



## Children's Ministry Handbook

(abcKIDS, abcKIDSlife, abc56)

*Partnering with parents as they give  
spiritual leadership to their children.*

Dear Allen Bible Church Children's Volunteer,

Thank you so much for your interest in serving with children here at Allen Bible Church. We highly value you, our volunteers and the ministry that we provide to children on Sunday mornings and throughout the week. We also value our children and want to provide a safe and nurturing environment so that they can learn about God in a loving way.

On the following pages, we have prepared a handbook to help you learn the ins and outs of our children's ministry. It is important that you read over these rules and regulations so that we develop unity and so we can protect you, the volunteer, the children, and the mission of Allen Bible Church.

After carefully reading over the following pages, please sign and date the back page and return.

Sincerely,  
Kelly Quarando  
abcKIDS Director

## **Mission**

*Partnering with parents as they give spiritual leadership to their children.*

## **Volunteer Application Process**

Allen Bible Church requires all volunteers working with children to complete the following steps:

### **1. Membership**

To serve in any capacity at Allen Bible Church you must become a member. The membership process includes a discovery class, a personal interview, and a statement of how you came to faith in Christ.

### **2. Background Check**

Allen Bible Church requires all of its volunteers that work with children to undergo a background check. If you have already talked with the children's director about serving in children's ministry, you can fill out a background check here:

<https://www.ministryopportunities.org/AllenBible>

Individuals who have been arrested for, charged with, or convicted of sexually oriented or sex related crimes, either misdemeanor or felony, cannot serve in any area of the children's ministry.

### **3. Review Handbook and Meet with Children's Staff Member**

Volunteers are required to review the pages of this handbook and sign the last page affirming that he or she agrees to comply with the following guidelines. Also, as part of our orientation process, volunteers in children's ministry must meet with a member of children's ministry staff before observing in an area of ministry. This can be done during one of the services on Sunday.

### **4. Observe Day**

Before committing to a regular rotation in children's ministry, it is our goal to have you observe in the area that you are interested in. This is to make sure that it is a fit for you as well as help you transition into the new role.

Allen Bible Church reserves the right to deny or suspend a volunteer's ability to serve in the children's ministry at any time for any reason.

## **Child Protection Policy**

Allen Bible Church supports and maintains a zero tolerance policy against child abuse and neglect. It is against the law and against Allen Bible Church's policy for any volunteer or staff member to physically, sexually, emotionally, mentally, or spiritually abuse or neglect any child.<sup>1</sup>

Allen Bible Church staff has had training to recognize behaviors intended to "groom" children for sexual abuse. These behaviors will be immediately investigated and reported to the appropriate authorities.

If any volunteer observes or suspects that a child is being abused contact the children's director or another staff member immediately.

In order to provide a safe environment for families at our church we adhere to the following policies:

### **Rule of 3**

There should never be a reason for a volunteer and a child to be alone. Ever. If one child needs to go to the restroom then bring another one, or have the whole class go. Ideally, there would be two adults present at all times.

### **Restroom Policy**

Occasionally, there may be a need for an adult to provide assistance to a child using the restroom. Any adult assisting a child must follow the follow procedures:

#### **Birth thru 3 Years**

Volunteers should provide assistance to a child using the restroom only if the child is three years or younger or has special needs requiring extra assistance. Only female volunteers should provide this assistance.

#### **4 Years thru 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

Volunteers (male or female) must prop open the main restroom door when taking children to and from the restroom and not allow any adults that are not children's ministry volunteers to enter the restroom while children are using the facilities. Volunteers should wait outside the door while children are going to the restroom and then gather all kids to take them back to their class.

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> thru 6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

We do not accompany children third grade and up to and from the restroom. However, they must go in groups of 3. Welcome desk staff will be trained to make sure these kids are getting back to where they need to go.

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions can be found: Myers JEB, Berliner L, Briere J, Hendrix CT, Jenny C, Reid TA, editors. *The APSAC handbook of child maltreatment*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks (CA): Sage Publications; 2002. p. 55.

