

## Second Presbyterian Church of Chattanooga

### Nursery Policies and Procedures

September 2015

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

Second Presbyterian Church of Chattanooga maintains a commitment to love, shelter, and protect all children in its care. Our policies and procedures exist for the safety and protection of children entrusted to us during church functions, for peace of mind of their parents, and for the support of nursery workers as they provide a safe and nurturing environment.

#### Expectations of Caregivers

- Demonstrate a sense of serenity, calm assurance and love
- Model appropriate behavior for the children
- Understand children's developmental characteristics
- Respond appropriately to different personalities, special needs and temperaments of children
- Seek to be involved with the children and not with other caregivers
- Obtain pertinent information from the parents regarding the children's needs and habits
- Delight in interacting with the children
- Divert children's attention when they are unhappy or uncomfortable
- Respect parent's concerns, needs and wishes

#### Expectations of the Church

- Take to heart the Baptismal vows by providing a place where a young child's physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs are met
- Employ the best staff possible and provide the best qualified volunteers
- Inform parents of all childcare procedures and expectations
- Provide a proper ratio of caregivers to children in the nursery
- Provide CPR, first aid and child protection training to caregivers and volunteers
- Be aware of insurance, liability, safety and security issues
- Provide rooms with age appropriate furnishings, educational materials and toys
- Ensure a nursery area that meets the highest standards of cleanliness and safety
- Take every precaution to ensure a safe, secure and stable place for the children

#### Expectations of the Parents

- Refrain from bringing a sick child to the nursery
- Provide all pertinent information to the caregiver at time of sign in (parent's location while the child is in the nursery, an emergency phone number, feeding and nap schedule, and any known allergies/medical conditions).
- Label with their child's name everything brought to the nursery
- Bring necessary items for their child, such as change of clothing, bottles, diapers, etc.
- Promptly pick up their child from the nursery and sign child out
- Ask about their child's experiences (positive and negative) during the child's stay
- Tell their children positive things about the nursery
- Immediately report any inappropriate/ questionable occurrences to the Pastor, Children's Ministry Director, or any leader of Second Presbyterian Church

## **Age limits**

Only children aged four years and younger are permitted in the nursery rooms, unless prior approval has been obtained from the Director or Children's Ministry (DCM). Children with special needs may be exempted from traditional physical age limits.

Nursery will be available on Sunday morning and at Wonderful Wednesdays and extra activities as requested below. Two nurseries are available:

Infant nursery (newborn to 18 mos.)    Nursery (18 months – 4 yrs.)

## **Nursery hours**

- The nursery opens fifteen minutes prior to services or other events and closes fifteen minutes after the conclusion of the service or special event.
- Parents are welcomed and encouraged to check their children out of the nursery in order to include them in special events during service (such as communion or baptism).

## **Adult/Child ratios**

- Second Presbyterian strives to maintain a minimum of one adult per five children and one adult to every three infants.
- Second Presbyterian strives to maintain a minimum of two caregivers on duty at all times.
- Under no circumstances are children to be left unattended for any duration of time.
- Caregivers are required to directly supervise children by sight and hearing at all times- even while the children are sleeping.

## **Nursery scheduling**

- The Director of Children's Ministry is responsible for the proper staffing of the nursery Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings.
- Other church sponsored events (such as bible study, meetings, adult evenings out and Sunday school parties) requiring child care shall be scheduled with the DCM. Child care for church sponsored events will be arranged to the best of our ability based on the availability of caregivers.
- In order to arrange for childcare, the leader of the function must notify the DCM of child care needs a minimum of two weeks in advance of the event. The DCM may be contacted by phone at 423-267-0541 or via E-mail [Lindamaymay@live.net](mailto:Lindamaymay@live.net).
- Please notify the DCM of any changes in the event schedule using the methods above.

## **Caregiver qualifications**

1. Childcare skills which include but are not limited to: diaper changing, bottle feeding, holding, burping, soothing, and engaging children in play.
2. Must be 18 years of age or older (May be under 18 if accompanied by a full time qualified caregiver over the age of 18).
3. Must have CPR, first aid certification, and child protection training.

4. Must successfully complete a criminal background check.
5. Must attend all required church training and continuing education events.

## **Nursery volunteers**

Active members of the congregation may volunteer to assist the paid nursery staff. All volunteers must familiarize themselves with the relevant church policies and procedures of Second Presbyterian and be under the supervision of a paid staff member.

## **Safety**

- To ensure the safety of our children, parents, grandparents and/or guardians must sign children in and out of the nursery.
- Nursery caregivers shall not release children to anyone other than the adult that signed them in unless other arrangements have been made at the time of sign in.

## **Cleanliness**

The nursery should be the cleanest room in the Church, for the safety of both the children and caregivers. The guidelines below will facilitate the cleanliness of the room(s):

1. All toys that have been mouthed must be cleaned before use by another child.
2. Caregivers must wash hands after using the bathroom, after change of a diaper, after eating/feeding, and after cleaning any body fluids (runny noses, etc.).
3. The room(s) and toys used for nursery will be cleaned by the caregivers after each event.
4. The room(s) will be deep cleaned weekly by the church custodian or approved cleaning service.
5. Toys and equipment shall be inspected on a quarterly basis by the DCM and will be discarded, repaired or replaced when necessary.

