

Grandview Nazarene Church¹

Children and Youth Protection Policy²

In accordance with our God-inspired vision for GNC we affirm that we are called to be a “Family of Christian Faith Impacted to the Core by the Gospel.” One lesson we learn from Jesus in the Gospel of Mark is that we are to welcome the children and youth into our community. Another lesson we learn from Jesus is that our welcoming is one of hospitality or self-giving love for our neighbor. To assist in living out these lessons, we have established policies and guidelines for those who volunteer in ministry to children and youth in our care.

The policies and guidelines are as follows:

Becoming a volunteer co-minister at GNC:

- Those considering a volunteer partnership with GNC families are first encouraged to pray. Allow space for the Spirit to check you and guide you. It’s important to us that we have volunteers who desire to be with our children and youth as an expression of their God-given identity and calling.
- Volunteer co-ministers must seek to be regular attendees and participants in the community life of GNC for a minimum of 3 months prior to submitting a volunteer ministry application. (*Exceptions: students recommended for internship or practicum, approved volunteer co-ministers transferring from another assignment w/recommendation from former supervising pastor.*)
- Each volunteer must complete and submit a “Volunteer Co-Minister” application, interview with age-level pastor/team, and submit personal information required to complete a federal (*criminal*) background check
- Each volunteer is expected to read and become familiar with the policies, procedures and guidelines documents provided by GNC.

¹ Hereafter referred to as “GNC”

² Adapted from New Beginnings Church of the Nazarene Child Protection Policy

I. General policy as it relates to children, youth, and volunteer safety:

- A. Volunteers should avoid being one-on-one with a minor child. (*note: a minor is anyone who has not yet reached his/her 18th birthday*) All adult/minor interactions should include two approved volunteers for any size group of children. (*note: “approved volunteer” includes adults who have an application on file with church office and approved Jr. Sponsors, 13-17 years old*) If for any reason two volunteers are unavailable, the door to the gathering space will be left open taking care to provide a clear sightline. Windows in classroom doors are to be left uncovered as well. In cases where a volunteer is both a classroom leader and the parent or guardian of a child in their classroom, the one-on-one minor child policy is waived where it concerns said adult and said child.
- B. We do **not** support or tolerate the use of corporal punishment of any kind for any reason. This includes spanking, pinching, shaking, grabbing, jerking, slapping or any other form of injury-induced contact.
- C. Caregivers will exercise caution to avoid **any** unsettling physical contact with a child. This would include areas commonly considered “private parts” (*i.e., genital, breast, buttocks.*)
Exceptions to contact with the lower anatomy would include diaper changes and assisting early childhood students with toilet needs.
 - Diaper changes will be done within the sight-range of other caregivers.
 - Bathroom/stall door should be left open while assisting early childhood students with toilet needs.
- D. Photos, videos or images captured for retreats, classroom crafts/projects and/or special events (*sponsored by GNC*) may be placed on the church website photo gallery or regulated social networking sites (*i.e. Facebook, church blog*) to promote and celebrate these events. However, volunteers are **not** to identify by name (or tag) children on any public site without the consent of a parent/guardian.

Parents/Guardians have the option to request that images of their children not be included in photos and videos. This request can be made by contacting the supervising pastor, directly.

- E. In cases of a notable incident or accident, volunteers are required to complete an incident/accident report within 24 hours. Reports are located on clipboards at three locations: upstairs beside Nursery door, downstairs by Kid Splash door, and downstairs in fellowship hall on desk in the teen prayer room.

- a. The following steps will complete the process:
 - i. Locate clipboard.
 - ii. Check clipboard for 2 blank copies separated by 1 piece of carbon.
 - iii. Complete report with clear yet concise details. (*note: please take the time to print carefully to ensure legibility*)
 - iv. Double-check that date and signature are included.
 - v. Give 1 copy to parent/authorized caregiver. (*note: be prepared to give verbal explanation when possible*)
 - vi. Leave 1 copy in senior pastor's mailbox in the office.
 - b. Examples of a notable accident:
 - i. If a child hits, bites or hurts another child leaving any form of mark or drawing blood.
 - ii. A child falls or collides leaving a bump, cut or the show of blood.
 - c. Example of a notable incident:
 - i. a non-custodial parent or unassigned caregiver attempts to retrieve children without custodial parents permission.
 - d. These should only be considered examples, not limits. Volunteers are expected to exercise careful judgment when considering information that may be helpful for parents/guardians. Our goal is to provide the greatest level of insight regarding a child's experiences; especially information that could affect a child's health, mood or comfort.
- F. All volunteers will be provided an identification badge. Volunteers are expected to wear their i.d. badge during activities and ministry related to children.
- a. Prior to completion of the "Volunteer Training" badges will have generic label (*i.e., "GNC volunteer" or "family ministry volunteer"*)
 - b. After the completion of the "Volunteer Training," ministry volunteers will receive a personalized badge complete with volunteers first and last name.
 - c. Volunteers are asked to store i.d. badge in the church office next to the utility closet

II. Check-in/Check-out Policy

- A. Parents/guardians will be asked to complete the following steps to ensure the safety and accountability for children, birth to kindergarten. These steps apply only during the times

GNC provides age-level programming for early childhood. If no programming is provided, check-in is not necessary.

