

Christ's Church  
of the Assemblies of God

**Policy and Guidelines**  
for Christian Education Ministries

Version 2.a

Published February 2007



# Christian Education Policies and Guidelines Manual

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## Published Revision History

Version Number	Publish Date	Comments
1	May 2006	Version for original training
1.a	May 2006	Minor edits from training class, version published on web
2.a	February 2007	Revised policy in Ministry Management, and Classroom Procedures

## I. Purpose of the Policies and Guidelines Manual

We believe it is a privilege to teach and disciple those that God has placed in our care. Studying God's Word is integral in growing in a relationship with Christ. It is our duty to ensure that Christ's Church is a safe place ministering to body, mind, and spirit.

Operations and Curriculum: This policy provides guidance and expectations to the various children, youth, and adult ministries of the church on worker performance, curriculum selection, and managing classroom situations.

Child and Worker Protection: This policy addresses steps necessary to minimize the possibility of abuse of children and teens that participate in the church's ministries. These precautions also minimize the possibility of false accusations of workers who provide this ministry.

Consistent Administration: This policy presents the plan of our church to provide consistent administration across all Christian Education ministries at Christ's Church.

## Church Ministries Covered

This document covers any ministry operating at Christ's Church, sponsored formally and informally, that involves minors (all below age 18).

The developmentally disadvantaged, although they may be 18 years old or older, may be vulnerable to abuse, and are therefore covered by this policy.

Specific church ministries (collectively called Christian Education Ministries) identified at the time of this publication (but not limited to) include:

- Small Group Bible Study (a.k.a. Sunday School)
- Missionettes
- Royal Rangers
- Child Care
- Youth

## How to Use This Manual

Policy statements in this document are identified as such and inserted in a box. The text following the policy statements provides guidance on how to apply the policy.

## Revisions

From time to time, the church leadership will review and revise the policy. Ministers, teachers, and childcare workers are expected to remain current on the policy and to place them into effect. Anyone may suggest a revision by submitting a proposed change to the church office.

## II. Dictionary of Terms

**Adherents** – people that consider the church to be ‘their’ church, attend with some level of frequency, and are no longer considered visitors. Adherents may or may not be members.

**Adults** – those age 18 and above whose role is ministry to children and youth.

**Children** – those in Grade 5 and below

**Christian Education Worker** (abbreviated as **Worker**) – a broad term referring to any leader, helper, or volunteer participating in children’s and youth programs at Christ’s Church. These include Department Heads, Leaders or Teacher, Assistant Leaders or Teacher, Substitute Leaders or Teacher, and Helpers

**Class** – this is the general term used for the teaching unit of a program. E.g. a Missionettes club is a class, a Royal Ranger outpost is a class, a youth meeting is a class

**Junior Ambassadors and Buddy Workers** – are teenage workers in the Christian Education Ministries

**Parents and Guardians** – These terms are used interchangeably and refer to the person who has the legal custodial right to the child. The terms parent and guardian do not apply to those from whom the courts have removed custodial rights.

**Pastoral Staff** – Official church staff designated as pastor or minister

**Responsible Adult** – Any adult that brings a child to a program. Usually this is a parent or guardian. Occasionally family friends, relatives and neighbors are brought to church without their parents. In that case, the person that received custody of the child to bring them to church retains responsibility.

**Teacher/Leader** – these terms are generally interchangeable and refer to the appointed leader of a class

**Usher** – An officially designated person with the defined responsibilities of usher such as crowd management, safety, etc.

**Volunteer** – also known as Parental Volunteers refers to classroom helpers that occasionally assist the assigned classroom teacher.

**Youth** – those in Grade 6 -12 (under the age of 18)

### III. Qualifications to be a Christian Education Worker

Policy: Christian Education Workers must have salvation experience and demonstrated Christian qualities as defined in the Bible and the church constitution. The pastoral staff will ensure that workers are qualified, meet high standards, and are of good moral standing in the community.

#### General Guidelines

The Pastor, as head of this body, is responsible for the ministries and activities of this church. The Pastor and Pastoral Staff place and remove workers in positions of leadership and authority. Responsibilities for ministry are delegated to department heads.

To be appointed as a Christian Education Worker, the candidate must:

1. Meet the required criteria
2. Be interviewed
3. Pass a background screening.

#### Adult Volunteer Worker Qualification Criteria\*

- Has personally experienced salvation through Jesus Christ
- Demonstrates a willingness to serve God and others
- Is an example of Christian character and conduct, showing evidence of a consistent Christian walk
- Portrays a cooperative, humble and Christ-like spirit toward God and church leadership,
- Shows an ability to relate well with people on a personal basis
- Faithfully attends a majority of the weekly worship services for 6 months (In special circumstances, the Pastoral staff may waive the 6-month requirement)
- Reads and affirms that they subscribe to the Assemblies of God Tenants of Faith
- Is dependable and well prepared for class
- Able to maintain confidentiality (about things learned or observed when ministering)
- Has already or will complete the Child Protection Program training shortly after their appointment
- Is 18 years of age or older
- Passes a background check administered by the pastoral staff
- Meets the approval of the Pastoral Staff

\* Pastoral Staff (paid and unpaid) and paid church staff have different set of requirements that are appropriate to their appointment and/or their employment contract.

