

## Grace Kids Policy

### **Vision Statement**

We seek to create a safe environment where children can experience, learn about, respond to, and grow in the truth and love of Jesus Christ.

### **Staff Lifestyle Statement**

We ask that every volunteer sign a covenant promising to maintain a healthy personal lifestyle and continue to mature spiritually by constantly seeking how to take the next step in their relationship with Christ. Regular meetings between ministry leaders and volunteers are held to promote healthy discussion and personal growth through accountability.

### **Application Process for Volunteers**

The following is the application process for those interested in joining any of the Grace Kids ministry teams: Applicant visits the classroom for a period no longer than two weeks:

- Applicant visits the classroom for a period no longer than two weeks
- Application is filled out and returned to the appropriate ministry leader
- If the applicant feels comfortable with the position, he or she signs a three month commitment, to obtain a trial position in the classroom
- If the applicant feels confident that his or her position is a sure fit, he or she then fills out a one year covenant

### **Background Checks**

Fingerprint BGC through NJ State Police and run through AFIS on state and federal levels.

### **Classroom Visitor Policy**

Any visitor to the classroom, for any reason, must first be cleared by the appropriate leader. For example, if someone wants to visit a classroom, he or she must first be cleared by the Grace Kids Director or Campus Pastor in order to do so. A visitor cannot visit a ministry team any longer than two weeks without signing a three month covenant and completing a successful Background Check.

### **Grace Kids Check In System**

Upon a child's arrival, the person responsible for check-in will be given a name badge with a number. The badge will be placed on the child, the corresponding number will be recorded along with the child's name in the appropriate attendance book, and the person responsible for pick up will keep the corresponding ticket. At the time of pick up, the ticket must be displayed for release of the child.

**Grace Kids Express Check In System**

Upon becoming a frequent attendee, children are transferred to an express sign in system. The system works identically to the above mentioned check in, except that the children are given tickets with their name pre-written on their ticket. This is simply a way to expedite the check in process for regular attendees.

**Registration Forms**

Upon the arrival of a new child, the person responsible for the child will fill out a New Child Form prior to check in.

**Staff/Child Ratio**

It is our desire to be flexible and accommodate as many children as possible. Our staff/child ratio for our age groups are as follows:

New Jersey State Requirements

<http://www.daycare.com/newjersey/>

0 - 18 months	(1:4) 20 max
18 months - 2 1/2 years	(1:6) 20 max
2 1/2 - 4 years	(1:10) 20 max
4 years	(1:12) 20 max
5 years and older	(1:15) 20 max

Grace Kids Requirements

0 - 24 months	(1:3) 20 max
2 years – 3 years	(1:4) 20 max
4 years – 5 years	(1:6) 20 max
6 years – 10 years	(1:10) 20 max

**CPR Availability**

In our commitment to create a safe atmosphere for children, and a carefree environment for parents we offer a CPR training annually for all Grace Kids volunteers.

**Special Events**

Any group event outside the Grace Kids program must have prior written approval by the Grace Kids Director.

**Incident Reports**

If an accident occurs causing bleeding, injury to the head or child has trouble using any part of their body, an Incident Report must be completely filled out and signed by a witness of the accident, then returned to the teacher of the appropriate age group present on the day of the accident. The teacher must also immediately report this to the Grace Kids Director or Campus Pastor.

**Illness and Disease Policy**

We kindly ask that you do not bring a sick child to the nursery where he or she can pass an infection onto other children present. If a member of the Grace Kids team notices signs of illness, for the benefit of your child as well as the other children, we will have someone contact you during the service and ask that you take your child out of the class.

Some signs of illness in children are:

- Unusual fatigue or irritability                      Coughing, sneezing, or runny nose
- Fever    Questionable rash
- Vomiting or Diarrhea                                      Ear infection

We understand that irritability, coughing, sneezing or a runny nose does not always imply the illness of a child and that the symptoms can be due to allergies. However we do ask that you alert us of these symptoms at the time of check-in.

- A child should be fever free without the use of fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours before being admitted into class.
- If a child is given antibiotic medication for an illness (Strep Throat, Pink Eye, Tonsillitis, etc.) medication must be taken for at least 24 hours before being admitted into class.

We have provided a chart below listing common diseases, incubation periods, and the period during which the child is considered contagious.

<u>Common Diseases</u>	<u>Incubation Period (Days)</u>	<u>Contagious Period</u>
Chicken Pox	10 to 21	Until crusts have fallen off.
Measles	7 to 14	Until 5 days after rash develops.
German Measles	12 to 21	Until 3 days after rash disappears.

