sunday School, the Sunday School Leader will usher the children to the Children's Church.

It is important that no child be left unattended without an adult at anytime during their time here at Creekside Church. Together we can assure our children are safe and in good hands.

Check-In

First-Time Guests will:

Fill out a **Registration Card** and then follow the below procedures.

Note: The registration card is important for follow-up. We like to send each new child a postcard with a personal note in the mail after their first visit as well as on their birthday. The information on the card also helps us know of any special needs and family information.

All Parents need to:

1. **Sign-in** their child on the Sign-in sheet.
2. Write their **Cell Phone Number** on Sign-in sheet so we can send a text if their child needs their attention (or other preferred method of contact).
3. Receive a **Security Bracelet** and record that number next to the child's name on the Sign-in sheet. Parent must return the security bracelet to their child's room leader before their child will be released.

Check-Out

Two things must happen for a child to be released from their room:

1. The parent must **sign-out** their child
2. Parent must **return the security bracelet**

Leaders: After the parent has signed-out their child, you may then call the child or if in the nursery, bring the child, to the parent at the room entrance. No parent should need to come into the children's ministry area. Leaders may have the children line up or stay seated until they are called to keep order; whatever works for each area.



Creek Kids Wellness Policy

To ensure the health of other children and leaders, we ask that sick children or sick leaders not attend any children's event at Creekside Church. It is recommended that a child or leader should not attend church when any of the following symptoms exist:

1. A fever of 100 degrees or higher
2. Vomiting or Diarrhea, currently or within the last 24 hours – no matter what the cause is (medication, teething, etc.)
3. Any symptom of childhood diseases such as scarlet fever, German measles, mumps, chicken pox, or whooping cough
4. Common cold – from onset through one week
5. Persistent cough, sore throat or croup
6. Any unexplained rash
7. Any skin infection: boils, ringworm, impetigo or any open sores that leak fluid/blood even if the condition is caused by eczema or other benign skin conditions
8. Pinkeye or other eye infections/mucous or redness of the eye
9. Colored mucous (runny nose that is not clear)
10. Any communicable disease
11. Lice, including the presence of eggs or nits
12. Bed bugs

No medication will be given by volunteers or employees of Creekside Church

All children and leaders must be free of the symptoms without medication for the past 24 hours.

Children with allergies

If a child has a food allergy or other allergy (i.e. bee stings), all leaders working with that child will be notified and told how to handle a reaction should it occur. If the child accidentally ingests or comes in contact with allergen or begins to have any symptoms of a reaction in our care, notify the parent immediately. If the symptoms are serious (swelling of the face and neck, severe coughing or difficulty breathing), immediately call 9-1-1 and then contact the parent.



Creek Kids Nursery Diaper Changing Policy

Diapers are to be changed by adult female volunteers only. Volunteers are to follow these procedures to eliminate the spread of infectious, contagious diseases:

1. Diapers are to be changed on designated changing pad only.
2. Wear a new pair of gloves for each diaper change.
3. Assemble supplies of diaper, wipes, plastic baggie, and gloves before laying child on diaper changing pad.
4. Secure child on changing pad with strap provided. Always keep one hand on the child at all times and never leave the child unattended.
5. Baby powder or creams will not be used unless instructed by the parent.
6. Clean every child with a wipe. (Note: Clean girls from the front to the back.)
7. Place soiled diaper in a plastic baggie, tie and discard in trash. After service, please take trash with soiled diapers to outside trash bin.
8. Clean diaper-changing area with Clorox wipes provided.
9. Wash your hands after every diaper change.

Creek Kids Nursery Cleaning Policy

Before leaving the nursery, please complete the following:

1. Wipe down any toys that may have saliva on them with Clorox wipes or put into the tote labeled "Toys to be Cleaned".
2. Put toys back to their designed area.
3. Take the garbage out to the dumpster (if garbage contains dirty diapers).
4. Wipe down all surfaces (tables/chairs/countertops).
5. Vacuum as needed.
6. Turn off lights.

Thank you!



Basic Structure

The curriculum provided for each area will give the general order-of-service. From the Nursery to Kid's Church, we want to be sure to include these 3 components each time we care for children:

- 1. Prayer**
- 2. Worship**
- 3. Bible**

General Teaching Tips

Children are learning from the time they walk into the children's ministry room until they leave. They observe the way you treat them, other children, and fellow adults. You are the church to these children. The most important lesson you can teach each child who enters your room is unconditional love. Let us as leaders, **LOVE first; LEAD second.**

The curriculum part of your lesson is provided. As you become familiar with your students, you'll have a better feel for the style of teaching they prefer. Different ways children learn include listening, discussing, doing, and imagining. Teach to their learning styles, rather than trying to make them sit and fit the way you're most comfortable teaching.

