



Welcome

Greetings and welcome to Cornerstone EPC! At Cornerstone we believe as scripture says that “children are a heritage of the LORD” (Psalm 127:3). We have a responsibility to care for and teach the children entrusted to us. We want our children to understand they are cared for and loved and are an important part of our covenantal family. This handbook was created to answer questions you may have as a parent of a young child in our care. However, feel free to contact the Children’s Director at (281) 579-1080 or info@cornerstonekaty.org if additional information is required.

Frequently Asked Questions

- Q. Where is the Infant Room located?
A. The Infant Room is located just across the hall from the sanctuary.
- Q. Where is the Toddler Room located?
A. The Toddler Room is located in the Education Building in the "Daniel's Petting Zoo".
- Q. What should I send with my child?
A. We recommend parents bring a diaper bag and bottle (or juice cup).
- Please feel welcome to bring any comfort items your child might have, such as a blanket. However, we discourage you from bringing any toys that might get mixed up or lost.
 - You will also want to bring a change of clothes for your child just in case it is needed.
 - We often provide animal crackers, goldfish and juice to the toddlers. If your child has special dietary needs, please send a snack in a labeled container.
 - Please be sure all items are labeled with your child's name.
- Q. How will you contact me if my child needs me?
A. If your child becomes inconsolable or unwell, we will project your child's assigned number (located on the ID sticker) on the overhead screen in the worship service. If you would like to see the remaining portion of the worship service, you may take your child to the Cry Room where you can observe the service through a 1-way window and listen through the sound system.

Availability and Schedule

- Nursery is regularly provided for children ages birth – 4 years. While children develop at different rates we suggest the following when considering room assignments for your child. Infants should use the Infant Room until they begin walking or reach 18 months. Walkers through age 3 should use the Toddler Room/Daniel's Petting Zoo. Children ages 3 to 5 usually attend worship with

their family and have the option of participating in Worship Training part way through the service.

- Nursery will be provided during the following times:
 - Sunday Morning:
 - 9:15am Gospel U (Sunday school)
 - 10:30am Worship
 - During the week:
 - WOC Studies
 - Workshops
 - Special Events
- Nursery shall be provided for all special church functions upon approval of the Children's Director. Requests for the Nursery facilities should be made one week in advance or earlier, when possible.
- Excluding Sunday mornings, non-teaching/free baby sitting is provided during church functions. Children will play, color, or watch videos while in the Nursery depending on how long the church function lasts. (Only videos approved by the Children's Director may be used in the Nursery during any Church function.)
- If you are on the premises when the Nursery Rooms are not staffed please do not leave your children unattended in any of the nursery rooms or the Cry Room.

Cry Room & Powder Room

We want to provide every opportunity for mothers and their children to truly engage in worship. If you're a nursing mom or have a crying baby you are welcome to try our Cry Room, located at the end of the hall. This room, along with the Powder Room should the Cry Room be full, are available during all services. However, please keep in mind these rooms do have the following limitation:

- For your convenience, there is a changing station provided in the Cry Room; however, please do not leave behind soiled diapers.
- These rooms are quite small, therefore, you should avoid bringing a stroller inside the room. Strollers may be parked in the sitting area in the foyer. If left in the hallway they will block the exit.
- Because there are many families with young children and infants

(and many more on the way) use of this room should be limited to as short a period of time as possible. It is not intended to be used in lieu of participating in worship in the sanctuary.

- If your child is ill or becomes ill while in the room please notify the Children's Director so the room can be properly disinfected.

Receiving and Dismissing of Children

- All children must be dropped off and picked up by adult family members, preferably only one adult at a time to cut down on congestion.
- Please be sure to bring the following for your child: a change of clothes and at least 2 fresh diapers.
- For the protection of your child and in order to avoid confusion please complete the Children's Ministry Registration Form and turn it in to the church office.
- Each time you leave your child in the Nursery, please complete the "Welcome to our Nursery" stickers. This helps us identify your child and their specific needs. One sticker is attached to the child's back. The other sticker is given to the adult who will be picking up the child. This sticker must be presented before we release the child.
- Parents are asked to sign their child in whenever a child is delivered and record where the parent will be located while their child is in the Nursery.
- Parents MUST remain on church property or property adjacent to church while their child attends the Nursery. (Exceptions are occasionally made when a special church function is held off site.)
- Parents are requested to avoid coming to the door of their child's classroom to check on him between services, classes, etc. (It disturbs an otherwise happy child to see his parents at the door.)
- In order to protect all children, parents are requested not to leave a child who appears sick in the Nursery.