Note: Remember the rule of 3. You should never take a child to the restroom alone. Failure to follow this policy will be grounds for removal as a volunteer from the Allen Bible Church children's ministry.

## **Physical Contact**

Appropriate ways to touch kids:

- An arm around the shoulder
- Walking hand and hand
- Carrying small children piggy-back
- Short congratulatory or greeting hugs
- A brief, assuring pat on the shoulder
- Handshakes, high-fives, and knuckles

Ways a volunteer should NEVER touch kids

- Never touch a child out of anger or disgust
- Never touch a child between the navel and the knee
- Never touch a child's private parts (With the exception of a diaper change or bathroom procedures listed above)

Any type of physical contact should be above reproach. Do not force contact or touch on a reluctant child. Children must be respected at all times.

## **Verbal Interactions**

Interactions between a volunteer and a child should be positive and encouraging. There is never any reason to yell at a child. Volunteers should never make fun of a child, or talk in a harsh, humiliating, or intimidating way towards them.

Volunteers and staff members should never keep secrets with a child.

Please refrain from swearing in the presence of the children.

Never teach anything that would disagree with Allen Bible Church's doctrinal statement ([www.allenbible.org/beliefs](http://www.allenbible.org/beliefs)).

## **Visibility & Security**

It is important that all interaction between children and volunteers happens in a location that is visible by others for accountability purposes. At no time should a child ever be one on one with a volunteer or behind a closed door without a window.

There are random walk thrus of the building during the service to protect both children and volunteers.

Only parents, children's ministry volunteers, church staff, and children are allowed in the children's ministry area during service. All other adults (including other members of our church) should be confronted by a staff member or welcome desk team member if found in the children's area during service.

## **Volunteer Attendance**

Allen Bible Church relies on many volunteers to carry out a successful Sunday morning. In order to make things as smooth as possible we ask that you abide by the following guidelines:

### **Arrival**

Unless leadership tells you otherwise:

abcKIDS- 30 minutes prior to service

abcKIDSlife- 15 minutes prior to service

abc56- 15 minutes prior to service

Welcome Desk- 30 minutes prior to service

### **Departure**

Volunteers must remain in their area until the last kid has been picked up from their classroom or the volunteers have switched out.

### **Absences**

Volunteers are responsible for their assigned shifts. We love the freedom we give our volunteers with a one-month on, two-month off rotation. However, this freedom has a lot of moving parts so we make it your responsibility to secure a sub. The follow are steps to take to secure a sub:

1. Email your team to ask for a sub, preferably a couple of weeks in advance. (A volunteer email list can be found on the website under resources. Password:abc1) Copy a children's ministry staff member (director or coordinator) and your team leader (If applicable) on the email to inform them of the date you will be missing.
2. Let children's ministry staff and your team leader know who is replacing you.

In the event of an emergency, or last minute (within 48 hours of Sunday) sub situation please text or call Kelly Quarando at 440-396-0666.

## **Check in Procedures**

We have 3 check-in kiosks located in the children's ministry area. Please make sure all kids (birth thru 6<sup>th</sup> grade) are checked in and have a nametag prior to coming into your classroom. If the parent is new to the church, please direct them to the welcome desk.

## **Parent Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to visit any and all services and programs in which their child is involved in at Allen Bible Church. However, they may not enter the classroom in a continuous, ongoing manner without completing a background check and talking with the children's director.

As always, you will be notified if your child is completely inconsolable (after 10 minutes of care), is ill or injured, has a severe disciplinary problem, or is a danger to himself/herself or others.

## **Discipline**

Physical discipline, such as spanking, is never permitted. Using physical restraint to prevent a child from doing something disruptive or dangerous is permitted and may, in some instances, be necessary. Affirmation and encouragement is always preferred.