## **Illness policy**

If a child is noticeably ill, the parent will be contacted immediately and the child segregated from the other children until the parent arrives to remove the child from the nursery. Parents of children who exhibit signs of a communicable disease within 24 hours of visiting the nursery shall notify the DCM at 423-267-0541 or via E-mail [Lindamaymay@live.net](mailto:Lindamaymay@live.net). Caregivers are not authorized to administer medication of any kind. The one exception to this is the EPI pen (in the event of severe allergic reactions) which the child should have with them. Parents should not leave children in the nursery if he/she exhibits any of the following:

- Body temperature of 100 Degrees F or greater within the last 24 hours.
- Vomiting within the last 24 hours.
- Severe diarrhea within the last 24 hours.
- Runny nose with thick or green mucous (even if medicated with antibiotics).
- Severe or persistent cough.
- Pink eye.
- Exposure to a contagious illness such as chicken pox, measles, flu, etc.

**Note: To ensure the safety of all the children and caregivers, the nursery caregivers are authorized to refuse any child exhibiting any of the above symptoms.**

## Confidentiality

All information regarding the children in our program and their families shall remain confidential unless the safety of the child is in question. In the event of suspected abuse or neglect, a member of the pastoral staff shall be notified **immediately**.

## Emergency procedures

- In the event of an emergency, caregivers are to remain calm in order to keep the children calm and comfortable. Call 911 in the event of a serious emergency. After contacting emergency services, the children's parents/guardians and the DCM (or other church leader) shall be notified.
- In the event an alarm sounds, the building shall be evacuated quickly using the nearest exit. All occupants shall remain clear of the building and assemble in the designated evacuation area until advised to return.
- In the event of personal injury, an *Incident report form* shall be completed by a caregiver and submitted to the DCM. A **first aid kit** shall be available in each nursery room.

## Responsibilities of Caregiver

### Room preparation

- Check room(s) for orderliness. Contact the DCM, member of the Pastoral Staff, Christian Education elder or member of the custodial staff if there is a problem with the facility.
- Set out the sign in/out sheet for parents, nametags for children and labels for affixing to children's belongings.
- Prepare toys, educational materials for the children.
- Stage all materials needed for diaper changes.
- Wash hands.

### Greet the children

- Greet parents and children at the door with a smile. Introduce yourself. Help with any separation problems. Ask parents/guardians appropriate questions regarding the child's care (name, feedings, allergies, and bathroom procedures).
- Ensure parents/guardians sign the children in.
- Obtain emergency phone numbers for contacting of parents/guardians.
- Ensure guests and visitors are given special attention. Caregivers and nursery attendants are often the first contact for visitors with children. Make a great first impression!

### Nursery Activities

All activities for children will be developmentally and age appropriate. Music and/or books shall be available at all times. It is our goal for the children to experience a pleasant visit in the nursery. To achieve this, caregivers should interact with children as they play and converse with them.

- **Play:** Interact with children at their level. Actively engage the children and refrain from sitting and watching while they play.

- **Snacks:** A snack consisting of juice and crackers is available on Sunday mornings. Due to the increase in food allergies and dietary restrictions, please do not give any other food to children.
- **Diaper changes:** Diapers shall be checked every thirty minutes; soiled diapers will be changed immediately upon detection. Diapers should be checked one last time fifteen minutes before the event is scheduled to end.
- **Inconsolable Children:** Caregivers should make every effort to engage unhappy children in play or by rocking them. Sitting on the floor with the children can be a very effective method for calming upset children. If a child is inconsolable (15 minutes of nonstop crying) the parents are to be contacted immediately. Under no circumstances should the child be allowed to "cry itself out".

### **Discipline:**

- Throwing, biting, kicking or hitting will not be tolerated. If a child exhibits any of these behaviors, he/she will be reminded in a kind, firm voice of the behavior expected of them. The child will be separated from the source of the conflict. Be positive if possible telling the child what to do instead of what not to do.
- Other methods of correction that can be used are: a short time out or time away from the source of conflict (e.g. 10 minutes of no blocks if fighting over blocks has occurred), or the distraction method (moving to a different activity).
- Shouting at the children is absolutely prohibited.
- Under no circumstances shall the use or threat of physical force be used. If the child is unmanageable after efforts have been made to correct the situation, contact the parent/guardian.

### **Clean up and departure**

1. Clean all equipment surfaces with the cleaning solution provided.
2. Clean all toys used during the nursery time with sanitizing solution.
3. Stow toys in their proper places. Children will be encouraged to assist in storing items used during the session before leaving (this teaches responsibility).
4. Return snack/drinks to their proper places. No food is to be left out. All food shall be labeled: **Nursery.**
5. Vacuum and quick mop the floors.
6. Empty trash containers.
7. Turn off all lights, close all cabinets and lock entry doors.

**I have read, understand and agree to comply with all applicable Policies and Procedures outlined in this document.**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**A signed copy of this document shall be kept in the caregiver's personnel file.**