

CALVARY
REVVVVVV

Kids!

Elementary

Team Handbook

Contents

Welcome to Elementary Ministries	1
Children’s Ministries Overview	2
Team Covenant.....	3
Peacemaker’s Pledge	4
Social Media.....	5
General Guidelines	7
Sickness	10
Incident Reports	11
Elementary Ministry Overview	12
Safety, Security, & Hygiene	13
Relationships are Key	14
Honor Shines	15
Speaking with Parents	17
Helpful Tips.....	18
Field Trips	19
Children with Disabilities	21
Terminology.....	22
Strategies and Ideas	23

Welcome to Elementary Ministries

Thank you for the time, energy and love that you are investing in our children's lives. Your role as a disciple will encourage them to know God personally, grow to love Him more and desire to walk with Him for a lifetime. We trust that you will be blessed as you love and care for each one and as you share the truths of God's Word week to week. We have no doubt that God will be faithful to water each and every seed planted and to bring about fruit that will last!

This Elementary Handbook provides you with the policies and procedures that are particular to our 1st-6th grade ministries. I so appreciate you familiarizing yourself with this very important information.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you!



Kathy Noel

Kathy Noel

Director of Elementary Ministries

[*knoel@calvarychurch.org*](mailto:knoel@calvarychurch.org)

717-560-2341 x233

Calvary Kids Overview

Our Vision:

Children pursuing life in Christ.

Our Purpose:

Partnering with parents as we inspire each child to know, love, and obey God for His glory.

Our Approach:

- Teaching God's Word for heart response
- Modeling the pursuit of life in Christ
- Building relationships for growth

Our Core Values:

Loving God - By knowing Him personally and worshiping Him collectively

Living God's Word - By learning what it means and doing what it says

Growing with God's People - By relating authentically with others for their good and my growth

Going into God's World - By extending the gospel to others right here and around the world

Investing in God's Work - As stewards of God's gifts and servants in God's plan

Message from the Senior Pastor

Dear Children's Ministries Team Members,

I want to personally thank each and every one of you for the commitment that you are making to invest in the children and the families that come to Calvary Church. On behalf of the entire Calvary staff and Elders, I want you to know that we are your biggest fans, your strongest supporters, and your trusted guides as you serve the Lord in Children's Ministries. This is a crucial part of your own pursuit of Life in Christ.

You have the privilege of being one of the first people to have a spiritual influence in the lives of these kids, and for some, the time that you have with them each week might be the only spiritual influence that they receive. One of the challenges of working with children is that you may not always see the fruit of your labor, but I can assure you that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. You are helping to lay a foundation in their lives. You are placing the anchor of the Lord Jesus deep into their hearts so that they can withstand the storms to come.

Thank you for the sacrifice that you are making to serve Calvary Church. You are an essential part of helping all of us to pursue life in Christ.

Beau Eckert, Senior Pastor

Team Covenant

Every five years you will be asked to sign the Children's Ministries Team Covenant when you receive your renewal clearance packet.

By signing the covenant you are agreeing that you have or will:

Read and adhere to...

- ✓ Children's Ministries Team Handbook – Nursery, Early Childhood, or Elementary
- ✓ Calvary Church's doctrinal statement in all of your teaching and communication with children

Grow spiritually by...

1. Pursuing life in Christ which will itself manifest in your personal relationship with Him, with your family, with your co-workers, and with the Church
2. Seeking ways to be fed spiritually outside of the regular worship service of Calvary Church and to be accountable to other believers (i.e. ABFs, small groups, Bible studies, accountability partners/groups, etc.)
3. Communicating God's love to each child who is in your care, and modeling Christ-like behavior both in and out of your classroom

Work together by...

4. Being dependable in your ministry by being faithful in attendance, in preparation and in prompt arrival
5. Communicating in advance to co-workers and directors when you must be absent
6. Following the principles in the Peacemaker's Pledge when you have a conflict with a co-worker, a classroom coordinator, or one of the ministry staff

Please do not underestimate the importance of your role in this ministry. Each member of our team has a significant role in sharing God's love and the truth of His Word with our children each week. Please pray that God will use you to draw the children in your care into a closer relationship with Him!

We also encourage you to attend a Discover Calvary class to help you see how your role in Children's Ministry fits into the larger picture of Calvary Church.

Peacemaker's Pledge

Revised from The Peacemaker, by Ken Sande; 1997, Baker Books, Grand Rapids. p. 235-237

As People reconciled to God by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we believe that we are called to respond to conflict in a way that is remarkably different from the way the world deals with conflict (Matthew 5:9; Luke 6:27-36; Galatians 5:19-26). We also believe that conflict provides opportunities to glorify God, serve other people, and grow to be like Christ (Proverbs 27:5,6,17; Romans 8:28-29; 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1; James 1:2-4). Therefore, in response to God's love and in reliance on His grace, we commit ourselves to respond to conflict according to the following principles.

