



# Nursery

# *Policies & Handbook*



*Agape Bible Church*



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# Nursery Policies

**"From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise..."** Psalm 8:2a

**"For [our earthly fathers] disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but [God] disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."**  
**Hebrews 12: 10-11**

## Nursery Care Giver: Responsibilities/Duties

The nursery caregivers will provide proper care and nurturing to babies/toddlers during church services and special events.

1. Arrive at least 10-15 minutes prior to service or event—earlier if expecting a larger crowd for special services or events.
2. Become familiar with nursery policies and facilities.
3. Greet parents and sign in/out babies/toddlers.
4. Take care of babies/toddlers in the nursery, following nursery policies for safety and proper care:
  - a. Change diapers/clothing as necessary; check diapers near end of service. And fill out the clipboard with appropriate information. After each diaper change please change the pad paper after each diaper change.
  - b. Rock, play with, sing to, play music for and show picture books to babies/toddlers.
  - c. Feed babies when needed or as requested by parents.
  - d. Give snacks to toddlers.
5. Clean up - Toys shall be put away in their proper places. Labels and pens will be put away in the cabinet drawer.
6. Wipe down all surfaces (tables, trays, ect.) with provided Clorox Wipes.
7. Place dirty toys in container to be cleaned/disinfected.
8. Tie-up diaper trash and throw away after your shift. The diaper pail must be emptied into the outside dumpster at the end of each nursery session.
9. Carpet sweep any crumbs or debris with the provided carpet sweeper in the nursery.
10. Make sure that the bathroom toilet is flushed and bathroom trash is emptied.
11. All lights should be turned off.

## Nursery Rules/Expectations

Use inside voices to create a calm environment

No Yelling or Screaming

No Running

No Throwing

No Climbing on Equipment

No Rough-Housing

No Pushing or Hitting

## **General Policies and Discipline**

### **Age limits**

Only children of the appropriate age for a room are allowed in the nursery rooms. No child over the age of four should be in the nursery rooms. For special events where a wide range of children are present, the children should be separated into similar age groups and appropriate activities provided to keep them occupied.

### **Inconsolable children**

Workers should make every effort to engage unhappy children in play or rock them. Sitting on the floor with the children is very effective and calming. If a child is inconsolable (15 minutes of non-stop crying), the parents are to be paged or notified immediately. Under no circumstances should you let a child "cry it out". This policy will help to fortify the trust between our parents and our nursery staff.

### **Snacks**

Appropriate snacks are available in the nursery cabinets. Do not give a child's snacks brought from home to another child. Children shall also be given their personal drinking cups only while they are seated, and removed when they are finished drinking. This is important to maintain the cleanliness of the nursery and to prevent choking hazards.

### **Cleanliness**

The nurseries should be the cleanest rooms in the Church, which is for the safety of both the children and workers. The guidelines below will help to facilitate this:

- All equipment surfaces (i.e. walker trays, swings, mats, tables, and chairs) must be cleaned with the provided bleach/water solution at the end of each nursery session.
- All toys that have been handled and mouthed must be cleaned with the bleach and water solution or wiped down with Clorox wipes before use by another child.
- Carpet spills should be cleaned up immediately.
- Workers must follow general hand washing guidelines posted in the bathrooms and sink areas in the nursery. Workers should wash their hands after each diaper change or cleaning any bodily discharge, such as wiping noses. Hand Sanitizer dispenser is located on the wall by the door for convience.

### **Emergency Procedures – (not in effect yet)**

Please refer to the posted emergency procedures in each room. If a serious injury occurs, an Accident Report Form (found in the Nursery Handbook) needs to be filled out by nursery worker and given to the Nursery Coordinator.

- A First Aid kit is located in the marked cabinet in the Toddler Nursery.

## Discipline

Part of ministering to children, is providing a safe, nurturing and **loving atmosphere** where children can "be conformed to the image of [Christ]" Romans 8:29. The safety of all of the children in the nursery room must be maintained. No throwing, hitting, biting, or kicking can be allowed. If children express this behavior, remind them in a kind voice of the appropriate behavior that you expect and remove them from the source of the conflict. If the behavior continues, it is appropriate to place them in a time-out chair for no more than one minute for each year of their age. Yelling at the children is absolutely prohibited. Also, under no circumstances shall the use of physical force or the threat of physical force be used. If a child is unmanageable after efforts have been made to correct the situation, then the parent should be notified. If a parent volunteer wishes to spank their own child, then they need to do so out of the nursery rooms to avoid the appearance of nursery staff spanking the children, and to prevent frightening the other children.

