



POLICIES & PROCEDURES

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Welcome!

CONNECT KIDS

Hello and thank you for your interest in reaching the next generation for Jesus. Our mission statement at Connect Church is connecting people to Christ, community, and purpose. This mission extends to our next generation ministries.

Our vision for Connect Kids is this; We want to create a space that is welcoming, nurturing, and spirit filled. A place where kids can learn and feel the love of Jesus the minute they walk into the kids area. A place where kids can come and make new friends. A place where kids can grow spiritually. A place that instills a life-long desire for God's love and word. And a place that kids can have fun. We want to see kids give their life to Christ at a young age and we want to celebrate and equip them to tell their friends all about Jesus.

We want to encourage and equip leaders and families with the tools to be the main disciple maker in their households. We want to create a place where every leader feels valued and welcomed. We want to lead and instruct young leaders who are called to ministry and give them practical and spiritual opportunities to further explore their calling. We want a place that feels the manifest presence of God.

We want a place that God uses to call the next generation into life-long ministry.

In order to effectively minister to our kids and fulfill the mission and vision of our church we have written a policies and procedures manual that will ensure the safety of our kids. We want to be consistent across all kids' ministry departments to ensure that each of us are effectively ministering to the kids. These policies allow us to spend more time with the kids and growing in our personal walk with the Lord!

I am extremely excited you are joining us on this adventure, and I cannot wait to get to know you!

God's Blessings,

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SECTION 1.

Security

1. SECURITY

1. Check-in (arrival): Connect Church uses the Check-ins feature on Planning Center at various computer stations throughout the church and their respective departments.

- Children may not enter their department until they have checked in at one of the stations, and are wearing their computer generated sticker name tag.
- The name tag goes on the child, and the parent tag is given to the parent.
- Dream Team leaders must have 1st time visitors complete the Kid's Registration Card, with all pertinent information filled out.

2. During Service: Contacting the parents if necessary during the service.

- In the event that a parent needs to be contacted during the service, the child's parent will receive a text from the Kid's Pastor.
- If that is the case please quietly come to the kids area and the kids pastor will meet you there.
- This only occurs in emergency cases.

2. Check-out (departure): It is extremely important that we are consistent in enforcing check-out policies in order to provide the best security for our children.

- It is required that parents must have their parent tag with them in order to pick up their child. No child will be released without the parent tag given to one of the Dream Team leaders. Be sure to look carefully at the child's tag and make sure it matches with the parent tag. Discard of the parent tag once the child is safely with their parent. A picture of the parent tag is allowed for a parent to pick up their child.
- If a parent does not have a tag, please contact a Connect Church staff member. If an adult attempts to pick up a child without their tag, the staff member on duty must ask to see the adult's driver's license. Record the child's name, parent's name, and the adult's driver's license number on a missing tag form.

- All parents upon registering; fill out who is authorized to pick up their child. If an adult tries to pick up a child, but they are not authorized to pick up the child, Dream Team leaders will not allow the child to leave until we receive confirmation from the parent.

3. Kids Department Entrance: No person is allowed to enter a Kids Ministry Department other than a Kids Ministry Dream Team member, a Connect Church Staff member, or individuals who are KidSafe approved with a clear background check.

- All Dream Team leaders must check-in at the Check-in station just as kids would. Dream Team leaders will mark themselves under the 'Volunteer' category.
- All Dream Team leaders are required to wear their lanyards before they enter a department to serve.
- If there are any questions or concerns associated with an unknown individual in the Kids Ministries, notify a Connect Church Staff member or a Connect Church Safety Team member immediately.

4. Photography/Social Media:

- No pictures or videos of a child will be posted on social media without prior approval from the Kid's Pastor or Connect Church Staff member. If a parent has questions or concerns on the individuals who are authorized to take and post pictures of children, please direct them to a Connect Church Staff member.
- There is a photo release section that each parent signs when registering their child. Once signed by the parent, they are giving Connect Church permission to use pictures and videos of them and their children listed in the form for Connect Church purposes. Publications may include: websites, social media, promotion videos, posters, flyers, and more.

SECTION 2.

Child Protection

Connect Church intends to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of leaders and children. As a precaution and to ensure accountability from our Dream Team leaders, they must follow these rules:

1. THE “RULE OF THREE”

1. The “Rule of Three”:

- The Connect Church “Rule of 3” states that there must always be two non-related adults present when supervising one or more children. This is a non-negotiable rule and is designed for the safety of the children, as well as the volunteers.
- The purpose of the “Rule of 3” is to make sure the actions of our Dream Team leaders are known to at least one other leader, which will encourage leaders to support each other and hold each other accountable in Kids Ministry.