Glorify God

Instead of focusing on our own desires or dwelling on what others may do, we will seek to please and honor God—by depending on his wisdom, power, and love; by faithfully obeying his commands; and by seeking to maintain a loving, merciful, and forgiving attitude. (Psalm 37:1-6; Mark 11:25; John 14:15; Romans 12:17-21; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Philippians 4:2-9; Colossians 3:1-4; James 3:17-18; 4:1-3; 1 Peter 2:12)

Focus on Understanding

Instead of focusing only on our perspective, we choose to honor others by listening carefully and ensuring we understand their perspective and their needs before we respond. We choose to actively seek reconciliation, understanding that conflict is an opportunity for personal and relational growth. (Proverbs 18:2; 18:13; James 1:19; Ephesians 4:29-30)

Get the Log out of Your Own Eye

Instead of attacking others or dwelling on their wrongs, we will take responsibility for our own contribution to conflicts—confessing our sins, asking God to help us change any attitudes and habits that lead to conflict, and seeking to repair any harm we have caused. We take others' concerns before the Lord asking Him to examine us and our ways and guide in our response. (Psalm 119:23-24; 139:23-24; Proverbs 28:13; Matthew 7:3-5; Luke 19:8; Colossians 3:5-14; 1 John 1:8-9)

Go and Show Your Brother His Fault

Instead of pretending that conflict doesn't exist or talking about others behind their backs, we will choose to overlook minor offenses or we will talk directly and graciously with those whose offenses seem too serious to overlook. When a conflict with another Christian cannot be resolved in private, we will ask others in the body of Christ to help us settle the matter in a biblical manner. If the conflict or offense is still unresolved after the involvement of a few others, we will request the help of the elders in the church with the goal of bringing reconciliation. (Proverbs 19:11; Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Galatians 6:1-2; Ephesians 4:49; 2 Timothy 2:24-26; James 5:9)

Go and Be Reconciled

Instead of accepting premature compromise or allowing relationships to wither, we will actively pursue genuine peace and reconciliation—forgiving others as God, for Christ’s sake, has forgiven us, and seeking just and mutually beneficial solutions to our differences. (Matthew 5:23-24; 6:12; 7:12; Ephesians 4:1-3, 32; Philippians 2:3-4)

Respect and Prize Differences

Recognizing that God has designed the body of Christ so that it includes many different parts, we choose to respect the differences of others. Since God has designed these differences for the mutual edification of the body, we choose to prize these differences, recognizing their value to us as individuals and the whole church. (Proverbs 27:17; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 3:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:12-26)

By God’s grace, we will apply these principles as a matter of stewardship, realizing that conflict is an assignment, not an accident. We will remember that success, in God’s eyes, is not a matter of specific results but of faithful, dependent obedience. And we will pray that our service as peacemakers brings praise to our Lord and leads others to know His infinite love. (Matthew 25:14-21; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:18; 1 Peter 2:19; 4:19)

Social Media

It is Calvary Church’s desire to create an atmosphere of connection and community among our members and regular attendees. We know that a sense of identity and belonging to a smaller group within the church will enable an individual to feel a part of the whole body.

Guidelines for Church Volunteers

1. ***What you write is public.*** You should always assume that it will be read by your boss, co-workers, parents, children, spouse, and the attorney for the person who doesn't like you. Ask yourself if you are comfortable with all of these people reading what you plan to post.
2. ***Write as yourself.*** Use your real name. If you choose to identify yourself as a volunteer of Calvary Church or to discuss anything related to the church, be clear about your role.
3. ***Be accurate.*** Ensure that you have all the facts about your subject. If you make a mistake, admit it and be quick to correct it. Be careful that what you write would not impair your ability to serve the Lord or represent Him in the community. Remember that frustrations are best expressed in person. Sarcasm does not usually translate well.
4. ***Respect your audience.*** Don't use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity or engage in any conversation that would not be acceptable in front of the Lord.
5. ***Choose your topics wisely.*** There are some ideas that are best discussed in person rather than a public forum. Don't allow your posts to hinder someone’s spiritual growth.

Remember that what you post, even if retracted, will always be available online.

Privacy Issues

Don't post the names or contact information of individuals without their permission. Don't post pictures of others that are inappropriate or that they would not appreciate.

Please remember to consider the safety and effectiveness of our Global Partners and therefore use extra caution when commenting to or about those serving overseas—particularly limited access countries. If you have questions, contact the Global Ministries office first.

