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parent Handbook

*"permit the children to come to Me;
do not hinder them;
for the kingdom of God
belongs to such as these."*

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"They said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.'"

Acts 16:31

"When Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, 'Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all.' And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them."

Mark 10:14-16

"Grandchildren are the crown of old men, and the glory of sons is their fathers."

Proverbs 17:6

"From the mouth of infants and nursing babes you have established strength because of Your adversaries, to make the enemy and the revengeful cease."

Psalm 8:2

"The lovingkindness of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children."

Psalm 103:17

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."

Ephesians 6:1, 4

"We will not conceal them from their children, but tell to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wondrous works that He has done. For He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers that they should teach them to their children, that the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, that they may arise and tell them to their children."

Psalm 78:4-6

"In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, and his children will have refuge."

Proverbs 14:26

Discipline Policy

“Bright Beginnings Children’s Ministry Center” is an extension of your home and we wish to work with the parents in training their children in the way of the Lord. Therefore, the following discipline policy will be used in each classroom. The teacher has the authority in the classroom to administer discipline according to this policy.



1. Children must obey their teachers. When they do not, they are placed in time out.
 - When a child receives three time outs, then he/she will be brought to the office and their parents will be notified at the director’s discretion.
 - After three office visits, a conference with the director is required and care at the center is jeopardized.
1. Older Children:
 - Physical aggression from a student toward a teacher will result in automatic dismissal. This includes intentionally hitting, kicking, cursing or spitting.
 - Weapons of any kind, whether real or toys, will be confiscated. This includes, but is not limited to, guns, knives, swords.

God's Promises to Children

"Behold, children are a gift of the LORD, the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them; they will not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate."

Psalm 127:3-5

"Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it."

Proverbs 22:6

At that time Jesus said, 'I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.'

Matthew 11:25



Dear Parents and Guardians:

Thank you for intrusting us with your child at “Bright Beginnings Children’s Ministry Center”. This ministry began years ago in hope that it would provide Christian care and outreach to all that graced its doors.

The most important decision you will ever make is in your child’s Christian upbringing. Where do I start? Do I want my child in a Christian atmosphere? Your child may only be in our ministry care for two hours each week, but we see each “two-hour” ministry care as an opportunity to assist you in training up your child in the Lord.

“Bright Beginnings” is a ministry with Biblically-based curriculum and a Christian staff. Our staff is blessed with a special “calling” to the ministry of children and families.

We believe that “children are the greatest in the Kingdom of God.” As a matter of fact, Jesus used a little child as an example of who we should be like in order to see heaven. That is why we count it all a joy and a privilege to be a part of the teaching and nurturing of God’s special gifts, your children.

Thank you for the opportunity to minister to you and your family.

*In His Service,
The Staff of
“Bright Beginnings Children’s Ministry Center”*



Mission Statement

Welcome to “Bright Beginnings Children’s Ministry Center”, (“center”), ministering to your children ages newborn through kindergarten. This children’s ministry’s main mission is to assist families by providing Biblical Christian teaching and training by coming along side of the parent(s) or guardian(s) in order to “*train up a child in the way he should go*” (Proverbs 22:6).

Our mission is also to give quality Biblical teaching that meets the child’s spiritual, mental, and physical needs at appropriate age levels. We desire to assist parents in leading their children to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ at an early age, therefore setting a foundation for a strong Christian walk and life.

The objective of our children’s ministry is to personally educate each child through the use of Biblical curriculum which prepares them for the developmental stages moving them through nursery, pre-school, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten toward the elementary level and beyond.

It is stated in *1 Corinthians 13*, “*love is patient, kind, it does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud, it is not rude, it is not self seeking, not easily angered, it keeps no records of wrongs, love does not delight in evil, but rejoices in truth.*” This children’s ministry is considered an extension of a Godly and Christian home and therefore we will work *with* the parents to meet the good and proper goals they have for their children. It is also an arm of the church, leading families into its fellowship. This church is to be an ever-burning light for Jesus Christ, sharing His love with all who come in contact with us.

Snacks

We provide a minimum snack time for your child. We are not able to feed your child a meal while in our care. To avoid difficulties we provide simple snacks that are “alike” for each child. (*See food allergies for any exceptions*).

