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## Riverside Children's Ministry Policy

Jesus called the children to him and said, "*Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.*"  
(Luke 18:16)

Children are a blessing. Our purpose for establishing this children's ministry policy is to demonstrate our total and unwavering commitment to the physical, emotional and spiritual safety of all our children and youth.

God calls us to care for "*the least of these*" and the "*widow, orphan and alien among us*" (James 1:27). This leads us to do all we can to insure that our church is a safe place, especially for the most vulnerable among us.

Our kids are engaged in learning about God's redemptive plan for humanity through focused and creative curriculum. While most children's Bible stories reveal a moral lesson, we strive to teach how God always had a plan to save His people and continues to save through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Having these policies in place help us to effectively minister to the youngest congregants at Riverside.

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### Volunteer selection policies:

All volunteers and paid staff who work with children and youth at Riverside shall:

- Be at least 5 years older than the oldest child/youth they will be supervising.
- All helpers must be at least 12 years old and approved and trained by the Children's Ministry Leadership Team or volunteer with a parent in the same classroom.
- Complete and sign an application and the related waivers giving permission to check references and background information.
- Undergo a criminal background check at no expense. (No one who has been convicted of physical or sexual abuse or neglect will work in any church-sponsored activity or program for children or youth.)
- All volunteer staff must be trained in our Riverside Children's Policy on a regular basis.

General guidelines:

The following principles will be applied to all activities involving children/youth at Riverside:

- All volunteers who work with children or youth at Riverside shall be actively involved at Riverside for at least 3 months prior to volunteering.
- Two non-related adults will be present at all times.
- Children will be checked in to and out of the activity by their parent or legal guardian or people authorized by parent or legal guardian.
- Volunteers will have access to a phone in case of emergency.
- Persons have the right to visit and observe children's/youth activity, classroom or program at any time, unannounced.
- All classroom and office doors will have a window or be visible from the hallway or remain open while occupied. These windows will remain free from adornment.
- Adults should never be alone with children/youth.
- One-on-one interactions with children/youth will be with an open door and visible to all.
- No adult should ever transport a child by himself/herself.
- Any group, agency or organization that uses Riverside's facilities must follow our Children's Ministry Policy.

**If a suspected incident of child abuse or neglect occurs at or is revealed to a staff person (volunteer or paid) at a Riverside sponsored activity, the adult in charge shall:**

- Insure the safety of the child or youth.
- Contact the Columbia Police Department.
- Contact the pastor and Erica Kimrey.