#### Substitute Adult Volunteer Worker Qualifications

All substitute leaders/teachers must meet the above requirements. Pastoral staff will maintain a list of officially approved workers from which substitutes may be selected. The

department heads will make the list available for the teachers and assist with managing the substitution process.

## **Jr. High and High School Volunteer Workers**

Teenage workers, also known as Junior Ambassadors ages 12-18 or Buddy Workers, to work in the ministries must have the following:

- The maturity and ability to perform the assigned tasks
- Sign the pledge form which outlines expectations for their participation (the form will be renewed periodically)
- Approval to participate from their parent, class teacher where they will be working, the department head, and the Pastor

## **Temporary Workers and Parent Volunteers**

Getting parents and others involved is a great way to introduce new people to ministry and can help to grow the number of teachers available. It is our desire to encourage the recruitment of new teachers but we must be careful to note when a temporary worker is becoming a regular leader. When temporary workers want to assist more frequently, or in an expanded capacity, they must meet the requirements above and go through the background screening.

These are the general conditions for a temporary worker to participate in ministry activities:

- Temporary workers participating in ministries may assist in teaching, childcare, or other ministry activities infrequently, without pastoral approval, if there is at least one supervising approved adult worker present.
- The designated class teacher will supervise the volunteer's actions and activities in the class.
- Temporary workers and volunteers will not receive background screening. Therefore, they cannot be left alone or in charge of a class.



## IV. Child Safety and Abuse Prevention

Policy: Christ's Church will maintain a safe and comfortable learning environment for children, teens, and workers protecting each from physical, mental, and spiritual harm. Workers will avoid the appearance of impropriety. Inappropriate behaviors are to be reported promptly.

### Child Safety and Abuse Prevention Program Objectives

1. To protect the minor from harm and/or abuse when participating in Christ's Church ministries
2. To discourage anyone with inappropriate intentions toward children from attempting to be involved in the ministries of Christ's Church
3. To protect all persons involved in Christ's Church's ministries from any false charges of misconduct.
4. To protect the church from any persons wishing to profit financially from any incident that may arise from the actions of an individual, accidental or otherwise.

### Program Summary

1. Screen workers and leaders who are in contact with minors, or vulnerable other persons
2. Establish policies on proper conduct of leaders
3. Establish job descriptions for leaders
4. Use a "Two-Adult" Rule in contact situations (Avoid "one-on-one" activity between adult and child)
5. Respect privacy of young people
6. All ministries must maintain the same standards
7. No unauthorized clubs, activities, field trips, meetings, etc.
8. Maintain records of unusual behavior or occurrences
9. Report incidences and/or suspicions of child abuse to pastoral staff

### General Guidelines

1. Scheduling Events: All activities involving children and teens where workers are acting in an official capacity of the church (or that might be construed official) require permission from pastoral staff and must be scheduled on the official Church Calendar.
2. Safety Rules: Department heads and workers are to create reasonable rules to maintain safety.
3. Student Responsibility: Students are to behave respectfully and safely during any activities. To prevent injury, students are to walk at all times while in the Education Center and Worship Center.
4. Emergencies: For situations requiring immediate emergency services such as police, fire, and ambulance, it is appropriate to call 911 immediately. Then solicit help from others within the

church such as trained medical personnel and ushers. Report all incidents to the department head and pastoral staff.

5. Proper displays of affection: The ministry of touch is understood to be a valuable dimension of ministry. However, it can also open the door of vulnerability if applied inappropriately. A warm handshake or handclasp is always appropriate, as is an arm around a hurting child or a brief hug of greeting or approval. Such displays, however, must always be done in the presence of other people, never in an isolated situation. Any indication from the child or youth that they are uncomfortable with such a display must be honored immediately. Any unreasonable or inappropriate touching is forbidden.
6. Windows: Do not meet in a room that does not have windows or a window in the door. Windows may not be obstructed so passing adults cannot see into the room.
7. Ushers: Ushers are stationed in locations where they can view activities in the buildings and will help monitor and control behavior that is considered unsafe or inappropriate. They can be asked to get parents when needed. However, ushers are not background screened so they cannot be left alone with the children.
8. Witnessing Inappropriate Behavior: People witnessing or hearing about inappropriate behaviors should report the incident to the program department heads. In the case of behaviors that are in violation of law, these items are to be reported to the pastoral staff who will contact the appropriate legal authorities in behalf of the church.
9. Fire Code regulations require that all exit doors remain unlocked during scheduled events. Both doors at the primary entrance should be unlocked.