Maintain Confidentiality

Ask permission before reporting on conversations or meetings that are meant to be private. Online conversations and postings are not private. Know that what you post online may be around for a long time and potentially shared with others. Therefore, be considerate and loving: Avoid identifying and discussing others, including church members and visitors—*especially* details such as hospitalizations and health concerns or information gleaned in personal counseling. Do not disclose health information on behalf of others. ***Seek to build up not to tear down (Romans 15:2; Ephesians 4:29)***

Relational Boundaries

One of the components of a balanced Children's Ministry is developing strong youth-adult partnerships within the intentional and safe community of our ministry. The vast number of communication possibilities and the speed of technology require that adults working with children and students be aware of the need to maintain appropriate relational boundaries regardless of the communication medium.

Group Identity

Facebook and other social media communication networks can help create a group identity, assist in planning for group activities and encourage students. These mediums provide powerful modes of connecting with youth, and for youth to connect with each other and should be channeled as such. Communications on Facebook are most appropriate when conducted through a group.

Adults must recognize the public nature of social networking sites and see themselves as representatives of God and Calvary Church. Thus adult volunteers agree not to post any material that could be deemed inappropriate or explicit. So doing will be in violation of Calvary's values and expected code of conduct. If an adult advisor is in doubt about the appropriateness of any ongoing or new forms of communication, they should consult with a ministry staff member for guidance.

Photography & Video

We want our members and regular attendees to understand that we will, as a regular practice, take pictures and videos of all our events and ministries at some point in time.

We will provide parents and volunteers the opportunity to complete a general opt-out form for all events if they do not want their image used. A failure to turn in a completed opt-out form constitutes consent for you and your families' pictures or video footage to be used. We will seek to honor opt-out requests for images of individuals or small groups, but cannot ensure that the request can be adhered to for pictures or videos of large group events. Anyone who sees their picture posted on the church website and would like it removed, can send a written request to the church office (please indicate where the picture is located).

The Calvary Church Photo/Video Opt-out Form is available at any Connection Center.

General Guidelines

Approved Team Members

Only **approved** team members may work in Children's Ministries. Team member requirements:

- ✓ Attendance at Calvary Church for **at least six months** is required.
- ✓ An Application for Service must be on file including a criminal background, a child abuse check, and either FBI fingerprinting or a signed affidavit and National Background check.
- ✓ Membership at Calvary Church is required to be in a leadership position, including a Bible Teacher in Elementary.

There must always be **adequate supervision** to ensure the safety of the children.

- **Two approved team members**, one being an adult, need to be in the classroom at all times.
- Children should never be left unattended.
- A single volunteer should never be alone with a child in a classroom, bathroom, or hallway. There should always be another approved worker within view.

Help Needed

When Children's Ministries is in need of additional volunteers, **#999** will be displayed on the screens in the auditorium. Please go to the West Connection Center to find out where you can serve.

Identification

You will need to wear your volunteer photo ID badge any time you are serving. If you forget your badge, go to a Check-in Kiosk to print a temporary badge or go to a Connection Center. Please do not ask our checkpoint volunteers to make an exception for you. They have been instructed to not allow any adult into the hallway who does not have a proper ID.

Modesty

As Children's Ministries leaders, our goal is to help children focus their attention on God. One of the ways we can accomplish this is by dressing modestly. Appropriate dress does not draw attention to the vessel, but allows both children and adults to focus on the truths being taught.

We want all aspects of our Children's Ministries to be honoring to God. Our purpose is not to present legalistic standards, but to be good role models, to be encouraging to all, and to be a stumbling block to no one.

(Romans 14:13-18)

Remember, a child's perspective is different from ours. They see us from behind and from a different level when we bend over. Test yourself in front of a mirror and notice what others will see when you bend over.

Children

There is to be no corporal punishment of children. Touch is to be appropriate so that all appearance of evil is avoided. Specific guidelines are given later in this handbook for proper bathroom conduct when necessary.

Children should remain on church property and not go on unauthorized trips with team members.

Team members should only use activities and materials which are suitable to the age of the child and are appropriate in meeting the educational and spiritual goals of the church. Our curriculum has been designed with the age and abilities of the children in mind.

Mandated Reporters

According to PA state law all volunteers that work directly with children are considered mandated reporters. Video training found at www.calvarychurch.org/mandatory-reporting explains the requirements of your position.

Instructions for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect. There is a file in your classroom with the needed forms and a copy of these instructions.

1. **Make a report** to Childline using the following phone number **1-800-932-0313**
2. **Inform** the staff person who leads the ministry in which you serve that you have reported suspected abuse.
3. **Fill out** the CY-47 form, giving as much information as you can. You will not have answers for all the questions.
4. **Make 2 copies** of the CY-47.
5. **Mail or fax** the original form CY-47 to the Lancaster Children and Youth Agency **within 48 hours** of making the phone call. Give one copy to the staff person who leads the ministry in which you serve. Keep the other copy for your records.