Children are to be disciplined using time-outs and other non-physical methods of behavior management. In employing this procedure, volunteers should observe the following guidelines:

- a) Verbally redirect the child before physically intervening. With younger children some physical redirection may be necessary (for example, removing a toy from the hands of a child that is hitting another).
- b) If the behavior does not cease, remove or direct the child away from the group to a corner of the room where the group is meeting (avoid being alone with the child).
- c) Provide the child with a simple, understandable reason for the time-out, and provide the child with a clear explanation of your expectations. ("Jamie, you didn't stop hitting Chris when I asked you to, so you need to sit quietly in the blue chair for three minutes.") In addition, be verbally reassuring, as being removed from the group will likely upset the child. Do not physically hold the child in time-out.
- d) Follow the rule of thumb that a time-out is ineffective if it lasts longer than one minute for every year of the child's life (3 years old, 3 minutes).
- e) Monitor the child through the entire time-out without giving your undivided attention. For longer time-outs give intermittent praise to reassure the child and keep them on task. ("Jamie, you're doing a great job of sitting quietly – just 2 more minutes.")
- f) Praise the child once he or she has completed the time-out and tell them that their reward is being able to rejoin the group. Remind them that repeating their initial behavior will result in further time-out. Follow this with praise.

If the behavior continues, volunteers should contact a welcome desk member or staff member for assistance. The staff member will determine what further action should be taken (paging the parent, discussion with parent, etc.)

## **Allergies**

Allen Bible Church commits to provide a safe environment for all children. In order to do this we have a strict policy on allergies:

1. No peanut butter snacks of any kind can be given out at church.
2. Volunteers need to be aware who has allergies in their classroom. This can be done by looking at a child's nametag or looking at a roster. Parents are responsible to put a red dot on their nametag if there is an allergy, but it is your job to double check.

## **Promotion**

Allen Bible Church promotes children on the first Sunday in August each year. We ask that all children stay in their class level until promotion day unless given special permission by the children's director.

## **Storage Closet**

Please do not place anything new in the storage closet without talking to the children's director first. There is a strong likelihood it will be thrown away. We work hard to keep it neat and organized for everyone's benefit.

- If we are out of something that is normally in the storage closet or you are the last one to use something please write the item on the sheet by the door and sign your name so we can replenish it.
- If you need something that is not currently in the storage closet talk to a children's ministry staff member.

## **Volunteer Training**

Ongoing training is an important part of our ministry. This is the current training schedule:

January- All children's ministry volunteer meeting (abcKIDS, abcKIDSlife, abc56)

March- abc56 All Volunteer Meeting

September- abcKIDSlife All Volunteer Meeting

From time to time online trainings or helpful emails may be sent out as a part of this process.



## **Year-to-Year Contract**

Here at Allen Bible Church we ask that you commit to a year of serving at a time. In the beginning of October of every year we will mail you a new contract for the following year. There will be three options on this contract:

I commit to serving again for the next year. (Jan-Dec)

I commit to serving next year but my desire is to be in another classroom or area.

Note: This does guarantee that you will change areas but we will make every effort to do so.

I'd like to transition out of children's ministry. We highly encourage serving somewhere if you are a member but realize that certain life circumstances require stepping down for a season. We would love to visit with you if a situation like this arises.

If the contract is not returned by the last day of October, we will presume that you have committed to serving in your same area for the following year.

## **Emergency Procedures**

### **1. Medical Emergency**

Immediately report medical concerns to the children's director or the nearest staff member as soon as possible. If no staff member can be found, please find a welcome desk member. The notified person will decide if 911 should be called. The volunteer should remain calm and divert the attention of the other children. There is a first aid kit located in the supply closet.

### **2. Inclement Weather**

In the event of a dangerous weather situation the children's director will notify you of what to do. Stay in your classrooms and do not allow children in the hallway.

### **3. Fire**

The first priority in any fire is that all children and volunteers safety is maintained. Do not attempt to put out a fire yourself unless judgment to do so is unquestionable and in no way puts yourself or others in danger.

Please remain calm and escort all of your children to the nearest exit. Walk away from the building and keep your kids together until the children's director tells you otherwise. Our church meeting place is the parking lot area northwest of the building. Under no circumstances should you release children until the children's director tells you. Parents are welcome to stand with their child but we cannot release children until everyone has been accounted for.