## Custody of Children

10. Parental Consent is required for children and teens to participate in church activities.
  - Implied parental permission for the child to participate in activities is given to the church when parents deliver their children into our custody for an event on the church property.
  - Express parental permission in the form of a signed permission form from the custodial parent or guardian is required to take the child away from the immediate church property.
  - Visitor Registration: Events that may attract non-church adherents where a child is left in the church's custody require a registration process to collect permission and contact information for use in an emergency. Other information may be collected to facilitate the programs needs.
  - When Parents Attend: Events where the parents are required to attend do not require permission forms.
  - Permission Form: A signed form is kept by the supervising leader. (The parent may also keep a copy.) Information collected on the form should include following:
    - name of the event
    - sponsoring department or class
    - location of the event
    - date of the event
    - time of departure and arrival from the church
    - transportation arrangements
    - supervising leaders name and how to contact the leader at the event
    - how to contact the parent during the event
11. Medical Consent for Treatment of a Minor forms are required for any event not held at the church and at a distance where the parent could not be quickly involved in medical decisions. Rule of thumb is events held out side of Houston/Galveston area. Events such as a camping

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trip and trips to seminars in other cities need Medical Consent for Treatment Forms. Uninsured attendees need pastoral staff to attend.

- Two Separate Forms: The medical consent form is not a substitute for a parental Permission Form.
- Standard Form: Most activities use the church’s standard form, which must be signed and notarized. Some activities may require a special medical consent form which substitutes for the standard form.
- Confidentiality: The medical consent form contains private and personal information. The holder of this information must maintain its confidentiality.
- Duration of Consent: The standard form is usable for all programs and is valid until the beginning of the next calendar year. (They are re-done each year because insurance information may change at the beginning of each year.)
- Filing: The original forms stay on file in the church office. Copies are taken on trips.

This table below explains which forms must be completed for a minor to attend an event.

Event	Where are the parents?	Permissi on Form	Medical Consent Form
<b>Activities on the church campus</b>			
Regularly scheduled meetings of established programs at the church such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small Group Bible Study (Sunday School) classes on Sunday mornings</li> <li>• Royal Ranger, Missionettes, and youth programs</li> </ul>	usually on the church campus	✗ not required	✗ not required
Irregularly scheduled events held at the church which require permission forms such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class parties where the children are left after service or dropped off,</li> <li>• VBS (registering the child is a form of permission)</li> </ul>	parent is not required to be in attendance	✓ required	✗ not required
<b>Activities off the church campus</b>			
Socials at leader’s or parent’s homes, etc	parent is not required to be in attendance	✓ required	✗ not required
Camping and field trips some distance from the church	parent is not required to be in attendance	✓ required	✓ required
Campouts where a parent is required to camp with the child	parent is required to be in attendance	✗ not required	✗ not required

12. Child Care Sign In/Out: All nursery-aged children should be dropped off and picked up by the parent or guardian at the door. For the child's safety, children will only be released to a parent or guardian (siblings are usually not guardians). Nursing mothers may use the specially designated nursing mother's room or, if extra space is needed, the nursery area.
13. Children Up Through Grade 5: Children up through grade 5 will be supervised at all times while in the church’s custody. For the child's safety, children will only be released to a parent or guardian (siblings are usually not guardians). Small Group Bible Study (Sunday School) Teachers of children who fall in this category will escort the children from their class to Children’s Church.
14. Siblings as Guardians: Siblings are considered guardians when they actually provide the transportation to church in place of a parent/guardian.
15. Court Custody Orders: When informed, the leaders will honor court issued custody orders and will act in compliance with the instructions of the court’s mandates. This includes not releasing to children to parents who do not have authorized custody and protecting collected information such as addresses and phone numbers.

16. Parental Visitation: With a few exceptions, parents and other *approved* observers are welcome to infrequent visits to children's programs at any time. [Visitors are frequently not allowed at kids camps and district sponsored campouts.]

## Two-Adult Rule

17. An important dimension of child abuse protection, and an important deterrent to false accusations of abuse, is the presence of more than one approved adult where child and teen ministry are taking place. All ministries will implement this policy to the maximum extent practical for their ministry.
  - It is ok to have one leader in a section of a large classroom with dividers as long as there is a second leader in another part of the divided room.
  - Where it is not practical to have two approved adults present, the teacher shall avoid being in the room with only one child present. If only one child is present (such as the first one in and the last one out), the door must be open wide enough for the teacher and student to be observed by a passer-by.
  - If you counsel a child and another worker is not present, you can still maintain privacy during the counseling session by separating some distance from others. Always stay visible to others.