To help ensure this policy, we have set in place a method of discipline to address behavior that is nearing or outside the set boundaries of the classroom. This type of behavior will most often fall into one of three categories: forgetting/misunderstanding of rules, willful/defiant disregard of rules or verbal/physical aggression. In these cases, classroom leaders will use the "1, 2, 3" method to address the child's behavior. This will be done in a firm but **loving manner!** Physical punishment **is not** an option. The following steps will help ensure expectations are understood by all involved.

### Step One: Set the Standard

Clearly communicate expectations and rules so that boundaries are established. Also, clearly communicate the consequences of behavior to the contrary. For example, make sure the children know that a 1 count is a warning, a 2 count is a "time out", and a "3" count means they have to leave and meet with their parents.

### Step Two: Follow Through

If a child breaks an expectation or rule that has been communicated it is vital that the leader address the behavior to ensure consistency for the children, as well as the staff. Upon the first occurrence, the leader will say the child's name followed by a reminder of the rule that the child has broken and "that's one". If there is a second occurrence the leader will repeat the child's name and the rule that has been broken followed by "that's two...now take five." If after the "time out" the child continues a third time in unacceptable behavior the leader will repeat the child's name then say, "that's three...now come with me" and remove the child from the activity/classroom and contact the child's parent. For a further explanation, refer to the full description of "1, 2, 3" on the following page.

### Step Three: Parent Contact

# Classroom Discipline Policy

*"From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise..." Psalm 8:2a*

## "One, Two, Three"

As Nursery Ministry volunteers, we need to be equipped with an efficient and effective method for managing the behavior of children within the classroom. The following is a brief description of what we believe will best serve the children of our ministry and you, the workers who are serving them. The first step in implementing this method of discipline is ensuring that your children have heard and understood the rules of your classroom. You may need to **review** these rules **often**, as well as the following steps, which will be the result of any behavior to the contrary.

1. Explain to the children that if they do something that is against the rules you will: **say "the child's name", remind them "\_\_\_\_\_ is not allowed, and then say, "That's one".** Proceed with the class without saying anything further unless the child appears to be in need of special attention.
2. Explain to children that if they do something again that is against the rule you will: **say "the child's name", remind them "\_\_\_\_\_ is not allowed, then say, then say, "that's two...now take five."** Explain to the children that they will be expected to sit on a "**time out chair**" if they are pre-school age and younger or in the hall with an adult if they are in grade school. Explain to the children that this time should be spent thinking about their behavior and what they need to do differently to become part of the class activities again. After five minutes the child may rejoin the group. This behavior should be brought to the attention of the parent when they are picked up from the nursery.  
**\*Note:** "time out" for children under 5 should correspond with their age.
3. Finally, explain to the children that if they continue a third time behavior that is unacceptable you will: **say "the child's name", remind them "\_\_\_\_\_ is not allowed, then say, "that's three...now come with me."** Explain to them that they will have to leave the class or activity and go with their leader to speak with their parent/s. Explain to the children they will not be able to return to the class until it next meets.

## Suggestions

- Praise and encourage positive behavior.
  - Try to "re-direct" potentially problematic behavior.
  - When possible, give children a choice if there is one.
  - Pray before each class that God would grant you wisdom, discernment, patience and love as you serve the children.
- \* Remember** there are limits to what we as volunteers may be able to do. You are in the classroom with your children for a limited time and therefore may find it difficult to affect change in children with more severe behavior problems. Do your best to enlist the help of parents in these cases and always be mindful of our example;

*"The Lord is gracious and merciful; slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love." Psalm 145:8*

# ABC Nursery Parent Information/Letter

## Nursery Team

Our nursery team consists of at least one adult worker and one or more adult or youth helpers in the nursery.

## Check-In Procedures

In order for our Nursery Team to provide your child with the best care possible, we ask for your help with the following:

- Bring diaper bag supplied with at least 2 diapers, a bottle/formula or food if needed, or, and any other special item your child might need. **Please be sure to clearly label your child's diaper bag (we provide tags if needed), bottle/sippy cup, and other special items.**
- There is a sign-in sheet on the counter in nursery. Please sign your child's name and complete the special instructions. If you are a visitor, please add your child's name to our sign-in sheet and complete all information.
- Children are only released to their parents (or guardians) at the end of services unless the parents inform the nursery staff otherwise.

## Illness Policy

We kindly ask that you do not put your child in the nurseries if they have experienced any of the following within 24-48 hours:

- fever (higher than 100.0)
- diarrhea or vomiting
- A severe runny nose (colored discharge) or sore throat
- Croup or bad cough
- ear infection
- strep throat
- rash of any kind (other than diaper rash)
- Any childhood disease – measles, mumps, rubella, scarlet fever, chicken pox, or fifth disease.
- pink-eye

\*If your child is on an antibiotic, he/she must be on it for at least 24 hrs before coming into the nurseries.