When teaching children a Bible Lesson, here are some good guidelines:

1. Pray 1st! Pray for yourself and for the children. The Holy Spirit will help you; he is our Helper!
2. Prepare. Know the material ahead of time.
3. Teach only what you can back up with scripture.
4. Keep your lesson simple. Stick with one main idea, scripture or theme, using activities to support and reinforce.
5. Make the story interesting and exciting. Use a variety of methods from week to week to keep the children guessing what you're going to do next.
6. Expose as many of the child's senses to the story as possible: hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling, and touching.
7. Use repetition as much as possible. Children will remember what we teach when we repeat it and repeat it and repeat it!
8. Get children involved during story time. Have them repeat words, make sounds, act out the story, etc.
9. Have Fun! Your time with children today brought them closer to Jesus. Way to go!



Discipline

Why discipline?

1. We want kids to be safe.
2. We want kids to learn and be able to hear from God.
3. We want volunteers to stay! 😊

Preventative Actions

1. Pray for God's wisdom, direction, and peace in your classroom.
2. Create a loving and caring atmosphere.
3. Come early and be prepared.
4. Understand the attention span of the children you are teaching; rule of thumb is they can sit and listen one minute for every year of their age.
5. Communicate classroom rules clearly and on a regular basis. Let children know your expectations.
6. Be consistent and fair. Follow-through with the consequences for each child and treat all children the same.
7. Focus on positive actions. Compliment students when they are behaving well, i.e. "Julie, I like the way you are sitting and listening so well!" Other children will naturally want the same positive attention.
8. Redirect a child's activity to help improve his/her behavior or move child to sit in another seat.
9. Love the unruly or disruptive child. They will respond best to positive attention and love!
10. Give children jobs. Giving a child a specific responsibility can help them feel important and redirect negative behavior.

Unacceptable Actions

1. Corporal punishment (physical punishment) is unacceptable at Creekside Church. Physically punishing a child will not be used by any children's leader including a parent who serves in a room with their own child.
2. Yelling or threatening a child is not acceptable.

It's important to evaluate yourself. If you are stressed or feel you are losing control, please step aside and ask another leader to handle to situation.

Aggressive Behavior

Aggressive behavior is when a person's behavior may cause harm to oneself, others or property. Aggressive behavior will not be tolerated and will be addressed immediately. Aggressive behavior includes biting, hitting, pushing, scratching, pulling, screaming, or throwing items. A child who displays any of these behaviors will be removed from the class and the parent notified.

Toddlers and Preschoolers

For toddlers and preschoolers, it is best not to say, "Do I need to get your mom or dad?" especially if they have a hard time breaking away from a parent. This may be exactly what they want and therefore, the purpose of discipline is lost.

However, if a parent needs to be contacted due to disruptive, disrespectful or aggressive behavior, please speak to the parent in a positive manner. Let them know their child is having trouble obeying today. Tell them you'd like for the child to stay but they will need to be kind to others, be gentle, not throw toys, or whatever the desired result may be. The parent can possibly talk to the child and help solve the problem.

Each children's ministry area will have their own set of simple rules and consequences.

Nursery Toddler Rules

1. Listen to your leaders
2. Be kind to others
3. Hands to yourselves

When toddlers are not following the rules

1. Remind them of the rule (i.e. Suzy, let's remember to be kind to others).
2. Redirect the child (why don't you come over here and play with this toy).
3. If a child persists in being disrespectful and disruptive after several attempts to remind and redirect, contact the parent.

Preschool Rules

1. Obey your leaders.
2. Raise your hand to speak.
3. Be kind to others.

Preschool consequences

1. Verbal warning
2. Verbal warning and move to another seat if having trouble sitting next to another child
3. Thinking Chair (1 minute intervals) *see below*
4. Contact parent if child continues to be disruptive

“**The Thinking Chair**” is a technique used to help a disruptive child. It is similar to a time-out. The “Thinking Chair” is to be set slightly off from other chairs but not facing a wall or in a corner. The purpose is not to create a feeling of shame or embarrassment, but rather a place where children can think about good behavior and ask God to help them. A sign on the chair will say, “I am here to think and pray how I can behave better today.” You may say, “Child’s Name, you seem to be having a hard time obeying today. I’d like for you to sit down, take a moment, and ask God to help you. He always helps us when we ask!” Lead them to the “Thinking Chair”. After 1 minute say, “Child’s name, are you ready to join us?” If they say “no”, let them remain seated and keep asking in 1 minute intervals.