## Procedures for One-On-One Meetings

18. The following guidelines are given for one-on-one meetings between leaders/teachers and the teens to whom they minister:
  - Parents must be aware of the meeting.
  - Any such meeting must be in a public place, such as a restaurant or mall. Transportation to and from the meeting for the teen, if needed, must be provided by someone other than the leader, unless prior parental permission is obtained, or unless a third person is in the vehicle. It is recommended that you personally document the meeting including how the parent was notified, when the pastor was notified, when and where the meeting took place, what was discussed, and how it was concluded.
  - The pastoral staff must be notified in advance of any such meeting. If a member of the pastoral staff is not available, any other youth leader may substitute. The pastoral staff must be notified after the meeting, however.

## Restroom Guidelines

19. If a young child needs to use the bathroom, he/she should do so by him/herself if possible. It is assumed that children in kindergarten and above will not need assistance. Workers should avoid being alone with children in the restrooms. Workers may enter to assist only when absolutely necessary and the child states that he needs help.

## Nursery Guidelines

20. Diaper Changing: The nursery workers are to dispose of soiled diapers in zip-lock baggies immediately following a diaper change and place in the trash bag. The changing area is to be sanitized after each child.

- 21. Sanitization: The toys and furniture in Nursery are sanitized after each use. The crib sheets, blankets and placed in a designated area for washing. They are replaced with clean sheets ready to use for the next stay in the Nursery.
- 22. Upset Child: If a child cannot be consoled within a reasonable amount of time (15 to 20 minutes) and after all reasonable efforts are exhausted, the parent is notified.
- 23. Sick Children: Sick children and a child who has had fever within the past 24 hours are not permitted in the nursery. If a child develops a fever or other symptoms of illness or discomfort, the parent is notified and asked that the child be taken home for the day.
- 24. Medication: Workers are not permitted to give medication to a child while in our care.

**Other Events (parties, sleepovers, camping, etc)**

- 25. Scheduling: All activities require permission from the church office and must be scheduled on the official church calendar.
- 26. Two-Adult Rule: Honor the two-adult rule as much as possible. There must be at least two leaders to supervise the activity.
- 27. Small groups: Leaders should avoid sleeping with children. If it is necessary to sleep with the students, there must be a minimum of two leaders or two children in the sleeping area with the leader. For mixed gender events, there must be separate sleeping accommodations maintained for the two genders. Any common space must be supervised by at least two adults.
- 28. Sleep Wear: In sleeping arrangements, leaders, youth, and children shall maintain modest dress at all times.
- 29. Dormitory Style Sleeping: Large groups of same gender children and multiple adults may sleep together in dormitory type housing or in large tents.
- 30. Children Under Grade 3: For children grade 2 or younger, the parent is required to be with the children on outings and camping.

**Worker/Child Ratio**

31. The optimal situation is for each group of children is to have at least two responsible workers, at least one being adult, present at all times. The following ratio of teachers and students are recommended:

Age/Grade	Students per Teacher
0-2 years	3
2-4 years	4
3-4 years	5

Age/Grade	Students per Teacher
5-10 (K-5 grade)	10
Jr High School	12
High School	12

## V. Classroom Procedures

Policy: Children's ministry workers should teach and manage their class not taking casually or lightly their responsibility to the church or their students, presenting the word of God and their Christian service in high regard. Workers must allocate enough time to prepare for their classes and seek to improve their style and delivery of materials.

### General Guidelines

1. Appearance: Be neat and clean in appearance. You are a representative of your ministry, the church, and the Lord. Dress appropriately for the type and time of your activity. Smile - it is contagious.
2. Be an Example: Always reflect a quiet and peaceful personality when working with the children, parents and co-workers. Remember to use "low" voice tones. This encourages everyone to respond in like manner. As a leader, you are the authority and the example.
3. Smoking and Alcohol: Smoking, alcohol possession/consumption, possession/use of illegal substances is not allowed on the church campus or during any church activities offsite.
4. Classroom Neatness: Keep your classroom clean, neat and organized. At the close of each activity, workers are responsible for cleaning up their room and restoring it to a "ready to be used" condition. If there is an accident or problem, notify the appropriate authority and help see that the mess is cleaned up.
5. Arrive Early: Arrive at least 30 minutes before each class session. Come completely prepared to teach. Have all of your visual aids and/or handwork ready for immediate use. Take time to be calm and to pray over the room before your class starts. The children are welcome to be in the classroom 15 minutes prior to the start of class.
6. Extra-Curricular Activities: Extra-curricular activities, i.e., parties, field trips, etc. are encouraged. Please involve as many parents as possible. All such activities must be approved in advanced by the department head and placed on the church calendar. Any activity that requires that the children be taken from the church property may require appropriate trip planning and emergency medical release forms for each child. Release forms for each child should be in the car with the child. Maintain a 1 to 4 ratio of leaders to children.
7. Records: Good records, as appropriate for the program, are to be kept on each student showing attendance, progress, performance, etc.
8. Periodic contact by mail is recommended to the home of each child. Remembrance of a child's birthday is an excellent way to continue to express your and god's love to them. More than the lessons we teach, our individual relationship with each child will have a dynamic impact on his life.
9. "No Risk – Safe Environment": Create an environment for students in which:
  - Everyone is assimilated (All feel welcomed & wanted - not just on day 1). Teachers should encourage regular attendees to make a special effort to befriend visitors.
  - No bullying, harassment, or humiliation is to be permitted whether it involves children, teens, or leaders – immediate intervention is required in these situations. Seek assistance if needed.
10. Form Relationships: Remember that being a children's worker involves more than presenting a lesson; it is the relationship that makes an impact.