\*Parents should notify the church office or nursery if their child has been exposed or develops any communicable disease after being in the nursery within the 24-48 hours after exposure. (Ex. Chicken pox, pink eye, fifths disease, ect.)

\*All nurseries are cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis to help reduce the spread of germs and illness.

## Discipline

"Time-out" is used at the workers' discretion. If your child is being destructive or will not stop a behavior that is hurting another child, we will come to get your assistance. We may also come get you out of a service if your child may possibly be ill, soils his/her clothes and there are no other clothes to be used, he/she cries inconsolably for more than 15 minutes, or has been injured.

## **Infants**

- Infants are in the earliest stage of development, and in order to foster this development, infants should not be restricted to one area (piece of equipment) or activity for long periods of time. Activities such as swings, lying/playing on blankets or mats on the floor, and looking at books and toys are acceptable and encouraged.
- Do not stand and hold more than one infant at a time. It is a much better solution to place them on a mat on the floor and join them.
- Infants will be held while given bottles.
- Diapers need to be checked hourly and soiled diapers need to be changed immediately.
- When placing babies in the cribs, they are to be placed on their backs (unless instructed otherwise by the child's parent).

## **Handbook Helpful Hints**

### ***Guidelines for a Safe Nursery***

- Establish a committee to oversee nursery.
- Screen everyone who has access to the children and youth in your church.
- Follow the practice of two adults present at all times, having windows in entrance doors, and having diaper changing stations in central locations.
- Always have an adult in charge. It is best if the same person is there each week.
- Require all nursery workers to go through an orientation before working in the nursery
- Have a back-up plan for staffing the nursery.
- Minimum adult to child ratio recommendations:
  - 1 adult to 3 infants
  - 1 to 4 toddlers
  - 1 to 6 children 3 years and older.
- Have only age appropriate toys in the nursery. If a toy, or parts to a toy, is small enough to fit through a toilet paper tube, do not use.
- Regularly check floors for choking hazards such as: coins, marbles, safety pins, jewelry, buttons, crayons, pen caps, nails, screws, etc.
- Avoid stuffed animals, as they are great germ carriers.
- Establish a regular schedule for checking, cleaning, and replacing toys and other nursery equipment.
- Practice SIDS prevention: always put infants to bed on their back.
- Make sure all electrical cords are out of the way and all electrical outlets are covered.
- Tie up window-blind cords.
- Post emergency exits and phone numbers including poison control.
- Throw out any broken toys.
- Don't get too comfortable. Keep checking and revising your nursery policies.

### ***Good Communication with Parents***

- Have a check-in system for parents that includes having them fill out information cards on their children.
- Keep up-to-date information on all children.
- Ask parents to label their child's diaper bag, bottle, spare clothing, toys, etc.
- Be sure to talk with parents each Sunday about any concerns and joys related to their child.

### ***Necessary Nursery Supplies***

- Disposable diapers
- Paper lining for changing tables
- Pre-moistened wipes
- Tissues
- • First-aid kit with syrup of Ipecac, thermometer, alcohol/antibiotic ointment, bandages, cold pack
- Name tags and markers
- Plastic bags and ties for soiled clothes
- Disinfectants and nontoxic cleaning solutions Clorox wipes
- Paper towels
- Electric outlet covers
- Emergency manual
- Posted fire exit plans/maps
- Goldfish Crackers and Animal Crackers
- Children's books and toys

### ***Furniture***

- Rocking chairs
- Child size table and chairs
- Pack-n-play cribs
- Changing table(s)
- Locked cabinet for supplies
- Hooks for hanging coats and diaper bags
- Bulletin board for announcements and pictures
- Baby swings and walkers are optional (Strict guidelines should be established for the use of these items.)

### ***Nursery Coordinator: Responsibilities/Duties***

1. Recruit and train volunteers to serve in the nursery.
2. Organize the nursery and ensure its cleanliness and safety.
3. Develop, post and enforce nursery policies.
4. Routinely inspect nursery equipment, toys and supplies:
  - a. Report repair and maintenance needs to appropriate personnel.
  - b. Restock supplies when needed.
5. Obtain and keep a library of picture books and music/songs on cassettes or CDs for use in the nursery.
6. Keep a current list of nursery caregivers with names/addresses/phone numbers.
7. Schedule nursery caregivers for every service and special church-wide events in which nursery care is needed.
8. Collect and launder used crib sheets weekly.
9. Clean/disinfect dirty toys as necessary.
10. Oversee budget and expenditures for the nursery ministry.