

**Westminster Presbyterian Church**  
**Nursery Procedures**  
**Updated January 2018**

**VOLUNTEER APPLICATION PROCESS**

1. Fill out the application form online.
2. Review Westminster's Nursery policy, which can be found online. Print and sign the final page. You can also find the final page at the nursery counter.
3. Complete a background check application.

***VISIBILITY***

It is important that all interaction between children and volunteers happens in a location where others can observe what is going on for safety and accountability purposes. At no time should a child and volunteer be without visibility to outsiders.

***TWO ADULT RULE***

Ideally, a minimum of two adults (volunteer/staff/paid caregiver) will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during our programs and activities. In some instances, only one adult (volunteer/staff/paid caregiver) will be in attendance. In these instances, doors to the classroom should remain open. We do not allow one child to be alone with one adult.

***RESTROOMS***

Restrooms are located in the nurseries. Female adults (volunteer/staff/paid caregiver) should provide physical assistance to a child using the restroom if the child is three years or younger or has needs requiring extra assistance. Male adults (volunteer/staff/paid caregiver) may provide physical assistance only to a male child using the restroom if the child is three years or younger or has needs requiring extra assistance.

***PHYSICAL CONTACT***

Physical contact in any form should be above reproach. The personal behavior of staff members, volunteers, and paid caregivers must foster trust at all times. Never force physical contact, touch, or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.

Using good judgment, the following are appropriate ways to touch small children:

- An arm around the shoulder.
- Walking hand in hand.
- Short congratulatory or greeting hugs.
- A brief, reassuring pat on the back or shoulder.
- Handshakes, high-fives, and 'fist bumps'.

- All touch taking place in visible/observable spaces.
- Carrying small children piggy-back.
- Allowing a child to sit in your lap.

The following are actions an adult (volunteer/staff/paid caregiver) should NEVER take:

- Never touch a child in anger or disgust.
- Never physically discipline a child.
- Never touch a child in any manner that may be construed as sexually suggestive, in particular, try to avoid touching a child between the navel and knee.
- Never touch a child's private parts (with the exception of diaper or bathroom procedures).

### ***DISCIPLINE POLICY***

We're given a description of God's discipline in Hebrews 12:7-11. It is not punishment, but guidance, training, and molding of character. We do not seek to merely control behavior, but to partner with parents to help shape a child's character to be more and more like that of Christ. Remember the delightful opportunity we have to minister to each child and guide them closer to the Lord.

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children.

Children are to be disciplined using time-outs and other non-physical methods of behavior management. In employing this procedure, staff members and volunteers should observe the following guidelines:

- Verbally redirect the child before physically intervening. With younger children some physical redirection may be necessary (for example, removing a toy from the hands of a child that is hitting another).
- If the behavior does not cease, remove or direct the child away from the group to another part of the room. Provide the child with a chair to sit in or a "spot" to sit on (a pillow, carpet square, etc.) until their time-out is complete.
- Provide the child with a simple, understandable reason for the time-out, and provide the child with clear explanation of your expectations. ("Jamie, you didn't stop hitting Chris when I asked you to, so you need to sit quietly in the blue chair for three minutes.")
- Do not physically hold the child in time-out.

- Follow the rule of thumb that a time-out is ineffective if it lasts longer than one minute for every year of the child's life (3 years old, 3 minutes).
- Monitor the child through the entire time-out without giving your undivided attention. For longer time-outs give intermittent praise to reassure the child and keep them on task. ("Jamie, you're doing a great job of sitting quietly – just 2 more minutes.")
- Praise the child once he or she has completed the time-out and tell them that their reward is being able to rejoin the group. Remind them that repeating their initial behavior will result in further time-out. Follow this with praise.

\*\*Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to the Nursery Coordinator.

### ***ALLERGIES***

Every child entering the nursery during church events will be required to have a WPC nametag which will include identification information as well as any information about the child's allergies.

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure their children eat snacks that are appropriate for their dietary needs.

### ***FOOD AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS***

For children entering the nursery, we require the following:

- All belongings are labeled and stored together in a bag.
- Any outside snacks should conform to the posted allergy requirements for the Nursery.

### ***CLEAN UP***

Before leaving the classroom the adults (volunteer/staff/paid caregiver) are to ensure the following has happened:

- All children have been picked up by a parent.
- All toys and materials are put away in a neat manner to prepare for the next week.
- Wipe down tables, chairs, and toys with the provided Lysol spray or wipes.
- Any diapers should be disposed of in the appropriate trash can.
- Let nursery coordinator know if anything is missing.

### ***CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT***

A child should be checked in with the nursery coordinator at the nursery counter. The child will be given a name tag and sent to the appropriate room.

An authorized adult may pick up the child. Parents are asked to wait by the nursery counter while the nursery coordinator or helper goes to get the child.

Parents are asked to hand the child and their belongings off at the nursery desk and not to enter the classroom during check-in and check-out unless given permission.

### ***SICK POLICIES***

Parents should refrain from bringing children to the Nursery who exhibit the following symptoms. Furthermore, if these symptoms are observed by adults (volunteer/staff/paid caregiver), the child's parent may be called to remove the child from the classroom. If a caregiver experiences these symptoms, alert the nursery coordinator so a replacement can be secured.

- Yellow or greenish discharge from the eyes or nose during a cold
- Heavy coughing or excessive sneezing
- A temperature of or greater than 100.4
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Questionable rashes

### ***MEDICATION POLICY***

Westminster is not responsible to store or administer any medication for any child. This is the parent's sole responsibility.

### ***EVACUATION***

- Read and understand the evacuation route for your classroom. The map is posted at the exit door of each room.
- Divide the children among all volunteers and exit immediately.
- Once evacuated, count to make sure all children are accounted for and wait for further instructions from a Westminster staff member, elder or deacon.
- Please stay with your group at all times. Do not leave to go get your own children, to obtain first aid, or for any other reason. First aid will be brought to you if needed.
- Release children only to their parents (for ALL ages) and only after you have been given the okay to dismiss by a staff member, elder or deacon. Do not allow parents to take their child from your care during the evacuation process. Remind parents that they can walk with you but you cannot release a child until you have arrived at your designated location.

### ***WEATHER EMERGENCY***

If there is a reason to shelter in place due to the weather:

- The blue nursery will stay in the blue room.
- The yellow nursery, by way of the bathroom, will move to the green nursery.
- Be sure to count the children under your care.

If children are being cared for in the education wing, they will move to room 211, 212 or to the restrooms in the education wing.

Volunteers and paid workers will not release children until it is safe to do so. Parents are permitted to stay with their children if they so choose, but may not leave with their children until a WPC staff member, deacon or elder releases them.

Please stay with your group at all times. Do not leave to go get your own children, to obtain first aid, or for any other reason. First aid will be brought to you if needed.