Lancaster County Children and Youth Agency
900 E. King St. Lancaster, PA 17602
FAX: 717 299-7929

Allergies - Nut-Free Zone / Epi Pens

All of Children's Ministries is a **NO NUT** and **NO PEANUT BUTTER** zone. No peanuts or nut products will be allowed in any classroom or at a Children's Ministry event. This restriction is in place even if another group is using the room as minute particles of peanut residue can trigger an allergic reaction in highly sensitive individuals. It's just not worth the risk.

Some children may require the presence of an **Epi pen** to use in the event of an allergic reaction. If one is needed, the parent will bring it and inform you of it. When you receive an Epi pen, make sure it is in a sealed plastic bag and labeled with the child's name. Place it in the red emergency bag on the wall. If the child has a severe allergic reaction, one class leader should administer the Epi pen, and another leader should call the Medical Team to tell them you have an emergency and contact the parents. Training in Epi pen use will be provided if needed.

Emergencies

Windows on classroom doors should be unobstructed and clear. Blinds must remain up at all times except during a lock down emergency situation.

The **first aid kit** is located inside the red emergency backpack. In the Nursery and Early Childhood classrooms, this backpack is hanging on a hook near the door. In Elementary classrooms, this backpack is hanging by the check-in desk. Adult team members may clean up minor scrapes and apply band aids and icepacks as needed.

Whenever you **leave the room as a class**, take the emergency backpack with you so that you will have all of your first aid supplies readily available if needed! If you find the first aid kit running low on any supplies, please let the director know right away so that supplies can be replenished. In Elementary classrooms, extra supplies can be found in the Generic closet; please let the director know when this closet supply runs low.

Emergency 911 calls:

1. Team members are to call 911 directly, if a child or an adult is:
 - Unresponsive
 - Not Breathing
 - Has No Pulse
 - Has Excessive Bleeding
 - Is Having a Seizure.
2. After you have called 911, call Calvary Church's Medical Team at extension 522 so they can come and assist until the emergency team has arrived. The Medical Team's extension can be found next to the phone in every classroom.

For all other first aid needs, call the Medical Team. They will come to you or ask you to bring the child to them, depending on the injury.

Evacuation Procedures

Calvary Church Children's Ministries has plans in place for multiple emergency and/or evacuation situations. Training on these protocols will be done in person and will not be posted on-line or printed for mass distribution. See your ministry leader for more details. Review procedures periodically throughout the year.

Tape Use

Using the wrong tape on the wrong surface can cause extensive damage. Please use the different colored tapes as instructed on the card stored with the tape in each classroom.

- Drywall - White colored tape only
- Concrete - Clear 3M packing tape
- Carpets and Floors - Red tape or black gaffers tape

Sickness

In an effort to provide a healthy and safe environment for everyone, we ask that *children and adults* not be in our classrooms if they have any of the following symptoms or illnesses:

Active Chicken Pox

Lice

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)

Measles

Diarrhea (for any reason)

Mumps

Fever within the past 24 hours

Rash

Infection of any type

Vomiting (within the past 24 hours)

In addition for *Nursery* or *Early Childhood* Classrooms:

Cold

Coughing

Runny nose (clear drainage is allowed but not encouraged)

If a child is being treated with antibiotics, he/she should be on the medicine for at least 24 hours before coming to any of the Children's Ministries classrooms.

If any of these symptoms are noticed in a child, please promptly locate the parents and ask them to remove their child from class. For the health and safety of all our children and staff, there will be no exceptions to this policy. If you have any questions about the symptoms you notice, please talk with your room coordinator or with one of the Children's Ministries Directors. Calvary Church's Medical Team is always available to help in confirming any of the symptoms; they are located in the Medical room on the 300 level in the lobby.

Lice:

If you discover, either through the parent or through conversation with other adults, that a child has been exposed to, or is being treated for lice, please make sure that your director is informed.

Please do not talk with others about the matter. We do not want to cause any harm to the family that has been dealing with lice or cause other people to panic.

Thank you for helping us to provide a safe and healthy environment for each of our children and every worker. We appreciate your cooperation and courtesy.

Elementary Ministry Overview

Arrival Times

Sunday School

Please aim to arrive in the classroom by 8:30 so that you can be totally set up and ready to pray with your team at 8:40. The doors to the classrooms will open for children at 8:45.

Kids Church

Arrive in the classroom by 10:40 to help set up. Before 11:15, 2 team members will go to the lobby to gather the children and walk them to the classroom.