## Media Policy

In the event of a severe incident, Allen Bible Church Elders shall be the only persons to make a statement to the media. It is important that all volunteers not say anything to avoid being misquoted.

It is our policy that social media is never used as a platform for slander, venting or retaliation for Allen Bible Church, its staff, members, or children. If an incident occurs, please do not share about it via social media. Biblical conflict is always to be used if you have an issue with someone in our church.

## Ministry Specific Information

### **Nursery/ Toddler**

Welcome! We are excited to have you join the team. Here is an abbreviated list of the responsibilities of those serving with the littlest children at Allen Bible Church. Please let me know if you have any questions.

- 1 1st service workers arrive at 8:30 to pray and prepare your room before the children arrive around 8:45. Clean all toys, put on clean sheets and changing table covers each week. 2nd service workers should arrive at 10:00.
- 2 Get **your nametag** out of the binder on the changing table. This will help parents know who we are. There are blank nametags in the front for those who don't have a printed one.
- 3 Pick **one person to stand at the door and welcome each child** to the room and hand them off before greeting the next set of parents.
- 4 In the nursery, record the child's name and other important info on the white board. The numbers on the white board correspond to the numbers on the diaper bag hooks.
- 5 There is a roll of masking tape and a permanent marker on each changing table. Please use this to label any diaper bags or other kid items that don't have identification. This will help each week's workers keep track of everything.
- 6 Comfort, read to, pray over, tell about Jesus, sing songs, etc.
- 7 Serve Cheerios only in the toddler room. With two services the snack times should fall around 9:40 and 11:10. Due to allergy and choking concern, **only bottles are to be given in the infant room.**
- 8 Change diapers as needed. Put one of the **pink diaper change stickers** on the back of the child's shirt so parents know of the fresh diaper.
- 9 Return children to parents at pick up only after **checking parent nametags** with children's tags.
10. After second service only: Vacuum and Swiffer the floor. Turn out the lights, close the door and take out the trash. Go home for your day of rest!

Never take a child out of a classroom to console them. Although, this may seem helpful it is a security risk.

Please be extra diligent about keeping toys cleaned and not swapping germs. If a child chews on a toy, please remove it and clean it before another child uses it. This may seem overwhelming,

but it helps cut down on the spread of illness. Also, please clean toys before services begin.

Reminder: No bare toes or shoes for workers. Volunteers need to remove their shoes and wear only socks while helping in these classrooms. This cuts down on germs on the floor with the little ones. Feel free to wear socks with your shoes or bring a pair to wear just while you are serving. There are a few extra pairs of socks in the nursery. If you borrow a pair, please put them with the other dirty linens for that day so they can be washed for next time.

## **Explorers (2's)** **Adventurers (3's)**

### Curriculum

We use a curriculum called TRU Blessings by David C. Cook. The children's director will give you access to this curriculum, which is online. Your team leader for your month will email you prior to your serving date to let you know which activities you will be using out of this curriculum. You personally need to prepare the bible story, which is listed in the schedule below.

### Schedule

8:30am- Clean/ Prepare for kids to arrive

8:45am (10:15am)- Welcome/receive kids

*This time is a mixture of play time/ activity time. Have kids play and pull a couple of kids at a time over to the tables to do the craft/activity for the day.*

9:30am (11:00am)- Play clean up song and help kids clean up toys

9:35am (11:05am)-Bible story

*TRU offers a script as part of their curriculum. Please do not simply read from the script. We recommend you read over the bible passage several times, and then look at the script as a reference point to help you teach the bible story. Kids learn best by using visuals and engaging with them in the material.*

9:45am (11:15am)- Bible verse time

*Please review the bible verse with the children in a creative way. If you need help thinking through ways to do this, there will be a list of ideas in the storage closet of each room.*

9:50am (11:20am)-Worship through music

*There will be a list of songs inside the storage closet in each room. Please ask your lead teacher what they would recommend. There is an ipod in each room that will have music on it.*

10:00am (11:30am)-Snack (Check nametags for allergies)