2. Compliance to the “Rule of 3” includes:

- There must always be two approved volunteer adults present when supervising one or more children.
- The adults must not be related family members (a married couple would be considered “related”).
- If two related adults are teaching together, a third cleared person must be present.
- The adults should be in sight of each other at all times.

3. Exceptions to the “Rule of 3: Occasionally, leaders will find themselves without another adult present due to unforeseen circumstances.

The following procedures should be followed:

- Immediately inform the Kids Pastor or a Connect Church staff member.
- For any time when there is only one adult present, the group must be in a location that is visible to others with an unobstructed window, open door, etc.

- In special circumstances, the “Rule of 3” can be one adult, with two kids as long as they are visible to the public. However, this is the last resort.

2. VISIBILITY & SECURITY

1. Visibility:

- It is important that all interactions between children and Dream Team leaders happen in locations where others can observe what is going on for safety and accountability purposes.
- At no time should a Dream Team leader and a child be behind a closed door with no visibility to outsiders.

2. Security:

- Most areas, if not all, where children and Dream Team leaders are present at Connect Church are equipped with video surveillance.
- Dream Team leaders must acknowledge that they are being recorded for safety and security purposes. This is not only done for the protection of the children, but for the leaders as well.

3. RESTROOM POLICY

1. Restroom Breaks:

- Dream Team leaders should provide assistance to a child using the restroom only if the child is five years or younger or has special needs requiring extra assistance.
- If for some reason an adult needs to enter the restroom with the child, there must be two adults present for the safety of the child.
- The bathroom in the hall leading to the Pre-K room will be designated as a kids only restroom. No adult should ever enter those restrooms unless an emergency situation deems it necessary. Dream Team Leaders will use the main restrooms in the hallway leading to the worship center.
- Men should never enter the girl’s restroom for any reason, and women should never enter the boy’s restroom for any reason.

4. PHYSICAL CONTACT

1. Physical Contact: Connect Church is committed to protecting children in its care and recognizes that appropriate touch is part of a positive, nurturing environment in a healthy kid's ministry. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by Connect Church Dream Team leaders:

The following are appropriate ways to have physical contact with a child:

- An arm around the shoulder
- Walking hand-in-hand when needed to ensure safety or efficiency in moving a group to a different location
- Short congratulatory or greeting side hugs
- A brief, assuring pat on the back or shoulder
- High-fives, handshakes, and knuckles

The following are actions that should NEVER occur between Dream Team leaders and children:

- Never touch a child in anger or disgust
- Never touch a child in any manner that may be construed as sexually suggestive
- Never touch a child between the navel and the knee
- Never touch a child's private parts
- No lap sitting for children in elementary (1st thru 5th grade)

Physical contact in any form should be above reproach. The personal behavior of Connect Church Staff and Dream Team leaders must foster trust at all times.

- Do not force physical contact, touch, or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected, except in cases where the child's safety or the safety of others is in question.

5. VERBAL INTERACTIONS

1. Verbal Interactions: Verbal interactions between Dream Team leaders and children should ALWAYS be positive and up-lifting.

- Connect Church leaders should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children.
- Dream Team leaders should not talk to children in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.
- Dream Team leaders are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children.

6. EVENTS OUTSIDE OF CONNECT CHURCH

1. Outside Events: All policies apply whether events occur at Connect Church or at an outside venue.

- Off-site group social events are encouraged as long as approved by Connect Church Staff. This should include date/time/location and reason for event.
- A child will NEVER be invited to go alone ANYWHERE for ANY reason.
- If you feel a child is in need of counsel, please contact a Connect Church Staff member and get them to help you develop a plan to help the child.
- All Dream Team leaders are required to fill out the KidSafe Application and go through the background check process that is REQUIRED for serving in areas of ministry in order to volunteer with events that happen outside of Connect Church.
- A child will NEVER be transported alone in a vehicle. If there is an emergency, make sure a Connect Church Staff member is notified or dial 911.
- Two non-related (married/family) members MUST be present at all times until all children are picked up by parents. Dream Team leaders should NEVER be alone with a child.
- In a camp situation, if you enter a cabin/room in which children are present it is allowed for a leader to stand at the opened door and ask them to step out if you need to come in the room.

- If the event involves transportation, for children you must use Connect Church transportation to do so. Do not use private cars. Only approved drivers that are listed on our insurance may drive Connect Church transportation vehicles.