Discovery Clubs

Arrive in the classroom by 6:00 to help with set-up. Your team will gather to pray at 6:10. The doors to the hallways will open for children at 6:15.

Sunday Curriculum

We take 1st - 4th graders through the one story of the Bible two times.



In **1st and 2nd Grade**, our Treasure Island theme encourages the children to “dig for treasures in God’s Big Story” and discover that God, himself, is the greatest treasure of all!



Our **3rd and 4th Graders** are “FBI” agents, Faithful Bible Investigators. Our FBI theme reminds them weekly that, in spite of sinful choices and overwhelming circumstances, God is always in control and His mission is possible because He is unstoppable!



Calvary 56 Throughout the year, we have a variety of Bible teaching units which encourage and challenge the students to dig deeper into God’s Word. The teaching units vary and include: Bible Characters, Topical Studies, Addressing Tween Needs, as well as Spiritual Disciplines.

Wednesday Night Curriculum:

Wednesday Night Discovery Clubs is our main venue for teaching missions to kids on a regular week-to-week basis. The children learn that “missions exists because worship doesn’t.” (John Piper) God wants people from every tongue and tribe and nation to worship Him and He wants to use every one of us to declare His glory...from our own neighborhoods to the nations.

Kids Choir

Singing praises to our God is an integral part of our worship. We value worshiping Him collectively! The goal of King’s Kids is to help children develop their talents so that they can lead others in worship and bring glory to God as they sing for Him.

Safety, Security, & Hygiene

We want to provide the safest environment possible for our children. Please remember that your actions determine our effectiveness!

Children in Hallways

1st– 4th graders must be accompanied to and from the classroom by a parent. Any exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Elementary Director.

Children in 5th and 6th grades may be dismissed from class on their own unless a parent has specifically requested that they wait to be picked up.

Bathroom Procedures

Children should be strongly discouraged from using the restrooms during class time unless it is an emergency. Make this clear on the first day of class. Once you give permission for kids to leave, it will become an easy habit. If it is an emergency, please adhere to the following:

- 1st and 2nd graders must be accompanied to the restrooms. Never allow yourself to be the only adult in the restroom with a child. Stand in the door as the child goes into the bathroom and have the volunteer at the checkpoint or your room coordinator be your second person.
- 3rd through 6th graders may go to the restrooms unattended. Send only 1 child at a time. Please be aware of the time they leave your room, and follow up if they do not return in just a couple of minutes.

If there is no checkpoint staff in place, the hallways doors will be locked and the child will not be able to get back in! In that case, a worker with a key must accompany the child to the restroom. Wait outside the restroom until the child exits.

Locked Doors

Hallway doors should be locked at all times unless a checkpoint volunteer is on duty. If you find an unmanned hallway door unlocked, LOCK IT or ask your coordinator to.

Allergies

Remember Children's Ministries is a ***NO NUT product zone***. Other allergies that your children have are listed on a chart found on the inside of each closet and in the check-in desk drawer. Please check the list each and every time you serve food. If you have any question about a specific allergy, please contact the parents for clarification or to ask about alternate snacks for their child.

If you are planning to have snacks for a party or special occasion, please plan ahead so that you can include the children with allergies either by providing an alternate snack or asking the parents to do so.

Relationships are Key

Ministry is about PEOPLE! Relationships matter! Please be aware of how you communicate with:

Parents

- Be purposeful in trying to introduce yourself to your children's parents.
- Have an open door policy that welcomes parents into the classroom.
- If you have an on-going or a serious issue with a child, don't wait to communicate with and involve the parents! (See "Talking to Parents" on page 17)
- Return their calls and e-mails promptly.
- Inform them in advance of special events.

Kids

- Arrive on time and be ready to greet the first child who arrives. That confirms that they are special and that you value your time with them.
- Treat them as individuals. Use their names! Insist they wear their name badges where all leaders can readily see them.
- Wear your name badge so that they can call you by name.
- Always SIT WITH your children. Your proximity and availability communicate that you are there for them and will lead and guide them even when someone else is teaching up front.
- Be FUN!
- Set clear boundaries, and stick to them. When a child crosses a boundary, follow the steps in the "Honor Shines" section on page 16.
- Be aware of children who have been absent for several weeks. Follow up with a phone call and/or a postcard.
- Follow up on their prayer requests.
- Communicate important information about your children to other team members who serve on different weeks than you do.

Teammates

- Arrive on time to set up and pray with your team. Remember, if you're not there, it puts stress on the rest of your team.
- Look for ways to encourage and help each other.
- Pass along important information so that you can be most effective.

Guests

- Stand and approach them. Introduce yourself to them.
- Give them the royal treatment!
- Ask if they have any questions that you can help answer. Make sure they know where to go and how to get there!