*Please write the snack for the day on the white board outside the door. A great way to engage kids during this time is to read them a story. Good options: Jesus Calling Bible Storybook, or The Big God Story*

10:05-10:15am (11:35-11:45am)- End of Time Activities

*When a parent comes to pick up their child be engaging with them. If it is a child you do not know, make sure you check the parent's sticker. The child will get sent home with a coloring sheet that has the bible verse for that week on it.*

### Cleaning Procedures

After all children are gone, clean foam floor and tile with Swiffer mop, vacuum carpet with Dirt Devil, and clean all hard surfaces (including door knob and windows) with spray and paper towels. Stack chairs. Take trash bag to trash bin outside door to supply closet and replace bag (extra bags in supply closet). Turn off lights, lock cabinet, and close bottom half of door when room is clean.

### **Navigators (Pre-K)**

Any child that is in Pre-K starts with their parents in the worship gathering until they are released. It is usually 10-15 minutes after service starts.

### Curriculum

We use a curriculum called TRU Wonder by David C. Cook. The children's director will give you access to this curriculum, which is online. It is your job to look at the lesson for your week and decide what activities, and crafts you would like to use.

### Schedule (General Outline)

Opening free play/game time — fun activities help children transition to their classroom

Bible story time — children develop a love and respect for God's Word

Bible verse time — children are introduced to God's Word

Worship through Music — children worship God in song

Craft Time

Snack Time

Games—more game play to finish the class before parents arrive.

### Cleaning Procedures

After all children are gone, clean foam floor and tile with Swiffer mop, vacuum carpet with Dirt Devil, and clean all hard surfaces (including door knob and windows) with spray and paper towels. Stack chairs. Take trash bag to trash bin outside door to supply closet and replace bag (extra bags in supply closet). Turn off lights, lock cabinet, and close bottom half of door when room is clean.

## **KIDSlife (Kindergarten- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

Any child that is in Kindergarten thru 4<sup>th</sup> grade starts with their parents in the worship gathering until they are released. It is usually 10-15 minutes after service starts. You are more than welcome to go to service until the children are released.

### Curriculum

We use a curriculum called TRU Story by David C. Cook. The children's director will give you access to this curriculum, which is online. When planning for small group, you may use any of the activities given by TRU or incorporate some of your own.

### Schedule

#### **9:15am (10:45am)- Countdown and Intro**

*When the clock gets to 10 seconds please start counting down out loud with the kids. Then the big group teacher/ leader should then say "hi everyone" enthusiastically and the kids will yell back "hi".*

#### **9:20am (10:50am)- Game**

*The game changes from week to week but be ready to play/ help the big group leader with whatever they might need. Please be actively engaged during this time.*

#### **9:35am (11:05am)-Books of Bible**

*We use a format by "walk thru the bible" that does a great job of teaching people the overall theme and story of the bible through each book. We alternate years between the Old Testament and the New Testament.*

#### **9:40am (11:10am)- Big Group Lesson**

*The big group is lead by specific leaders in KIDSlife. In order to best support these leaders, we ask that you sit with the children to help them engage in the lesson and refrain from talking to their neighbors. If there is a specific child that is being disruptive please move and sit next to them.*

#### **9:55am (11:25am)-Small Group Time**

*Please incorporate prayer and the memory verse into your small group time. The memory verse can be found on the first page of the lesson. Prayer should incorporate children learning how to pray out loud. Please do not give rewards for prayer or scripture memory without talking to the abcKIDS director first.*

#### **10:15am (11:45am)-Parent pick up**

*If you do not know the child, please make sure you check the parent's sticker when they come to pick up that child.*

### Cleaning Procedures

After the children are gone, please wipe down all of the tables with disinfectant. Vacuum the floors, if needed. Take the trash out and replace the bag. Please return all supplies to the correct location. Turn out the lights and shut the door.

## **56 (5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade) Sunday Mornings**

Any child that is in 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade starts with their parents in the worship gathering until they are released. It is usually 10-15 minutes after service starts. You are more than welcome to go to service until the children are released.