The following should NEVER occur when at an event outside of Connect Church:

- Helping children bath/shower is absolutely prohibited.
- Never expose yourself in any way to children.
- In a camp situation, wait until all kids have showered or bathed to take yours. Always practice modesty and respect privacy.

SECTION 3.

Health & wellness

1. WHEN TO CALL 911

1. Call 911 if the following emergencies occur:

- A child begins choking
- A child is knocked unconscious or suffers a serious injury
- A child starts to have serious trouble breathing, especially if the child has any allergies. They may be having a fatal allergic reaction in this case.
- If there is a fire, serious security issue, or act of violence

2. In the event of an emergency:

- In the event of a potentially life threatening illness or injury, any adult has authority to immediately call 911.
- In non-life threatening instances, immediately report any medical needs or concerns to a Connect Church staff member or Dream Team leader. The notified person will contact the Connect Church Safety Team to decide if 911 should be called.
- The leader should remain calm and divert the attention of the other children.
- The injured or sick person should be kept quiet and still. Do not attempt to move a severely injured person unless they are in imminent danger. Remember that calm people, calm people.
- Regardless of severity, any medical needs or concerns should be reported immediately to a Connect Church staff member.
- All minor injuries should be reported on an incident report that is then signed by both a Connect Church Staff or Safety Team member and the parent prior to the child leaving the Kids Ministry department.

3. Locations of Fire Extinguishers and AEDs:

- At Connect Church, there are eight (8) fire extinguishers and two (2) AEDs on site in the main building. There are seven (7) fire extinguishers in the Multi-Purpose Center, as well.
- Inside of the worship center building, there is one fire extinguisher inside of the nursery, one inside of the Pre-K & K department, one inside of the Elementary department, one inside of the life group room, one by the mission's wall in the main lobby, one in the worship center behind the stage, and two in the hallway along the worship center towards the printer room.
- In the worship center building there is one AED inside of the Cafe and one by the Mission's Wall in the main lobby.
- In the Multi-Purpose Center, there is one fire extinguisher in the staff break room, one in the hallway of the entrance, one by the restrooms, one inside of the cafe, one inside of the entrance to cross to go to the main building, and one in each of the youth rooms.

2. ACCIDENTS & INJURIES

1. Accidents & Injuries: If an injury occurs, contact the Kids Pastor or a Dream Team leader immediately. Inform the Kids Pastor or Dream Team leader of the injury and any details that need to be recorded, and they will contact the parent and speak with them regarding the injury.

The following injuries MUST be reported:

- Any injury that leaves a visible mark
- Any injury where there is blood
- Any injury involving an allergy child ingesting an allergen (alert parent immediately)
- Any injury that leaves the child crying for an extended period of time, even if there is no visible injury
- Any injury that leaves a child limping or dazed
- Any injury where a child is complaining of pain more than five minutes after the accident occurred.

2. Incident Reports: An incident report form needs to be filled out by the Kids Pastor or Staff member(s) who witnessed or was given information about the incident.

- Record all details as soon as possible.
- Parents of any children who have been injured in anyway, spit on, or verbally abused will be informed of the incident only and not the name of the other child involved.
- The Incident Report form can be filled out on the Connect Church website at connectchurch.xyz/ir. Physical copies are available upon request.
- The Incident Report form must be signed by the parent, the Kids Ministry leader, and the child (when applicable).
- All completed and signed Incident Report forms will be sent to a Connect Church Staff member.

3. MEDICATION POLICY

1. Medications: No medication may be administered to a child from a Dream Team leader at Connect Church.

- The parent of the child must administer all medication, both oral or topical, such as teething gel, teething drops, eye drops, diaper rash cream, etc., unless they give the Dream Team leaders in the Nursery permission to do so.
- Any child not in the Nursery is not allowed to be given medication by a Dream Team leader.
- An exception to this is if a child has an EpiPen® and needs it administered to them in the case of a life-threatening reaction. However, in order for a leader to administer the EpiPen®, it must be on file with Connect Church.
- Dream Team leaders are prohibited from opening or taking medication while in the department.
- In the event that medication is needed, a Dream Team leader must leave the department to take their medication.

4. CHILDREN & DREAM TEAM HEALTH POLICY

1. Health Signs: At child drop-off, Dream Team leaders should evaluate each child for signs of an illness.

- If there is concern of an illness with a child, kindly ask the parent if the child has been symptom-free for 24 hours.