B. Early Childhood (*Birth to Kindergarten*)

1. Children will be signed **in and out** by the parent/authorized caregiver using the GNC check-in/out sheet for children's ministry and be given a number. The number must be returned to the GNC volunteer in order to pick-up child.
2. If an Early Childhood worshipper has a need for a parent/guardian during their time of separation, a volunteer will notify parents.
3. No person under the age of 16 is allowed to take any child out of the classroom unless they are considered an "authorized caregiver" as determined by parent. This would mean that the minor seeking to retrieve child is able to offer an identification card for exchange.

C. Elementary (*1st to 6th Grade*)

1. Parents or "Authorized Caregivers" of Elementary Children are given the option upon filling out a one-time welcome sheet to request that their child either remain in their classrooms until parent or "authorized caregiver" arrives or to leave on their own.
2. All Elementary children moving from sanctuary to children's worship area or children activities during the second part of worship shall be escorted by a volunteer or parent/authorized caregivers.

D. For the safety of children and volunteer staff, all children (*birth – 6th grade*) are **not** permitted to roam the building or premises unattended. Therefore, children require an escort to the drinking fountain, restroom, etc.

When escorting children to the restroom, volunteer should stand in the outer doorway, propping the door in order to hear a child should there be a need. Volunteer should provide assistance then return to open door; otherwise remain in the restroom doorway until child is ready to return to classroom or activity.

III. Wellness Policy

A. Any child or youth with the following symptoms should not be admitted to the classrooms. If a child or youth should develop any of these symptoms while in a program, parent/authorized caregivers shall be notified communicating an expectation for a child to be picked up in a timely manner. Any volunteers who display any of these

symptoms should find a substitute and let the supervising pastor know that he/she will be unable to attend.

- a. Fever over 99 oral. (*Fever associated with illness that is not associated with teething.*)
- b. Vomiting in the last 12 hours.
- c. Diarrhea in the last 12 hours (*in case of flu symptoms*).
- d. Skin rashes or eruptions of unknown origin (*impetigo, measles, chicken pox, etc.*)

If your child or youth contracts any of these or another contagious illness, please notify the church office at **816-763-6891**. The church office will pass information along to others who may have been exposed.

- e. Persistent coughing associated with respiratory infection, including cold, bronchitis, and pneumonia.
 - f. Pink eye that may have a colored discharge or drainage.
 - g. Parasites, any form of lice, mites, or ringworm.
- B. While on site, parent(s) or assigned caregiver of a minor is the **only** one allowed to administer any form of medication to a child or youth. If a child or youth participates in an off-site event and requires medicine, the medicine and a written note with dose and time instructions will need to be given to the supervising pastor or authorized volunteer.

IV. Child Abuse or Allegations Policy

- A. It is our intent to follow state regulations in the reporting of child abuse. Any parental complaints about suspected or alleged mistreatment/abuse of any kind are to be reported to a member of the pastoral staff immediately.
- B. In cases where reporting is deemed necessary, the pastoral staff will work closely with the family and/or any agencies involved. Our desire is to protect the children and youth and support the family.
- C. Any suspected or alleged child abuse by volunteers can result in temporary or permanent removal from ministry, pending the outcome of an investigation. This would be done to protect both the child and the volunteer.
- D. See GNC Procedures and Best Practices for Ministry to Children and Youth document.

V. Outdoor Play Area Policy

- A. Play area must be checked for safety before children enter.
- B. One approved volunteer must be present at all times.

- C. Use equipment safely (*i.e. one child at a time, sliding on bottom and feet first*). This will help ensure safety and limit liability.
- D. Stay inside the fenced or assigned area at all times. When children need to use the bathrooms or retrieve something, a volunteer must accompany them.

VI. Off-Premises Policy

- A. Age-supervising pastor must be made aware of all events. (*ie. Sunday school class parties, preteen events, retreats, etc.*)
- B. There are to be at least two approved volunteers in a vehicle with children or youth or no less than three children or youth with one approved volunteer.

VII. Overnight Policy/Sleeping Arrangements on Overnight Trips

- A. In “group” sleeping arrangements (*i.e. lock-in, church sponsored slumber party, camping, ski or canoe trips, mission trips, etc.*) male and female participants are required to sleep in separate areas.
- B. No visitation between genders is allowed during the stated “lights out” time without consent and accompaniment of an adult sponsor.
- C. At least two approved volunteers must be present.

VIII. Training for Volunteers

- A. All volunteers are required to attend at least 2 trainings offered annually. These events are designed to enhance interaction and ability to care for and/or teach children and students.
- B. All volunteers are expected to annually review the GNC Child and Youth Protection Policy and Procedure documents.
- C. Local training days will be at no cost to volunteers and will focus on ministry to families.
- D. The Kansas City District Church of the Nazarene offers an annual training day. This provides an additional option for equipping and training. Registration fees for this training event will generally be covered for all volunteers from GNC, who choose to attend.