11. Audio/Video Equipment in Rooms with Dividers: Because of the potential for disruptive noise levels in rooms with movable dividers, teachers wishing to use CD's, TV's or other audio equipment must check with the teacher of the other classes within the same room asking whether the noise level is disruptive.
12. Posting on Walls: No sticky tack, staples, tape or thumbtacks will be used on the walls, windows, doors, etc. Posters, pictures, etc. may be posted only on the bulletin boards provided with thumbtacks or staples. (Safe class rooms -- Age appropriate thumbtacks)
13. Minors as Teaching Assistants: Approved teenagers (see Jr. High and High School Worker Qualification in Section I) may be used to assist in classes, but a teenager may not be left with the responsibility for the class. Teenagers may never be in charge of a class away from the church facilities. Teenage workers should not be put into the position to counsel with parents about their children. The supervising adult workers are to handle parent consultations.
14. Invitations to non-Class Events and Gift Giving in Class: Students may want to pass out invitations to non-class sponsored parties or distribute gifts or thank you notes during class. In the past, this has created classroom problems. To prevent this problem the teacher should separate the personal activity from the classroom environment. In this we are not trying to prohibit or monitor family activities, or even prevent the occasional celebration of a birthday in the classroom, but to protect students from public embarrassment and the teacher, ministry, and church from misunderstandings that may arise. Therefore the teacher should discretely stop the behavior in class, require distribution be handled outside the class and not in the classroom, and offer to the parent a more appropriate way to handle the passing out of invitations, gifts, and notes.

### Dress Code

15. Appropriate Dress: In all church activities you may dress comfortable, but modestly. As role models, we are representatives of the Lord and of the church. The workers and leaders (including teenage workers) of the programs will wear appropriate clothing and shoes. The standard for both men and women can be set by asking ourselves several questions:

"Is my clothing drawing attention to myself, or honoring the Lord? What parts of my body will their attention be drawn to? Why do I want to wear this outfit?"

General Guidelines:

- Pastoral staff and department heads are to encourage and enforce appropriate dress.
- It would be inappropriate to wear tight fitting or revealing clothing that expose body areas that would be considered immodest to reveal. This includes bare shoulders, cleavage, bare areas between the waist and thigh, and explicit profiles.
- Pants should be worn at the natural waist.
- Clothing, jewelry, and other accessories that contain suggestive, offensive, or vulgar messages or artwork, or advertise and promote alcohol and tobacco products, or illegal substances are prohibited.
- Some ministries have a uniform associated with their programs; those uniforms should be worn appropriately as defined by the program's dress code. Nursery workers will wear name tags and smocks.
- Workers should maintain good personal body and oral hygiene and control body odor.

- Clothing, jewelry, and other accessories that the department head or teacher, in their judgment, considers unsafe are prohibited. Generally this applies to camping, games, and other special circumstances.
- It is appropriate in some circumstances to enforce a student dress code when the situation of the class necessitates it. For example, camping trips may require clothing to protect from insect bites or sun protection.

### Injuries

16. Noting an Injured Child: If a child comes into the class with a cut or a bruise, draw this to the parent's attention before they leave. If not, possibly show the child to the department head or another teacher/worker. Document and report the findings if the incident sounds "fishy".
17. Parental Notification of Injury: Always tell the parents if there has been an accident that results in an injury. Document the incident and notify the department head. Do not over-react in this area, but tell somebody about any situation that you feel needs more attention.
18. Emergencies: For situations requiring immediate emergency services such as police, fire, and ambulance, it is appropriate to call 9-1-1 immediately, (phones are located in the offices in both buildings and at the visitor welcome center) then solicit help from others within the church such as trained medical personnel and ushers. Report all incidents to the department head and pastoral staff.
19. First Aid kits: The church will maintain a first aid kit for minor injuries in the teacher workroom in the Christian Education Building. A first aid kit should be taken on camping trips.