Honor Shines

*God is interested in hearts because that's where real and lasting change takes place.**

We want to use every teachable moment to help build the inner character the children need to follow the Lord in every area of their lives. Those moments happen not only during Bible lessons but also as we help them to make honoring choices in their words and actions. (See “Honor Shines” on page 16)

As children make honoring choices, not only do they “shine”, but far more importantly, God shines through them! Children will be better able to make right choices when you make expectations clear.

- Review the Honor Shines poster regularly
- When giving instructions, always expect the students to be quiet and looking at you. Make sure you are close to the students and looking at them.
- Give directions in regular speaking tones. Never shout over the students.
- Ask them to repeat instructions if necessary to ensure that they understood the instructions given.

When children make choices that are dishonoring, we will address both the behavior and the heart issue.

*Trying to change behavior will be fruitless without also rewriting what the child believes and says in his/her heart.**

Respond with a 5-step approach, moving from one to the next as needed:

1. Look at the child. Often just catching his eye is all the reminder needed.
2. Move towards the child. Gently touch him on the arm if needed.
3. Address the student gently and quietly, without embarrassing him or interrupting the activity. Remind him of a better choice and clarify expectations.
4. Move the student away from the problem, or remove the distraction from him.
5. Ask him to take a “break” - a short, quiet time removed from the group to think about what he is doing wrong, why it is wrong and what he will do differently.

Any time you have to address a student or give them a “break”, be sure to follow up with a **positive conclusion** by asking:

- What did you do that was wrong / dishonoring? (Always use the Honor Shines poster to help them identify whether they were dishonoring God, His Word, a leader, others in the room, or property that doesn't belong to them.)
- Why was it wrong / dishonoring?
- What will you do differently?

If he continues in his behavior, seek help. Start with your coordinator or lead teacher. If necessary, contact the Elementary Director through Connection Center to find the parent.

**Quotes are from Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller of the National Center for Biblical Parenting.*

HONOR SHINES!

Outdo one another in showing honor!

Romans 12:10

Speaking with Parents

It is very important that we see our role as *Partnering with Parents* in the ongoing spiritual development of their children.

All parents enjoy hearing encouraging words about their children! Don't be afraid to let parents know when you see signs of growth or honor shining in their son or daughter. You never know whether that very thing you observed is something they've been working on at home, and your recognition of it may be a huge boost to further growth!

At times, you will need to talk to parents about a concern you have with their child. In all discussions with parents, remember the following:

- ✓ **Don't Wait**

No parent appreciates hearing in December that you have had a concern about their child since September! A good rule of thumb is to talk to your coordinator or ministry leader if there is any serious behavior that concerns you OR if there is a pattern over several weeks of on-going behavior and the child is not responding to your promptings in the classroom.

- ✓ **The Whole Picture**

Do your best to refrain from jumping to conclusions about the heart of a child. You may not know that there are other things going on in his life that are affecting his behavior at church.

- ✓ **Speak Privately**

Never begin a conversation with a parent concerning their child's behavior in the presence of the child or others. If, after speaking to the parent alone, you wish to bring the child into the conversation, feel free to do so.

- ✓ **Seek Assistance - Don't Accuse**

Tell the parents what you have noticed and ask them if they have any insights to share that might help their child in class. Assure them that you love their child and want his/her experience in your ministry to be as enjoyable and profitable as possible.

- ✓ **Ask for Help**

If you are not sure about what to say to a parent, don't let that stop you! Ask for help from your coordinator or director. They will be more than happy to listen and to give some direction, or to help facilitate a discussion if this is the first time you've had to speak to the parent.

- ✓ **Every day is a New Day**

God's mercies are new every morning....and so ours should be! Greet each child with a loving smile each and every week. Give them the opportunity to try again.

Helpful Tips

Hallways

Please insist that children walk in the hallways, not because they are in church, but because they are in a public place and should be considerate and honoring to others who are using the hallways as well.

Gym

If you would like to use the gym, you must reserve it through the Elementary Director. Children must be supervised at all times, and all of our security rules apply. You will need a key to enter the gym. It is hanging on a hook inside the Generic closet in each classroom. You are responsible to lock the gym upon leaving.

Elementary Ministries has a cabinet of gym supplies. It is located inside the gym lobby wall. The padlock combination is on a tag attached to the gym key ring.

The gym supplies cabinet includes:

- Frisbees
- Giant Soft Frisbees
- Jump Ropes
- Soft Balls for Dodge Ball
- Indoor Bases for Kick Ball
- Parachutes
- Cones (large and small)
- Pinnies for Team Sports

Playground

The outdoor playground is designed for children up through age 12. Children must be supervised at all times while on the playground.