Feeding

- Fruit juice and crackers/goldfish/cookies may be served to 18-24 month old and up.
- Bottles (plastic and labeled, please) will be served in the infant

rooms. Unless a child has specific dietary requirements and arrangements have been made with the Children's Director no food is to be sent with any child who attends the Nursery. Nursery workers do not have the manpower to feed each child, and it is unfair to those children with whom no food was sent. Snacks will be provided by the church.

Workers and Classrooms

- All paid workers shall be 18 years of age and older. Teenagers may volunteer with the approval of their parents and the Children's Director.
- All paid workers and volunteers shall be interviewed and approved by the Children's Director, complete training on our Policies & Procedures for the Prevention of Child Abuse and submit all required paperwork. All adult workers whether paid or volunteer will be subject to background checks.

Communicable Disease Policy

In order to promote the health of the members and visitors to Cornerstone EPC and to prevent the spread of communicable disease, we have adopted the Communicable Disease Policy outlined below.

- The church realizes that children sometimes become ill quickly. The severity, nature and transmission of the varied diseases is different. Under certain circumstances, as determined by the worker and the Children's Director, you may be summoned to care for your child.
- The church believes it is in the best interest of everyone for the sick child to rest and heal at home if the child has a communicable disease or illness and bringing the child to church constitutes a health risk to others. The church encourages one to err on the side of preventing the spread of sickness and disease when faced with the decision of whether to stay home or bring the child to church.
- Cornerstone EPC will follow these Communicable Disease Policy Guidelines.

Purpose

- To protect healthy children and staff from illness.
- To protect ill children from worsening illness.
- To educate parents and staff on infection control.

- To prevent the spread of communicable disease between the members and visitors of Cornerstone EPC.

Scope

Infants and young children who are brought together in groups for care have potential for exposure to infectious disease agents. Prevention and control of infection in childcare settings is influenced by the care-givers' practice of personal hygiene and environmental sanitation, food handling procedure, the ages of the children, the ratio of children to care-giver, and the physical space and quality of the facilities.

Recommendations for Inclusion or Exclusion

- Children generally pose a greater threat to the dissemination of a communicable disease than responsible adults. The measures which reduce the risk of child to child transmission will also reduce the risk of child to adult transmission. Therefore, the following recommendations for inclusion or exclusion of a child from childcare of group settings applies equally to adults.
- Mild illness is very common among children and most children should not be excluded from their usual source of care for common respiratory and gastrointestinal illness of mild severity. Exclusion of children from childcare settings has been recommended for illnesses known to be transmitted among, by and to children when exclusion of the child or adult has a potential for reducing the likelihood of secondary cases. Exclusion has been recommended in cases of serious illness for which a hypothetical risk of transmission exists but for which data at present are insufficient to warrant the risk.
- Children need not be excluded for a minor illness unless any of the following exists:
 - The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities.
 - The illness results in a greater care need than the childcare staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.
 - The child has any of the following conditions: fever (within the last 24 hours), unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or other signs of possible

severe illness.

- Diarrhea (defined as increased number of stools compared with the child's normal pattern, with increased stool water and/or diaper or toilet use).
- Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- Mouth sores associated with an inability of the child to control his/her saliva. This should be closely monitored in children who bite.
- Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva, with white or yellow eye discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep and eye pain or redness of the eyelids or skin surrounding the eye.)
- Tuberculosis, until the child's physician or local health department states that the child is noninfectious.
- Impetigo or any open sore, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- Streptococcal pharyngitis, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and until the child has been free of fever for 24 hours.
- Head lice (pediculosis), until the morning after the first treatment.
- Scabies, until after the treatment has been completed.
- Varicella (chicken pox), until the sixth day after the onset of rash or sooner only if all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (whooping cough- which is confirmed by laboratory or suspected based on symptoms of the illness or because of cough onset within 14 days of having face-to-face contact with a person or classroom who has a laboratory confirmed case of pertussis) until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic therapy (currently, erythromycin) has been completed. Total course treatment is 14 days.
- Mumps, until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Hepatitis A virus infection until one week after onset of illness and jaundice, if present, has disappeared or until

passive immunoprophylaxis (immune serum globulin) has been administered to appropriate children and staff in the program, as directed by the health department.

- Biting may or may not be a reason to exclude a child from childcare. Although, children who do bite pose an additional concern. Existing data suggest a small risk of Hepatitis B and HIV transmission from the bite of an infected person. Victims of bites by Hepatitis B carriers, should be given Hepatitis B immune globulin phylaxis (HBIG) as recommended by the child's doctor or the health department.

