

CHILD SAFETY POLICY

Battle Lake Alliance Church

Reasons for the Policy:

We have a spiritual, moral and legal obligation to provide a safe and secure environment for the children and workers who participate in our church ministries.

The church represents Jesus Christ and must demonstrate and model His love, concern, and holiness of life to everyone.

The primary purpose of this policy is to safeguard **both** students and leaders in the church setting.

REQUIREMENTS:

Church workers will be screened according to the following:

- Volunteers should have regularly attended BLAC for 6 months, or have a character reference from someone who has.
- Adult volunteers are 18 years of age and older.
- Youth volunteers are 12 (completed 6th grade) through 17 years of age and are supervised by an Adult volunteer or Ministry Leader.
- All adult volunteers who work with children or youth will fill out a ministry volunteer application that includes permission for background checks.

CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT:

Staffing and Supervising:

- All classrooms in our church have doors with windows in them.
- We strive to place 2 volunteers in ministries, however, in situations where staffing is unavailable, please be aware that you do not put yourself in a one-on-one situation. If you find yourself in a one-on-one situation, please do one of the following:
 - Open classroom door
 - Find a more public place
 - Combine with another class
- During Awana and similar community outreach programs, there will be a minimum of two workers in each classroom unless approved by the ministry leader.

OTHER GUIDELINES

Teacher/Child Ratio:

Adequate staffing is necessary to provide optimal care. If you find yourself with inadequate coverage, notify ministry leaders immediately.

- One caregiver for every 3 infants
- One caregiver for every 4 toddlers
- One caregiver for every 8-10 elementary-age children

Children's Ministry Guidelines:

- Attendance is taken in each ministry.
- A child who is ill should not be received into any ministry.
- Please practice regular hand washing to prevent sickness and disease.
- At the end of a ministry, release children younger than 5th grade only to parent or guardian who dropped off the child unless otherwise instructed by parent or guardian. In the case of Awana, dismiss with the other kids at the end of the evening per usual procedures.
- All volunteers in any children's ministry should wear a name tag.
- All volunteers are expected to use respectable language and dress in a modest fashion.
- All volunteers will timely report suspected abuse, neglect or concerns to the ministry leader.

Nursery-Specific Guidelines

- Sunday Attendance is to be taken on the sheet taped to the wall above the changing table.
- Attendance is to be taken for other nursery uses (MOPS, AWANA) on their own sheet.
- Only volunteers and children being cared for in the nursery should be in the nursery. If a parent needs to tend to their child, direct them to the quiet room.
- Release a child only to a parent or guardian, unless otherwise instructed by parent or guardian.

Rest Room Guidelines

We strongly recommend that parents take their children to visit the rest room prior to each class or service.

- Volunteers should not be alone with a child in a rest room.
- Two unrelated children should not be in a bathroom stall at same time.
- If child needs assistance, a second adult must be within visual contact or informed of the situation.
- Men should avoid assisting children in the rest rooms.

First Aid

- First Aid kits are available in the office, kitchen, and Pastor's office.
- An AED and pocket mask are near front entryway. CPR training will be offered regularly.
- Accidents should be reported immediately to parents and ministry leaders.
- Any injury that requires medical attention needs to be documented.

Proper Displays of Affection

Physical touch is an important element in the communication of love and care. It is an essential part of the nurturing process that should be characteristic of ministry with students. Physical contact should be age and developmentally appropriate, and is most appropriate when done publicly. Obviously, holding and rocking infants and toddlers is appropriate. The following guidelines are recommended for preschool age children and older.

Inappropriate Touch

- Kissing a child or coaxing a child to kiss you.
- Extended hugging or prolonged physical contact of any kind.
- Any form of tickling.
- Lifting, spinning or throwing a child into the air, or surprise grabbing
- Touching a child in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit.
(exception: properly assisting a child in the rest room)
- Be aware of children inappropriately touching or speaking to another child.
- Games that involve turning the lights out or hiding.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

"Practice kindness, patience, self-control" Galatians 5:23

There are 2 rules we would like our children to follow:

1. Raise your hand before speaking
2. Don't touch your neighbor

Discipline Policy - Remember the "5 R's"

1. Reward good behavior
2. Remind student of proper classroom behavior (the 2 rules)
3. Redirect the student
4. Remove the student from the group
5. Return the student to a parent

Communicate honestly, timely, and lovingly about the behavior of children with the parent or guardians.

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