Kid’s Church Rules

1. Have Fun
2. Obey your leaders
3. Raise your hand to speak
4. Respect the church and others

Kid’s Church Consequences

1. Verbal Warning
2. Verbal Warning
3. Verbal Warning
4. Bye, Bye (meaning, the child’s parent will be contacted and they will be removed from Kid’s Church)



Accident and Emergency Information

You will be informed of any person(s) at Creekside Church who has medical training. If any of the following accidents occur, contact the person(s) immediately. If unavailable, call 9-1-1.

- A child starts choking
- A child is knocked unconscious
- A child starts to have trouble breathing especially if he/she is an allergy-alert child.

Accidents

Accidents happen. If any of the following accidents occur, contact the parent immediately and complete the Accident/Injury Report.

- Any accident where the injury leaves a visible mark
- Any accident where there is blood
- Any injury to the head
- Any accident that involves an allergy-alert child ingesting an allergen
- Any accident that leaves the child crying for a long period of time, even if there is no visible injury
- Any accident that leaves a child limping or dazed
- Any accident where a child is complaining of pain more than five minutes after the accident

Accident/Injury/Illness/Incident Reports

An Accident/Injury/Illness/Incident Report is to be completed if a child is injured, has an accident (such as incontinence), there is a sudden illness (vomiting or allergic reaction), there is a behavioral incident or any other incident that requires attention from church staff, parent or emergency services.

The report should be completed by the witness of the incident. A parent and the Children's Pastor must be notified of the incident and sign the report. Accident/Injury/Illness/Incident Reports are located in all children's ministry areas. A sample of the report is on the following page.

Fire Evacuation & Tornado/Severe Weather Plan

In case of fire or tornado/severe weather, calmly but firmly have all children form a line at the door. It is important all children stay calm and quiet so leaders can communicate. A head count of all children should be taken before leaving the room. In case of fire: lead children out of the room and to the nearest exit of the building. Once outside, lead children to the pavilion and wait for further instructions. In case of severe weather/tornado, lead all children to the choir room located on the main floor between the kitchen and the sanctuary. When the all clear sign is given by a leader, children will return to their room for parent-pick-up.



Accident/Injury/Illness/Incident Report

This form is to be completed if a child is injured, has an accident (such as incontinence), there is a sudden illness (vomiting or allergic reaction), there is a behavioral incident or any other incident that requires attention from church staff, parent or emergency services.

Date of Incident: _____ Name of person filling out report: _____

Child's First and Last Name: _____

Location of Incident (i.e. Kid's Church, Nursery): _____ Time: _____

Type of Incident (please circle): Injury Illness Behavioral Incontinence Other _____

Description of Incident (please describe in detail): _____

Please list all witnesses to incident:

First and Last Name	Child or Adult	First and Last Name	Child or Adult
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

What action was taken and by whom (please be specific): _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Children's Pastor Signature: _____ Date: _____



Keeping Kids Safe

Creekside Church is committed to keeping kids safe. Here is some brief information about Child Sexual Abuse and a list of prevention measures we have in place at Creekside Church. A 20-minute training video is also available.

Child Abuse: defined by state law, but generally includes 1. non-accidental physical injury, 2. sexual contact or exploitation, 3. neglect, and 4. emotional distress.

Child sexual abuse: defined by state law, but generally any sexual contact with or exploitation between an adult or caregiver and a child or adolescent even if the victim gives consent.

Some facts about abusers:

- Over 80% of the time, the abuser is someone known to the victim
- Most abuse takes place within the context of an ongoing relationship
- The usual offender is between the ages of 20-30 yrs
- Child abusers often are married and have children

Prevention

- 6 month rule & membership
- Application
- Background Check
- Interview
- Reference Check
- 2 per room rule
- Limit isolation (car rides, events, overnights)
- Visibility (open doors, windows) & monitor to check throughout service
- Bathroom Procedures (as described in this policy manual)

Volunteer-to-child relationships

No personal phone calls, texts, emails, or facebook messages are allowed between volunteers and children. All communications to children must be through the child's parents or guardians.

Reporting

If you suspect a child under the age of 18 is being abused or neglected, please call the **Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-362-2178** (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week). Please be ready to provide identifying information and the whereabouts of the child. You may remain anonymous. If you believe the child is in imminent danger, call 9-1-1 immediately. Please also notify the Children's Pastor or Lead Pastor.



Creek Kids Children's Ministries
Volunteer Commitment Letter

I have completed reading and I agree to abide by the Creek Kids Children's Ministries Policies and Procedures. I understand that failure to abide by the guidelines as listed could result in my dismissal from serving in the Children's Ministry at Creekside Church. I understand the responsibilities of my position and know who I am accountable to.

Volunteer's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's Signature (if Student) _____ Date: _____

Children's Pastor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Note: *The following will be completed after discussion and in the presence of the Children's Pastor.*

Position Title: _____

Days of Service: _____

Times of Service: _____

Length of Commitment: _____