General Practices

- An illness screen should be performed on each child upon entering his/her room. Parents should keep the staff informed of their child's health. Printed material will be made available to the parents identifying the health and guidelines.
- Toileting and toilet training equipment should be maintained in a sanitary condition. The use of child sized toilets or access to steps and modified toilet seats should be encouraged. The use of potty chairs should be discouraged due the difficulty in maintaining sanitary conditions with potty chairs.
- Diaper changing surfaces should be nonporous and sanitized between use for different children. Soiled disposable diapers, or soiled disposable wiping cloths, should be disposed of in a secure plastic-lined container. Diapers should be able to contain urine and stool to minimize fecal contamination of the children, staff, surfaces and objects. Only modern disposable paper diapers should be used and diapers never should be rinsed. Infants and children should be allowed in the Nursery only in disposable diapers. Diaper changing areas should never be located in food preparation areas.
- Hand washing should be recognized as the single most important measure to prevent infection. Routine hand washing should be enforced between handling of any bodily secretions of each child.
- Accidents which lead to bleeding or contamination with blood containing body fluids by any child should be handled as follows:

(1) the area should be disinfected with a freshly prepared solution of 1:64 household bleach (1/4 cup diluted in one gallon of water); (2) disposable gloves should be used unless the amount of blood or body fluid is so small that it can easily be contaminated by the material used for cleaning;(3) persons involved with cleaning contaminated surfaces should avoid exposure or open skin lesions or mucous membranes to blood or blood-containing body fluids and to wound or tissue exudates; (4) hands should be washed thoroughly after exposure to blood or blood-containing body fluids; (5) optimally, disposable towels or tissues should be used and properly discarded; and(6) blood contaminated material and diapers should be disposed of in a plastic bag with a secure tie.

- Sleep equipment should be used by only one child and should be cleaned and sanitized prior to assigning to another child. All frequently touched toys in rooms which infants and toddlers are cared for should be cleaned and disinfected daily. The use of soft non-washable toys in infant/toddler areas of childcare programs should be discouraged.
- Food should be handled in a safe and careful manner to prevent the growth of bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites and to prevent contamination by rodents or insects. Tables and counter tops used for food preparation and food service should be cleaned and sanitized before and after eating. No person who has signs or symptoms of illness should be responsible for handling food. Hands should be washed before handling food. Because of their frequent exposure to feces and children with enteric diseases, staff members who work with diapered children, whenever possible, should not prepare food for others.
- Staff should wear disposable latex gloves with every diaper change and follow sanitary methods as previously outlined.
- Diaper changing should be permitted only in the diaper changing area and not on the floor where other children play.
- Disposable wipes and facial tissues should be used to clean noses and any bodily fluids rather than non-disposable or cloth towels.
- Diaper bags should contain only those items necessary for the welfare of your child: diapers, labeled bottles and pacifiers,

extra clothes. No wallets, keys, cameras, etc., should be left in a diaper bag.

AIDS Policy

- It is the policy of Cornerstone EPC to lovingly accept HIV infected children into our facilities. It is requested that the parents of the infected child inform the Children's Director of the child's condition upon entering the Nursery.
- Paid workers and volunteers working with the child will be informed of the situation and will keep a watchful eye on the HIV child, but will do everything possible to maintain normalcy in the room.

AIDS Guidelines

The following guideline should be followed when an HIV infected child attends the Cornerstone Nursery:

- It is requested that the Children's Director be informed that the child is present.
- Paid staff and volunteers working in the particular room should be notified in order to keep an inconspicuous eye on the child. Confidentiality must be maintained in the event that you work with an infected child.
- Normalcy should be maintained throughout the room. However, in the event that other children are interfacing with the child, special attention should be given in regards to biting, etc.

Conclusion

We adopted these policies and created this handbook because we believe churches need to be prepared. But there's a deeper, more significant reason – to protect the children. Policies are only printed expressions of the value placed on children. If the only reason for safety policies is to protect the organization, the church has missed God's love for children.

Some people may think that our church is too small or that our church "knows" everyone and does not need to worry about these safety issues. Remember it's much easier to make plans and develop safety policies as a means of prevention, rather than wait until they are needed as a reaction to an abuse case.

Some churches tend to take the biblical concept of trusting God to an extreme. They think nothing bad can happen to Christians. We must not be unwise regarding children's safety. There is no automatic protection from evil for the faithful. We are to watch and be ready. Accidents will always happen. There will always be unforeseen circumstances that need to be handled. The church should build into its organization a sturdy safety policy to protect children.

Cornerstone EPC desires to be "a church that cares" through the implementation of the policies stated in this handbook and also in our Policies & Procedures for the Prevention of Child Abuse. Adoption of these provisions will enable Cornerstone EPC to provide a safer and more secure environment for each individual of our church family and its guests.