Ball Use

Nerf balls are acceptable in the classroom for low intensity games only. Any balls or other object that accidentally hit the sprinkler nozzle can set off the fire system and cause extensive damage.

Cleaning

While we do have a fabulous custodial team, it is not their responsibility to clean up after your class. Please honor them and be considerate by putting all of your supplies away in the appropriate places. Use the vacuum in your generic supplies closet to clean up any obvious messes left on the floors. Wipe any obvious spills or messes off tables. For any major spills or messes that are beyond your clean-up, contact the Connection center to have our maintenance department notified.

Field Trips

All church-sponsored field trips off of church property must be approved. Please adhere to the following guidelines:

Approval

Your coordinator has the authority to approve a field trip. If your coordinator is unsure about a request, she/he will bring it to the attention of the Elementary Director for approval.

Permission Forms

Two forms of communication must be sent home:

1. Memo explaining the purpose and details of the event
2. Calvary Church Field Trip permission form - These are found in the check-in desk drawer in your classroom.

No child will be able to participate without a signed permission form.

Give the Elementary Director a copy of the memo you would like to send to parents. Fill in the needed information on one permission form and hand that in as well. The Elementary Director will electronically transfer the information to the permission form and make as many copies as you need of the memo and the permission forms stapled together.

Please note: If you are having a special event here on our church property and the parents are accompanying their children, you do not need to have permission forms.

Drivers

All drivers must be 21 years of age or older. No driver may be alone in a car with a single child unless that child belongs to him/her. Drivers must complete the Driver's Commitment Form (see page 13) and provide a copy of their driver's license and automobile insurance. Completed forms and copies may be turned in to the classroom coordinator who will give them to the Elementary Director. Blank Driver's Commitment forms are found in the filing drawer in each room's check-in desk.

Safety and Security

The leader of the event must have all of the completed permission forms with him/her throughout the duration of the event.

All of our safety and security policies and procedures must be followed during any Calvary Church sponsored event.

On overnight events, males and females will have separate sleeping quarters. Males and females should stay out of each other's sleeping areas.

After the Event

All permission forms must be turned in to be filed. Our insurance company insists that we keep them on file for 2 years.

Sample Form

Driver's Commitment Form



When driving for a Calvary Church Children's Ministry event, we insist that you:

- never be alone in a car with a single child unless he/she is your own.
- ensure that every passenger is wearing a seatbelt.
- keep the noise and other distractions to a minimum.
- abide by all speed limits.
- not talk on your cell phone while driving.
- not text while driving.

I have read the above and hereby commit to abide by each one.

Name (Please print) _____

Signature _____

Date Submitted (m/d/y) _____

Please submit this completed form, along with a copy of your driver's license and automobile insurance, to your classroom coordinator.

Children with Disabilities

1 Corinthians 12:12, 22

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 22 ...the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable.

Including children with disabilities in our early childhood program is part of our vision at Calvary Church. As a body of believers, we are incomplete without their active inclusion in our body. They are “indispensable”.

Here are some ways we can effectively include kids with disabilities:

- ***Provide a Buddy*** - For some children a 1-on-1 support person is provided. This “buddy” will support the child throughout the ministry hour. Buddies are trained to meet the individual needs of the children they are paired with. The level of support given depends on the child. At times a buddy will need to work very closely with a child and at other times they may observe from a distance as the child participates as other typical children are participating.
- ***Get to know each child*** - A red folder is available in the classroom with information about each child who has a buddy. Included in this folder is a “Get to Know Me” sheet with pertinent information provided by the parents. Please read over this information if this child is in your classroom. This information is confidential in nature so please don’t share this information outside the context of the classroom.
- ***The child with a disability is an active member of your class!*** - As a volunteer in children’s ministry, you will also be an active part of this child’s life. Your interactions with a child with special needs should mirror the type of interactions you have with the typical kids in your classroom setting.
- ***Fill your toolbox*** - See the attached sheet of suggestions for strategies to use when you encounter a challenging situation.
- ***Ask for help!*** - The buddy provided for a child with a disability should be your first go-to person if there is a concern. Remember, you are all on this child’s team and will be working together to help this child and family “Pursue Life in Christ”. If there are ongoing concerns, please contact the Disability Ministry Coordinator. Call the West Connection Center during ministry hours or the church office 560-2341 during the week.

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Terminology

Your words emphasize a person's worth.

Why worry about terminology? Because, our words carry a great impact! Although it is more important to emphasize inclusion over politically correct language, we want to be aware that some people are sensitive to language. We communicate that we care for families affected by disability when we are willing to learn a new language. No one wants to be labeled, and we always want to show grace and kindness, because our actions and words will have a bigger impact than we may know. Let's take some time to read and reflect on the suggestions given below.