### Curriculum

We use a curriculum called TRU Story (5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade) by David C. Cook. The children's director will give you access to this curriculum, which is online.

### Schedule

The 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> graders come into the neighborhood room with K-4<sup>th</sup> grade for the intro, and game. They will then be dismissed into their classroom for the lesson.

### Cleaning Procedures

After the children are gone, please wipe down all of the tables with disinfectant. Vacuum the floors, if needed. Take the trash out and replace the bag. Please return all supplies to the correct location. Turn out the lights and shut the door.

## **56pm Wednesday Nights**

56pm meets every Wednesday night at Allen Bible Church from 6:30-8:00pm.

### Schedule

6:30-7:00pm-Welcome and Games

7:00pm- Lesson

7:15pm-Small Group Time (Guys and Girls Separated)

7:45pm- Journaling/ Big Group Wrap up

\*\*Occasionally we will have nights where we go off site to do something fun!

### Curriculum

We use a curriculum called TRU Identity by David C. Cook. The children's director will give you access to this curriculum, which is online.

## Welcome Desk

You are our first impression! Please make sure to be wearing your nametag and smile. ☺

9am team: Please arrive 30 minutes early, turn on and log into all check-in kiosks, and be ready to receive new guests.

10:30am team: Please stay until 10 minutes after the service lets out so you can answer any questions parents may have. Also, please shut down the check-in kiosks.

### 1st Time Visitors

-If the guests are first time visitors with us:

- Have them fill out an information card
- Give them yellow stickers for all of their children
- Show them their child's classroom (s) and answer any questions they may have
- Input their information into realm
- Fill out guest postcard and give to teacher

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Time Visitors

-If the Guests have been here once before but have not yet checked in via realm:

- Show them how to sign into realm and print off labels for all of their children
- Ask them if they have any questions and let them know that from now on they can go straight to the computers to check in their children

### Walk thrus/ Security

During the service, one member of the welcome desk team must do a walk thru of the building. This includes checking supply closets, the kitchen, the upstairs storage area, and the restrooms. It should occur at random times very week. Also, if there is a stranger in the hallway please let a staff member know or confront the individual in a gracious manner to kindly let them know it is a closed area during service.

### Emergencies

If there is an emergency inside one of the classrooms the teachers are told to get you if a staff member cannot be found immediately. Please get a staff member to determine the necessary next step. If it is a serious emergency, call 911 immediately.

**The welcome desk is our command center for children's ministry. Please try to know the location of staff members at all times in the event a situation arises. Teachers may ask you for help or turn to you in the event of an emergency.**

## Volunteer Contract

Name \_\_\_\_\_

As a member of the Allen Bible Church's Children's Ministry team, I commit to teaching by word and example these seven marks of a disciple . . .

**#1 WORSHIP -LOVE GOD**

Above all, I love and honor God with my life because He saved me and He loves me.

**#2 FELLOWSHIP - LOVE FRIENDS**

I choose believers to be my closest friends, so we can encourage each other and grow to be more like Christ.

**#3 INFLUENCE - LOVE NEIGHBORS**

I make friends with others, so I can love them like Christ loves them.

**#4 FOLLOW GOD'S PLAN**

I make choices that please God and follow His Kingdom plan because all of me and my stuff belongs to Him.

**#5 SERVE GOD AND OTHERS**

I serve God and others using the special way God made me.

**#6 KNOW AND OBEY GOD'S WORD**

I flood my mind and heart with God's Word, and the Holy Spirit helps me understand and obey it.

**#7 SHARE GOD'S TRUTH**

I encourage others with my words and actions to know Christ and grow to be more like Him.

I will teach and/or support the **teaching of God's Word** to the children in my care.

I will **pray** for the children in my class and their parents.

I have **received and read** a copy of Allen Bible Church's Children's Ministry Handbook and understand the importance of the material in this manual. I agree to abide by these guidelines while serving at Allen Bible Church. I will provide a **safe, loving, ordered, and purposeful ministry** for children.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_