1. Graham Crackers and/or Fish Crackers or similar.
2. The center may serve water, “Capri Sun” or drinks such as 100% apple or grape .
3. You may provide for your child in a sealed container or baby bottle should their needs be different than we can provide.
 - Please prepare formula prior to checking your child into the nursery.
 - For babies that are bottle feeding, our staff **may not mix formula** for your baby for safety reasons. Each child has differing needs, therefore it is the parent’s responsibility to prepare for those needs as the staff will not have knowledge of those needs
1. If your child has any **food allergies** please:
 - PLEASE it is very important to provide the center with a list all food allergies (i.e.: peanuts or any type of nuts, fruit of any type, wheat, milk products, etc.)
 - PLEASE provide snacks and appropriate juices or drinks for your child, and label them with their name.
1. Please refrain from giving your child gum, candy or any other food in hand before entering the center.



Outside Play

We love to go outside, weather permitting. If for some reason you do not want your child to go out, you must keep them with you during service or make other arrangements for his/her care as our staffing is limited and each child must be supervised effectively and safely. You are welcome to come and care for your child during such outside activities.

1. *Should you choose to keep your child in service with you for any reason, please be very respectful of the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the Word that is being delivered by the Pastor.*
2. *If your child is uncomfortable, please feel free to come back to the Children's Wing or find a comfortable place for you and your little one in the foyer as you continue to enjoy the message from the pulpit.*



Our Philosophy

This ministry offers an enriched program, meeting the highest standard of early childhood Christian education. No matter what happens during the week, our focus is that on Sunday, while your child is in our children's ministry program, that the individual needs of each child, which we believe to be the following, will be met:

They need to...

1. Be loved and accepted unconditionally.
2. Feel secure by being accepted as a member of a group.
3. Develop a positive self image by getting to know one's self.
4. Gain approval and receive praise from peers as well as adults.
5. Develop independence by assuming responsibilities and making choices.
6. Be creative.
7. Express ideas and emotions in a constructive way.
8. Develop in all areas: social, emotional, physical, spiritual, and intellectual at your little one's own pace.
9. Learn Biblical principles and lessons that are age-appropriate and applicable to their young lives.
10. And, last but not least, to learn and to know that Jesus Christ is their Savior and that He came to this earth just for them through salvation.

Children Served

This particular ministry area will serve children Infant through kindergarten. The center is not staffed or equipped to serve children with **serious* special needs. Children with *minor* special needs will be considered on an individual basis. (**Your children are so very important to us that we don't want any child to "fall through the cracks" and please know that there are no prejudices to any child with special needs, but that we are very limited in our resources to serve your child's needs to the extent that your child may need.*) We pray for the opportunity to be able to provide for all children's needs.



Teachers and Staff

Our center is staffed by a rotating team of dedicated teachers:

1. All staff undergoes an application process and is pre-screened for the protection of everyone.
2. All staff is trained in all childcare procedures.
3. All staff is knowledgeable of safety and security procedures.
4. All staff is trained in the curriculum for each grade level and are well prepared and qualified to teach.
5. Future special needs

Abuse and Neglect

We are required by law to report any and all signs of abuse and neglect. All reports are made through the Senior Pastor, senior Administrative staff and the Department of Social Services Child Protective Service Unit.

Parent Involvement

Parents are an important part of the center. You are always welcome and encouraged to visit at any time with prior arrangement. Parents are invited to make suggestions and share their talents with the center. You may schedule a conference with your child's teacher at any time. We invite you to become a "mommy or daddy helper" (or maybe a grandparent helper!), to assist the teaching team.

7. Toddlers

- Our staff needs your permission to assist your child in toileting procedures to protect your child and our staff.
- Please bring an extra set of clothing (underwear, shirt, pants, shoes, socks) may be needed if your child is in the process of potty training.
- Pull-ups are to be provided by the parents for those not yet potty trained.
- If your child is being potty trained, please send extra underwear or Pull-ups.
- Please do not go back to pull ups once training has started unless you have determined that training has started too early as this tends to confuse the child.
- Please let the staff know of any issues or difficulties with your little one during this very grown-up time.
- Please let the staff know of any special words for going potty (i.e.: #1 or #2, etc.). This will help the staff to know how to communicate with your child and assist you in the training process.
- Please communicate with the teacher concerning when training has started and any issues or concerns.