Let your words **emphasize a person's worth and abilities** not their limiting condition.

Think of the person first, and the disability second.

Take the parents' lead, using their same terminology when talking with the family or introducing them to others.

Always use <i>Affirmative Phrases</i>	and avoid <i>Negative Phrases</i>
Jane has special needs or a disability .	Jane is disabled or handicapped .
Fred has autism spectrum disorder or Asperger syndrome .	Fred is autistic .
Mary has down syndrome .	Mary is a downs child or a mongoloid .
Jon is Deaf or hard of hearing .	Jon is deaf and dumb , hearing impaired , or "suffers" a hearing loss.
Matt is a child without special needs or "typical child" .	Matt is normal or healthy (this implies people with a disability are not normal or healthy).



Strategies and Ideas

Be Ready! Fill your toolbox with ideas to make inclusion successful.

Transition Strategies

- Have a consistent schedule from week to week. This will help children know what to expect.
- Use a consistent signal for transition (bell, clapping, singing).
- Give advance warning if needed (ie., “In one minute I will ring the bell. It will be time to move to the large group for...”).
- Let the child bring something with him/her to the next activity (ie. Bring their “HOOK” activity page to finish during the large group or even a small toy or fidget).
- Bring the activity to the child (ie, bring the craft to the large group area, then encourage the child to go back to the table to finish up).
- Use a picture schedule to show the child what is next. (will be provided if needed)

Behavioral Strategies

- Take time to really look at the behavior and try to understand why it is happening. Is the child bored, hungry, tired, over stimulated, doesn't like the activity? This may help you create a solution.
- Use positive directions (ie. Instead of “stop yelling”, try “use a quiet voice”).
- When giving a specific direction, get down to the child's level and use their name. Use simple language and give directions one at a time. Allow TIME for the child to respond before repeating the directions. Model the behavior if it is appropriate. Reward compliance immediately using something meaningful to the child. A high five, sticker or even a small treat can be used. Try out a few ideas to see what works and change it up as needed.
- Use a TRY AGAIN strategy regularly to teach appropriate behavior. When a child exhibits inappropriate behavior ask him/her to repeat the action in an appropriate way. Guide him/her in whatever way is needed. (ie. If a child is running down the hall, stop, go back and walk with him/her down the hallway.) Praise positive behavior.
- Use a picture symbol or predetermined sign (like “thumbs up”) to encourage positive behavior. Point to the picture or use the sign without using words to encourage the appropriate behavior. Limiting verbal input may be helpful.
- Use a distracting activity if a child is having a tantrum. Try clapping, whistling, turning the lights on and off briefly. If the child will cooperate, give him/her a drink of water through a straw. The goal is to break the tantrum cycle so the child can gain some control.



Small & Large Group Strategies

- Define a child's space at the table by using a tray or masking tape. Put the material for that child only in that space.
- Seat a child in a place where they don't feel confined (at the end of a row) and can have access to leave if needed. Being too close or crowded could be a problem. If they sit on the carpet during the Bible lesson be sure the children have a defined space. Use carpet squares or a mouse pad. Even if all the children are on the carpet, your student can sit in a chair if needed.
- If using all the blocks or crayons is too stimulating, give the child his/her own smaller basket of items to play with.
- Allow a child to bring a white board, pencil and paper or fidget to the group Bible lesson if needed. Be sure a buddy or other adult is monitoring the use of these items.
- Use as many visuals as you have available to you.
- Give an active child a job or responsibility to carry out to encourage him/her to be included and engaged.
- Physical presence of an adult near a child can be helpful. A gentle touch on the shoulder may also help.

Sensory Strategies

- Explore the use of a fidget. Fidgets can help regulate a child's sensory system. They can be some sort of plastic or squishy object a child holds, distracting him/her and their brain so that the child can concentrate (we have a variety available to try)
- Utilize a sensory break to use a proprioceptive activity. This can help a student orient their body in space.
 - Active—"heavy work" (ie. pushing or carrying something heavy, pushing against the wall, using a thera-band on chair legs).
 - Passive—weighed lap cloth or weighted sock across the neck, carry a "heavy" back pack, (limit weighted items to 10 minutes—use infrequently) therapy seat cushion or ball.
- If a child shows tactile defensiveness, a child can use gloves to touch "messy" things. The "messy" items from the activity can also be put into plastic baggies.
- Use a hula hoop or masking tape to mark off personal space.
- Help your student take deep breaths. Have him/her use their arms in an up and down motion as they breathe. Or use a straw or bubbles to blow out. Blow some things across a table.



Last Updated Aug 11, 2021