Do not admit a child who currently or within the last 24 hours has had one or more of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Any symptoms of childhood diseases such as Scarlet Fever, German Measles, Mumps, Chicken Pox, or Whooping Cough
- Has symptoms or has tested positive for Covid-19
- Diarrhea or vomiting, no matter what the cause is (medication, teething, etc.)
- Common cold
- Sore throat
- Constant cough
- Colored mucus (runny nose that is not clear)
- Any unexplained rash
- Any skin infection: boils, ringworm, impetigo, or any open sores that leak fluid/blood even if the condition is caused by eczema or other benign skin conditions
- Pinkeye or other eye infections/mucus or redness of the eye
- Any communicable disease
- Lice, including the presence of eggs or nits

2. Signs During Lessons: If a child begins to exhibit any of the above-mentioned symptoms or show other signs of illness, contact a Dream Team leader or Kids Pastor to evaluate the child. Allergy-related symptoms will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

- If a parent informs a Dream Team leader that their child has exposed the department to a contagious disease (ex. Measles, chicken pox, Covid-19, etc.), please contact the Kids Pastor to handle the situation.

- If this occurs, do not alarm other parents or children. After full investigation, the Kids Pastor will be responsible for notifying other parents.

5. ALLERGIES

1. Children with Allergies: Parents with children that have a severe allergy requiring an EpiPen® are required to note that information when they registered their child at Connect Church.

- Parents are responsible for informing Dream Team leaders of allergies pertaining to their child at drop-off, including if their child requires an EpiPen®.
- Dream Team leaders are asked to constantly be aware of children in their department that have allergies.
- Connect Church Kids Ministries are a nut-free facility - peanut butter and nut products should never be allowed inside of the department.
- Allergies are recorded when the child is registered, and will print on the child's name tag once they check-in to their respective departments.
- When food is homemade from a member of Connect Church, that person must have undergone a background check and given permission by a Connect Church Staff member before being authorized to serve food.
- Pets are not allowed in any kids ministry areas because of the potential of allergies to the animal, distraction to the children, or an animal attacking a child.

6. AREA, TOY, & HAND CLEANING

1. Cleaning: All Kids Ministry departments are regularly cleaned and vacuumed.

- In the event of an illness outbreak, classrooms and toys will receive an additional cleaning.
- Every staff member and volunteer are encouraged to wash and/or use hand sanitizer prior to entering a classroom.

When to wash your hands:

- When you arrive

- Before handling food or bottles
- After using the restroom
- After assisting a child in the restroom
- After changing each child's diaper
- After wiping a child's nose
- When you leave

SECTION 4.

Protection against Child Abuse

1. WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT?

1. Child Abuse Prevention & Treatment Act: An “incident of abuse” means any occurrence in which any person:

- Has threatened to inflict or has inflicted physical injury upon a child, youth worker, or vulnerable adult, other than by accident means, or is reasonably suspected to have done so.
- Commits or allows to be committed any sexual offense against a child, youth, or vulnerable adult, or is reasonably suspected to have done so.
- With respect to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult makes any kind of sexual advance, or makes a request for sexual favors, or engages in sexually motivated physical contact, or is reasonably suspected to have done so.
- Exposes a child, youth, or vulnerable adult to verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, or is reasonably suspected to do so.

2. WHAT IS OHIO’S LAW FOR REPORTING?

1. Ohio Revised Code: Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) mandates that certain people are required to make a report to Child Protective Services or law enforcement if they suspect that abuse of a child is taking place. Section 2151.421 states:

- No person described in division (A)(1)(b) of this section who is acting in an official or professional capacity and knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect based on facts that would cause a reasonable person in a similar position to suspect, that a child under eighteen years of age, or a person under twenty-one years of age with a developmental disability or physical impairment, has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability, or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the child shall fail to immediately report that knowledge or reasonable cause to suspect to the entity or person specified in this division.

Division (A)(4)(a) of this section states:

- No cleric and no person, other than a volunteer, designated by any church, religious society, or faith acting as a leader, official, or delegate on behalf of the church, religious society, or faith who is acting in an official or professional capacity, who knows, or has reasonable cause to believe based on facts that would cause a reasonable person in a similar position to believe, that a child under eighteen years of age, or a person under twenty-one years of age with a developmental disability or physical impairment, has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability, or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the child, and who knows, or has reasonable cause to believe based on facts that would cause a reasonable person in a similar position to believe, that another cleric or another person, other than a volunteer, designated by a church, religious society, or faith acting as a leader, official, or delegate on behalf of the church, religious society, or faith caused, or poses the threat of causing, the wound, injury, disability, or condition that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect shall fail to immediately report that knowledge or reasonable cause to believe to the entity or persons specified in this division. Except as provided in section 5120.173 of the Revised Code, the person making the report shall make it to the public children services agency or a peace officer in the county in which the child resides or in which the abuse or neglect is occurring or has occurred. In the circumstances described in section 5120.173 of the Revised Code, the person making the report shall make it to the entity specified in that section.