Curriculum

Children are divided into age-appropriate Biblically-based curriculum.

- Infants or "bed babies" - Infants
- Babies learning to crawl and/or early walkers - Toddlers
- Two and three year olds – Pre-School
- Four and five year olds. – Pre K - Kindergarten

Even infants and young toddlers can learn the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. All children will also enjoy a wide variety of music, arts and crafts, and games development.



"Train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Pr. 3: 22-6)

Clothing/Personal Belongings and Supplies

1. Be sure your child's name is on everything you bring to the center.
2. Children should wear loose and comfortable clothing that can be washed.
3. Clothing must be marked with the child's name. We cannot be responsible for lost clothing.
4. We do not encourage stuffed animals or other personal toys, as they tend to cause problems with the other children.
5. Jackets of different weights for the spring and fall are essential as we may go out to the playground area when the weather is not inclement.
6. Babies
 - Please bring diapers for your baby. The center has an "emergency" supply of diapers, but we may not always have an appropriate size for your baby.
 - Bring a change of clothing for those "just-in-case" times when your baby wets through clothing.
 - Wipes are supplied by the center.
 - We do not have baby bottles, formula, milk or milk-substitutes. Please ALWAYS bring what your child will need to carry him or her through the time in our care and beyond.
 - If your baby uses a pacifier, please mark it with their name.



Happy Arrivals

At times children cry when being left by the parent(s), especially the littlest ones. We understand and expect this. Crying usually stops a few moments after you have left. We suggest that you reassure your child and then leave quickly. If your child continues to cry after five or ten minutes, we will have an Usher contact you in service or your class.

Parents must accompany children into the center and leave them with the teacher in charge.

1. Your child must be picked up at the door of the Children's Ministry Wing.
2. Your child will not be allowed to leave the childcare area to meet a parent.

Safety and Security Procedures

1. The child will ONLY be released to the parent/guardian or authorized person that SIGNED THEM IN... NO EXCEPTIONS.
2. For safety reasons, please do not enter the room unless you have been granted permission.



Sickness

Staff may NOT administer medication of any type to your child.

Any child who shows signs of illness should not be sent to the center. These signs include but are not limited to:

1. Fever over 100 degrees
2. Diarrhea (no matter the frequency)
3. Vomiting
4. Head lice
5. Rash
6. Conjunctivitis or other eye infections
7. Sore throat or deep thrush
8. Impetigo
9. Roseola
10. Chicken pox (running sores)

Children with colds and rashes that are not contagious may attend the center with a written doctor's note stating whether or not the child is able to participate in all activities.

1. Parents must notify the center of any communicable disease their child has or has been exposed to.
2. Your child must be fever free, diarrhea free and vomiting free for twenty-four (24) hours before returning to the center.
 - This is not 24 hours from the time they leave the center, but from the last episode of the above.

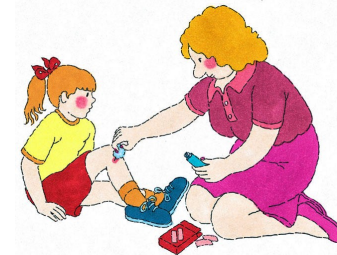
We strive to make the children's ministry classroom areas as healthy and safe as possible.

1. Latex or Nitrile gloves are used for all diaper changes.
2. Teacher / caregiver's hands are washed and sanitized frequently.
3. Toys are cleaned and sanitized after each use.
4. Linens are washed after each use.
5. Classrooms are thoroughly cleaned and sanitized weekly.

Injuries or Illness

Injuries

1. A staff person will handle slight injuries occurring at the center. (i.e.: small cut or scrape, skinned knee, "boo-boo's", etc.)
2. The center is equipped with a first aid kit and chart for various situations as well as a digital forehead thermometer if your child presents symptoms of illness.
3. In the event of a serious injury or illness, parents will immediately be contacted in the service or classroom by an Usher.



Illness

A staff person will handle illness in the following manner:

1. Insure the comfort of the child and isolation from other children.
2. Take the temperature of the child with a forehead thermometer.
3. Parent(s) will immediately be contacted in the service or classroom by an Usher.