Mumps	12 to 28	Until swelling has completely disappeared.
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## Behavior Management & Discipline Procedures

### Behavior Management

When a child is disruptive, all children suffer; therefore, we must handle disruptions and behavioral problems promptly, consistently and graciously.

It is important to remember that problems are often opportunities for you to build and encourage as a positive role model. Behavior management benefits the entire class. The administration of proper discipline makes all children feel safe and secure while giving the disruptive child an opportunity to learn and grow. Guidelines and examples for correcting children are listed below.

#### 1. Know What to Expect in the Classroom

The expectations must first be clear in our minds.

For example:

Segment	Appropriate Behavior	Inappropriate Behavior*
Activity Stations/Free Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interacting with others</li> <li>• Participation in chosen activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disruptive to others or physical harm to others</li> </ul>
Large-Group Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation and listening</li> <li>• Speaking when called on</li> <li>• Hands/feet kept to self</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking when someone else has the floor</li> <li>• Any physical roughhousing or contact</li> </ul>
*See following pages for disciplinary procedures.		

#### 2. Clearly Communicate Your Expectations

Limits should be stated positively.

Children often are more likely to obey the limits when positively rather than negatively stated.

### **3. Encouragement**

It is important that you notice positive as well as negative behavior.

### **4. Correct and Discipline in Private**

When a child displays inappropriate behavior, take action immediately to help restore order in the group. Talk individually with the child to find out what happened.

### **Discipline Procedures for Two-Year-Olds**

Because consistency in discipline is important, the teachers are responsible for and should take the lead in classroom discipline. It is important to be immediate and consistent.

When unacceptable behavior occurs, tell the child that the behavior is unacceptable and redirect the child to acceptable behavior. Explain to the child that he/she can choose to change the behavior or to have a time-out. After an appropriate warning, a time-out is the result of the child's choice to continue the unacceptable behavior.

The time-out procedure is as follows (children new to the classroom will need special instruction regarding this procedure):

- A time-out chair should be set up in the same location each week. Remove child from the group situation and have him sit in the time-out chair.
- Explain why he has been removed from the group.
- Stay close by the child during the time-out.
- Explain why it is wrong for him to do what he was doing.
- Express confidence in his ability to make a good decision next time.
- Have the child make restitution if another person was involved, i.e., acknowledge the sin to the other—"I'm sorry."
- The teacher should give reassurance of acceptance of the child and allow him to return to the group.
- If the child refuses to cooperate with the time-out procedure or you continue to have problems, the parent can be called.

If a child is bitten, call the parent of the victim so the child can be comforted. Inform the parent of the "biter" when the child is picked up. The purpose of informing a parent is that we believe parents want to know when their child inflicts injury on another, not to embarrass or condemn the child. If a child bites a second time, he/she will be removed from the classroom for the remainder of the day.

### **Discipline Procedures for Ages Three – Kindergarten**

In cases where the teacher has tried to verbally correct a child aged three and up and the child continues to disobey, the following time-out procedure may be used:

- Remove child from the group situation and place in a chair facing the wall away from the activities occurring in the room.
- Explain why he has been removed from the group.
- Leave child in the time-out for an appropriate amount of time (3 minutes).
- At the end of the time-out ask the child to verbalize why he was given a time-out. It is important for the child to verbalize what the wrong behavior was. He should know exactly why he had a time-out.
- Express confidence in the child's ability to make a good decision next time.
- Have the child make restitution if another person was involved.
- The teacher should give reassurance of acceptance of the child.

If the child refuses to cooperate with the time-out procedure or you continue to have problems, you may call the parent to come get the child.

Behaviors disruptive to classes and requiring immediate disciplinary attention by the teacher include:

- Fighting
- Disrespect, (i.e., talking back, refusal to listen and follow directions, defiance)
- Destruction of property
- Continued disruptive behavior, yelling, talking out of turn, etc.
- Leaving classroom without permission

### **Discipline Procedures for Ages 1<sup>st</sup> grade – 5<sup>th</sup> grade**

3 Strike Rule:

- (Unless something physical, which the child is then brought immediately to the parent and they are unable to come back into Clubhouse that day, the child gets a warning and 3 strikes)
- 3 verbal corrections; once strike is said, then the child is brought back to his/her parent.

## **Policy in Regard to Child Abuse**

The **abuse** of a child is an act of **commission**. An abused child is one whose parent, immediate family member, any individual residing in the same home, or any other person who is responsible for the child's welfare inflicts upon or creates a substantial non-accidental risk of physical or emotional injury to the child, commits a sex offense against the child, commits torture or inflicts excessive corporal punishment upon the child. Abuse represents an **action against** a child.