### Off-site Transportation Guidelines

20. An adherent, should provide their own transportation between home and church if possible; however, transportation between home and church, and to an offsite event may be provided by the leader/teacher if there are at least three people in the vehicle, or with the expressed permission of the parents of the youth involved. A leader should avoid being alone in a vehicle with a minor.
  - Driver Criteria: Drivers are at least 21 years of age, have a valid license, and vehicle in good working order including enough seat belts for each occupant, and good tires. Avoid selecting drivers that are not well known church adherents. Trip organizers should not allow anyone to drive that in their judgment is not a safe driver.
  - Insurance: The owner of the vehicle must properly insure the vehicle transporting minors and their equipment. Proof of insurance must be in the vehicle. The church will carry an insurance rider to extend liability coverage to non-church owned vehicles that are used in a sanctioned program of the church or an event approved by the church office. **THIS IS NOT A REPLACEMENT FOR LIABILITY OR COLLISION COVERAGE FOR YOUR CAR, it is an extension of the church's insurance policy.** If you are in an accident, the automobile insurance of the responsible party will pay for the damages to the vehicles involved. The owner is responsible for any deductibles that may apply. If you frequently transport persons on behalf of the church, you should discuss this with your insurance company.
  - Inspection: Before leaving, each driver's license, proof of insurance and vehicle will be visually inspected by the leader. Drivers should be sober; they should not drive if heavily medicated and/or drowsy.



- Carry Passenger Permission Forms: Ensure all drivers have a copy of the Medical Consent (as applicable) and Parental Permission Forms for each child in their car. Treat these forms confidentially.
- Driving Safety: The driver is responsible for the behavior of the passengers in the vehicle. All passengers are required to wear their seatbelt. If possible, a second adult should be in the vehicle.
- Driver Responsibility: The driver will operate the vehicle lawfully and obey all traffic laws. The driver is responsible for citations and tickets received even while driving on behalf of the church.
- Preventing Driver Fatigue: Drivers will not drive children while fatigued. Drivers must limit the number of hours driving and take mandatory breaks. The following limits apply.
  - a) The driver should take a 20 minute break every 2 - 2.5 hours of driving
  - b) Change drivers regularly, a driver should not drive more than 5 hours without a driver change.

## **Turning Guests into Members**

21. Retaining visitors and turning them into members is goal of a growing church that is committed to reaching out to the lost and disciplining converts. Assimilation into the church is not an accidental process. Ministry leaders assist by collecting basic data and following-up with contacts. The following is the procedure to follow:
  - A. Collecting information: The leader is to get the name, parent's information, address, and phone number.
    - All classes will use the Christian Education Visitor Card to collect this information.
    - Workers should copy the information for themselves. Then place the cards in the marked box on the credenza outside the Christian Education Office
    - It does not matter if a family completes multiple cards, the church office will separate the information for their needs.
    - Leaders should be sensitive that the adults may have already completed a Visitors Card provided in the Worship Center and should not be pressured to complete additional cards. You should at least get the visitor's name for your records.
  - B. First Contact: The church office will make contact with the guests the same week.
    - A letter will be sent thanking them for their attendance, welcoming them to return,
    - The church office will email teachers with information of visitors that attend on Sunday that may come back on Wednesday.
  - C. Second Contact: The leader should make contact with the visitor and their parents (if a minor) by phone one to two days before the guest would return to their class.
    - The call should communicate excitement in the first visit, invite the visitor to return to the next meeting, and answer any questions they may have. If the visitor is a minor, first speak to the parent and then to the child.
    - Follow-up quickly on any items that come up in the call. Paul Sorensen from Community Church of Joy reports, "34% of first-time guests who get a call from the pastor within 2 days will return next Sunday. But if they receive a call from a layperson, 68% will come back."

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- D. Third Contact (Missionettes and Royal Rangers): Between the second and fourth visit, the parents should receive written materials on the program including an age appropriate description of the program, desired commitment from the child, description of the costs, and leaders contact information. This contact is best done in person where questions can be answered.
- E. Continuing Contacts (Missionettes and Royal Rangers): The leader needs to periodically contact the parents to provide updates on their child's progress and praising their participation. This may be a casual conversation. However, make sure the parents understand you are discussing their child and the specific program.

## VI. Discipline Guidelines

Policy: Children are precious to the Lord. The children's ministry programs will train and manage children's behavior with love, graciousness, and uniformity. Learning and correction are to be positive experiences for the child.

