

# **Children's Ministries**

## **Activity, Party, Event, and Field Trip Guidelines**

Revised February 10, 1999

Building relationships with your students increases the effectiveness of your ministry. Knowing names and showing genuine concern for each student, in the classroom setting, is basic in leading that child to our Savior. Strengthening the teacher-student relationship will encourage the child in his or her Christian walk. A child who knows and loves his teacher will eventually desire to know and love the Jesus whom that teacher serves.

Because if this, we encourage you to serve your students beyond assigned class times. Parties, study sessions, special class events, and field trips are ideal ways to strengthen your relationship with your students.

The following guidelines are designed with yours, and the child's protection in mind. These are also in keeping with Bloomington Assembly's policies and administrative requirements.

### **The Basics**

- The three person rule. We have established a three person rule at this church. Every teacher shall work with two or more children in every setting. It is also permissible for two teachers to work with one child. Gone are the days when a teacher can invite an individual child to the local ice cream parlor. We move, speak, and party in groups of three or more. The safety of the child and reputation of the teacher are primary reasons for the establishment of this rule.
- Two or more adults. We like to have two adults, 18 or older, involved in every child care setting at our church. Minors cannot be responsible for minors without adult supervision and presence. We encourage the participation of youth helpers, but an adult must be present in every setting where children are being cared for by our youth.
- Adult to children ratios. When planning a field trip or off campus party it is always good to have a ratio of one adult for every 4 to 8 children. The more adults present, the easier to handle, keep track of, and insure the safety of the children. We encourage parental involvement in any off-campus party or field trip.
- When showing video materials keep the following in mind. Never show children anything that might be considered offensive, lewd, or violent. Any film with a rating other than G must be approved by the Children's Pastor. Use common/Christian sense. A film you

watch with your family in the privacy of your home, may not be appropriate in the church or church sponsored party setting. Children will often times bring films to an overnight or extended child care activity. Kindly let them know when a film is inappropriate for the general viewing audience. Many seemingly innocent films contain swearing and or jokes and situations which present an immoral world view to children.

Examples of off-campus activities are: Royal Rangers camping trips, Missionettes overnights, bike hikes, bowling parties, nursing home visitation, fire station tours, fishing trips, swim parties, Christmas caroling, yard clean-up, slumber parties or zoo trips.

- Drivers of any vehicle which transports children to and from a church sponsored event must be 18 or older. It is always a good idea to have two or more adults in any vehicle used. One can drive while the other assists with acceptable behavior. It is required that adult passengers spread out among the children. This insures that even in the back of the van or bus, behavior of kids is acceptable.
- Permission slips are required for every off-campus event. Children must have their parents permission to be transported or attend a church sponsored function off campus. A sample permission slip is included with this packet.

## **Planning An Event or Activity**

- Plan well in advance. We recommend that you begin working out the details of your event or activity at least six weeks prior to its implementation. A well planned event with plenty of lead time will be a blessing rather than a frustration for you.
- Chain of command. Each ministry segment in our children's department has a supervisor, a coordinator, commander, or sponsor. Leaders or teachers serving in specific ministries should coordinate any party, activity, or event, on or off-campus, with their immediate supervisor. That supervisor, in turn coordinates the activity with the children's department office.
- Checking the church calendar. The supervisor will check your dates with the children's department secretary to insure that there are no difficulties in finding a room, using transportation, or clashing with other ministries. When the individual teacher or leader calls, the children's department secretary will make inquiry to insure that the ministry supervisor is in the planning loop. Do not advertise a date without first having it approved by the children's department office. The exception to this guideline would be parties held in the classroom during normal class time.
- Transportation arrangements should be made by your ministry supervisor in cooperation with the children's department secretary. A ministry supervisor may step aside allowing the teacher or leader to make transportation arrangements. When reserving a church or rental

van, it is advisable to plan ahead at least six weeks. Last minute planning may leave you and your adult helpers carpooling in your own vehicles. Please plan as far in advance as possible. This will reduce your frustration level in transportation as well as other areas when implementing your plan.

- Feeding the children. We have a wonderful food service department at our church. Those in charge must have advance warning of upcoming events or activities which require their involvement. Your ministry supervisor should inform the children's department secretary at the time an activity is scheduled if food service is required. When in doubt, give the children's department secretary a call and ask if your snacks or meal fall into our food service departmental responsibility.
- Managing the money. Each activity or event is assigned an accounting number by the children's department secretary. Envelopes for the collection of funds will be provided for the leader or teacher. Please deposit funds contained in that well marked envelope in the drop door of the safe in the office hallway. Funds should not be deposited in offering envelopes. We do all we can to make events and activities self funding. If your event requires funding in addition to money collected from the students, seek approval from the children's pastor prior to spending.
- Room usage. When planning your event or activity, a request can be to reserve a room or rooms for your use. Do not assume any room is automatically available for your ministry. This is a very busy church and many of our rooms are used throughout the week for multiple purposes. If you want to use a room, your request must be made through the children's department secretary. An alternative room may be recommended if your first choice has already been booked.
- Communicate with the parents. After receiving approval for your event, communicate the basic details of date, time, place, and cost to the parents of your class. Copies of informational literature can be reproduced at the church. At the earliest possible date, communicate the need for parental involvement in your activity. Field trips, parties or events are ideal times for parents to take an active role in the lives of their children.

## **Have Fun!**

Above all, enjoy yourselves. Enjoy the experience of building relationships with the wonderful children under your ministry. With proper planning, done well in advance of your activity, you can relax knowing every detail will work out. If you need assistance in planning strategies, contact the children's pastor. God bless you in your faithfulness to minister to His children.