The **neglect** of a child is an act of **omission**. The neglected child is one whose parents or other person responsible for the child's welfare fails to provide the child with the necessary care and support such as nourishment, medical care, education as required by law, clothing and shelter or who is abandoned. Neglect is **failure to act** on behalf of a child.

## **Avoiding the Appearance of Child Abuse**

1. Discipline techniques and procedures should not go beyond those described in the discipline procedure section.
2. Share with parents and document any out of the ordinary observations or conduct.

## **Classroom Policy**

There should always be two people with the children at all times.

## **Diaper Changing Policy**

Unless otherwise directed by the parents, the children in the infant nursery will be changed by **female workers** during the last half of the teaching unless there is an earlier need. The children in the **two-year nursery** will be changed by **female workers** only if there is an obvious need or if parental request.

## **Bathroom Policy**

### **Children Ages Two through Kindergarten**

As needed, two female teacher/helpers will direct the child to the bathroom. Unless a child is in obvious need, no female teacher/helper should go inside the bathroom stall with any child. If the child needs help, a female will help while another teacher/helper watches or stands by. Only females take the children to the bathroom.

### **Children Grades 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup>**

A teacher may allow one child at a time to go to the bathroom. If the child does not return in three minutes, the teacher should go to get the child.

## **Identifying Potential Child Abuse**

To question a child for an explanation of bruises, cuts, burns, etc., ask direct questions

such as, “How did you get that?” or “What happened?” Do not ask leading questions such as “Did your daddy do this to you?”

Respond with comfort and questions when a child appears inappropriately upset in the classroom. For example: “Are you sad?” “What makes you feel so sad, angry, etc.?” Be aware that children who have been abused will often avoid giving you a straight answer.

- They may attempt to protect the one who hurt them.
- They may fear retaliation.
- They may distrust you and your motives.
- Their level of anxiety may lead them to give you several different stories.
- If they have been abused, they may fear you also and say what they think that you want to hear. Avoid asking leading questions.

Be aware of signs of poor hygiene, poor or inappropriate clothing, and unattended physical problems or needs that might indicate neglect or abandonment such as chronic body odor or dirty clothing. Be sensitive to families who are impoverished.

Reach out to the child who indicates an inordinate fear of relationships either through class contact or in play or artistic expression. Be a friend.

### **Protecting the Child**

#### **Who is required by New Jersey Law to Report Abuse or Neglect?**

#### **New Jersey Statute 9:6-8.10 Report of abuse**

Any person having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to child abuse or acts of child abuse shall report the same immediately to the Division of Youth and Family Services by telephone or otherwise. Such reports, where possible, shall contain the names and addresses of the child and his parent, guardian, or other person having custody and control of the child and, if known, the child’s age, the nature and possible extent of the child’s injuries, abuse or maltreatment, including any evidence of previous injuries, abuse or maltreatment, and any other information that the person believes may be helpful with respect to the child abuse and the identity of the perpetrator.

### **Hoboken Grace Procedures for Suspected Child Abuse**

1. Be aware. Practice the principles of identification (see above).
2. Respond to the child’s pain. Avoid overt reactions of disgust, shock, or anger.
3. Get basic information from new child info form (name, address, phone, parent or guardian name) and any written observations you may have from that day or over a period of time. Written observations and data are very



helpful in substantiating an objective case of abuse. Remember that objectivity is your friend especially in a potentially emotional situation. You need to be clear on what the child disclosed.

4. Contact your Grace Kids Director and give him/her the information.
5. The Grace Kids Director will contact the Lead Pastor, who will determine what, if any, further action is needed.
6. Keep this information confidential, on a need to know basis only. The law of immunity may not protect those who disclose the report or its contents to anyone other than the children's services or municipal or county law enforcement in which the child resides or county in which the abuse or neglect occurred.

### **Role of Physical Contact**

#### **Appropriate touch is:**

- non-demanding, gentle, aware
- shoulders, hands, arms, head, back
- sitting a young child on leg or lap in a lighted room with one or more adults present.

#### **Inappropriate touch includes:**

- demanding hugs
- touching chest, genital region, upper legs, buttocks
- sitting child in center of your lap, in a darkened room or when no other workers are present

#### **To avoid physical injuries:**

- never grab a child by any joint
- never spin a child by their limbs
- never toss a child

### **Failure to Comply with Guidelines**

Failure to comply with the above guidelines will result in disciplinary action, which could include the dismissal from the Grace Kids team and prohibition from volunteer roles in other children's ministries.

Any concerns about the inappropriateness of the behavior of any volunteer should be directed to the Lead Teacher who will talk with the Grace Kids Director and the Lead Pastor.