### General Guidelines

1. No form of physical discipline may be used on any child at any time. Do not slap their hands or shake them. If the child's behavior is harmful to the class, and the child does not respond positively to correction, the leader may take the child firmly by the shoulder, and escort the child out of the situation. In this event, the child's parent(s) must be notified immediately.
2. Don't yell at students. Keep your voice volume down. Do not yell across the room. Always walk over to a child to correct him. Keep your patience.
3. Never use the words "shut-up" or "hush". Take a moment to silently pray for God's grace to refresh yourself.
4. Don't tell kids they are "bad." Encourage them to not do whatever is causing the problem, e.g. "good boys don't... ", etc.
5. Be lavish with your praise. This helps the children to learn to correct the things which are unacceptable and develop a healthy self-esteem. Do not neglect to praise the quiet and shy children. Teach and discipline each child in a positive, loving, caring, and appropriate manner. Take into consideration the child's age, level of maturity and act of misbehavior.
6. Draw aside the child to whom you must speak. Never shame a child in front of his classmates.
7. Always have another person present when counseling/correcting a child. Practice the "Two-Adult Rule". One-on-one encounters are not acceptable.
8. When a child cries, be extra patient, gentle and loving. Let them know you love them. This makes them feel more secure.
9. Let them help in the defining of appropriate class rules and the consequences for failure to live by them.
10. Leaders have a right to expect respectful behavior from students. Teachers are expected to take appropriate corrective action when students are disrespectful of their authority.
11. Focus on the desired behaviors, not the undesirable actions. State classroom guidelines in positive, not negative, terms. (Instead of "No running indoors," say, "Walk when you're inside. Running is for outside.")
12. If a child continues to misbehave after correction, go get or send for their parent.
13. Use scripture to discipline.
14. Do not tolerate continued behavior problems. Manage the situation with the help of the parents. Do not wait too long to involve your department head or others.
15. Do not discipline in anger. If angry, request help from another adult.

## VII. Ministry Management

Policy: The ministries will manage their programs in a uniform way, establishing age or grade based class divisions, provide suitable teaching materials and resources, and provide for recognition of advancements and accomplishments. The curriculums are to be bible based and appropriate for the student's skills. The materials selected and taught will adhere to the principals and doctrines of the Assemblies of God. The course topics, materials used and teaching methods are subject to review and approval of the pastoral staff. The pastoral staff shall see that the programs are supervised properly.

### General Guidelines

1. Grade Based Programs: All programs, Missionettes, Royal Rangers, youth, and Small Group Bible Study (Sunday School) are grade-based programs with appropriate materials. That means that each student will attend the class that is appropriate for his grade.
2. Lesson Planning: The teachers are expected to be ready to teach their class before arriving to class. This includes planning ahead, being prepared to teach class and ordering supplies.
3. Teacher Training: Teachers are expected to continue their personal development by attending Teacher training events.

### Curriculum

4. Curriculum Selection: All curriculums will be approved by the department head and subject to review by the pastoral staff.
5. Standard Curriculum: The standard curriculum is the age appropriate material provided by Gospel Publishing House. A substitute of another curriculum requires the department head approval. The teacher needs to submit either the proposed book or appropriate documentation of the course content to the department head.
6. Movies and Video Games: The primary purpose of Christian education is to teach the Word of God. Any activity should support this goal as well as promote unity within the body of Christ. It is recognized that Christians have different standards regarding movie watching and video gaming, therefore, the pastoral staff must review and approve any movie to be shown and video games played. This policy will apply to any regularly scheduled classes or special activity.
7. Games: Games are good ways to reinforce lesson materials and to build relationships among the players. Common sense in selecting games should apply here. Avoid games of chance such as poker, craps, etc that would commonly be used in gambling situations. Physical games should be played using reasonable safety precautions.

### Placing Children in Classes and Promotions

8. Grade Based Programs: Classes for children and youth are organized by grade. Generally, children should be encouraged to participate with the grade they are in because the materials are developed for the children with those skills.

Sometimes a child may have advanced in school faster or slower than their age peers. Parents after discussing the situation with program leaders may choose the class the child attends. However, if in the judgment of the program leaders the child is not able to successfully participate the class, they can be re-placed into another class.

9. Promotion: Generally students do not promote on their birthdays, but with their peers once a year. To promote, the student must be at the required grade on or before September 1st of that year.
  - Mid-week Programs and Youth: Students will promote to, and attend, the next class level the first meeting date in September. Promotion ceremonies are customarily held on the last Wednesday in August.
  - Small Group Bible Study (Sunday School): Students will promote to, and attend, the next class level on the first Sunday in September. Promotion ceremonies are customarily held on the last Sunday in August. Kindergarten class exception: promotion from toddler class into the kindergarten class occurs in the beginning of the quarter after the child reaches his/her 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, parents and teacher discuss and agree on the promotion.
  - Nursery Classes: The infant nursery accommodates babies from 0-24 months. The toddler nursery is open for children aged 2 through 4. Upon reaching the age of 4, the child will be promoted to Children's Church on Sunday mornings. Upon reaching the age of 3, the child will be promoted to Rainbows on Wednesday evenings.

### Teaching Supplies and Ministry Expenses

The church will provide the necessary supplies that are needed to perform the ministries of the church. Leading a program or class is not meant to be a financial burden. Whereas teachers and department heads cannot commit the church to large expenses, one should expect reimbursement for reasonable and ordinary expenses in carrying out an approved function when approved in advance. For example, it is appropriate to be reimbursed for a limited amount of craft supplies, gasoline for a personal car to provide transportation to an approved church sponsored function like a camping trip, limited meals at an approved training event.

10. Centralized Standard Teacher Supplies: Standard items will be stocked in supplies cabinet in the Christian Education Building work room. (Includes dry erase markers; pencils, lined yellow pads; staplers; scissors; staples; paper clips; construction paper; scotch tape; etc.) Request non-standard supplies and the restocking of standard supplies through the church office.
11. Purchasing supplies through the church office: Teachers should request to supplies directly to the church office by filling out the TEACHER LEADER SUPPLY ORDER FORM online at the church website. Upon review the request may be routed to the department head for approval. Combining your request with others allows the church to obtain better discounts and to get the supplies tax free. Teachers should plan ahead since the process could take a week or more depending on the item requested.
12. Reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses: Reimbursement requires pre-approval. Reimbursement is to be used when time is critical to the purchase or when it is impractical to purchase through the office. Gasoline for a vehicle to drive kids to camp or meals at training would be examples. You may be asked to take a sales tax exemption form to make the purchase. Use the same TEACHER LEADER SUPPLY ORDER FORM to submit a reimbursement pre-approval form at the church website, note it as such on the form. The form may be routed to the department head for approval.

## VIII. Handling Emergencies, Illness or Injury

Policy: The church will take precautions to provide reasonable attention to accidents and illnesses of church attendees during ministry events providing basic first aid supplies and instructions. Proper concern will be provided to the patient and the care giver.

### 1. Rendering First Aid

- A first aid kit & gloves (see HIV Cautions below) is located in the Teacher Workroom in the Christian Education Building.
- It is ok to provide topical treatments of injuries such as antibiotic creams and a Band-Aid. It is inappropriate to administer medication to a child. The exception being on camping and similar events when prescribed medication needs to be administered on a scheduled basis. In such cases, that parent will provide the medication in containers clearly labeled with instructions to whom and when medication is to be given.
- Always tell parents about any accident involving their child. Report serious events to department heads.
- Take advantage of medical professionals and first aid experts who may be available at Christ's Church. A list of first aid certified members will be posted near the first aid kit.

### 2. HIV Cautions When Rendering First Aid and Changing Diapers

- Because of concerns about HIV, everyone's blood should be considered possibly infected. Any cuts or scrapes should be treated cautiously.
- It is recommended that one wear disposable gloves when giving first aid and changing diapers. Clean up blood spills with the blood kit available in the Christian Education Building Teachers Workroom and Worship Center Child Care (nursery). Notify the office when used so that it can be replaced.
- Cover with a bandage any wound that would ooze blood.
- After completing first aid, wash hands thoroughly with soap and water. Dispose of, launder or dry clean any clothing contacted by blood.

### 3. If An Emergency Is Life-Threatening Call 9-1-1

- Phones are located in the offices in both buildings and at the visitors Welcome Center in the Worship Center Building.
- Then contact the designated program coordinator who will find the child's parents and contact any first aid experts who may be available at Christ's Church.

### 4. Emergency Evacuations

- Workers need to be aware of evacuation routes from their classrooms and created a plan for managing a class evacuation.
- In the event of an emergency evacuation, workers are to guide children as a group, staying together, to a designated safe area outside the building and away for emergency equipment and emergency operations. The first designated area for evacuations is the rear parking lot; the second alternate location is the fields behind and north of the Worship Center Building.
- Workers should stay with the children until they can be released to their parent or guardian.

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5. Sick-up Kits: A sick-up cleanup kit is available in the custodial closet in the Worship Center. Ask the custodian for assistance.
6. A version of these guidelines are to be posted with the first aid kits

# Appendix I – Sample Permission Form

## Royal Ranger Outing Permission Slip

The Discovery Rangers are going to the National Weather Service in Dickinson Texas on Wednesday March 8, 2006 departing the church at 7:00 PM sharp returning by 8:30 PM Wednesday night. Transportation will be provided by Royal Ranger Leaders.

There is no cost associated with this field trip. It is part of their weather merit.

The address for the Field trip is:  
National Weather Service  
Houston/Galveston  
1353 FM 646 Suite 202  
Dickinson, Texas 77539

During the trip, you may reach me on my cell phone at 281-555-1234

Thanks  
Ibe Ready  
Royal Ranger Outpost Commander

*(Parent, please fill in below, detach, and give to the Royal Ranger Commander)*

I give permission for my child, \_\_\_\_\_ (child's name) to go to \_\_\_\_\_ (place) on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) with his Royal Ranger Outpost. I understand that transportation will be provided by the leaders. During the event, I can be reached at \_\_\_\_\_ (phone number)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Permission Form contains the place, time, and transportation arrangements.

How to contact a leader during the trip

The information is repeated by the parent so that they are fully aware of the details.

How to contact the parent is important.