2. Abuse Reporting:

- Clerics and designated church leaders (but not church volunteers) are mandated reporters and should report whenever such person knows or has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse and neglect.
- A cleric is not required to report information received in a cleric-penitent relationship if there is civil or criminal testimonial privilege, unless:
 - The penitent at the time of the communication is a child or disabled person under the age of twenty-one;
 - The cleric knows or has reasonable cause to believe the penitent has suffered or is threatened with physical/mental injury or condition that indicates abuse or neglect of the penitent.
- Proof is not required when making a report of abuse, as the investigation will be conducted by law enforcement.
- If you make a report in good faith, you are immune from civil or criminal liability if complaints about you intentionally providing false information are unfounded.

- Any Connect Church Staff member, or Dream Team leader is expected to report any suspected child maltreatment to the appropriate Child Protective Services Agency. The Child Abuse Hotline number is (855) 642-4453.

- If the child is in immediate and serious danger, a Connect Church Staff member will call 911.

3. Failure to Report:

- There are legal penalties for failure to report.

- In Summit County, failure to report suspected child abuse and neglect violates the Ohio Revised Code and is a misdemeanor of the fourth degree, punishable by up to thirty (30) days in jail and/or a fine up to \$250. Civil liability may also exist.

3. ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

1. Zero Tolerance: Connect Church supports and maintains a zero tolerance policy against child abuse and neglect.

- Child abuse and neglect include physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, negligent treatment, or maltreatment.

- Sexual abuse is defined as the use, persuasion, or coercion of any child to engage in any sexually explicit conduct (or any simulation of such conduct) for the purpose of gratifying the sexual desire of the actor or for producing any visual depiction of such conduct.

- It is against the law and against Connect Church policy for any volunteer or employed staff, male or female, to physically, sexually, or mentally abuse or neglect any child.

- Connect Church reserves the right to refuse membership, to dismiss, or to exclude from affiliation with Connect Church any Dream Team leader or staff member who is or has been convicted of child abuse or neglect of any child.

- Connect Church also reserves the right to dismiss or exclude from serving with minors any Dream Team leader who has been accused of child abuse of any kind.

Connect Church will neither condone nor tolerate:

- Infliction of bodily injury upon any child or physically or sexually abusive behavior towards a child.

- Physical neglect of children, including failure to provide adequate safety measures, care, and supervision in relation to church activities.
- Emotional mistreatment of children, including verbal abuse and/or verbal attacks.

SECTION 5.

Dream Team Rules & Expectations

1. LEADER GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS

1. Leader Guidelines: Connect Church takes the obligations to its children seriously and asks leaders to abide by the following guidelines.

- **Arrival:** Dream Team leaders should arrive 30 minutes prior to the service or event to which they are serving unless otherwise instructed by the Kids Pastor or a Connect Church Staff Member.
- **Departure:** Dream Team leaders must remain in the Kids Ministry department in which they are serving in until the last child has been picked up by a parent or if they are relieved by another leader. There should be two leaders at all times until the last child is picked up.
- **Absences:** Once a Dream Team leader agrees to volunteer for a service or event, they are expected to be there. If an event occurs where a Dream Team leader is scheduled to volunteer in a department but cannot attend, the Kids Pastor should be notified so they can find a cover for that empty space. In the event of a last-minute illness or emergency, Dream Team leaders should contact the Kids Pastor.

2. Leader Expectations: Connect Church holds their Dream Team leaders to high expectations when working in the Kids Ministry departments.

- Connect Church Staff members and Dream Team leaders are prohibited from the use, possession of, or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal drugs while working with or supervising children at Connect Church.
- Dream Team leaders must stay alert and attentive to the children at all times. Leaders may not eat meals, read personal materials, talk or text on their phones, or perform any other task that takes the attention away from caring for the children in the department.
- As social media becomes more prevalent, we ask that the leaders refrain from posting inappropriate photos, images, or posts. You are a representative of Christ and Connect church and therefore must act above reproach. At no time should a Dream Team leader engage in private conversations with a child through social media or any other form of communication.

- Failure to comply with these policies will result in removal from all kids ministry departments.

2. PARENT COMMUNICATION

1. Crying Children or Worried Parents: There may be times when a Dream Team leader experiences a child who is reluctant to enter the classroom. If a child is crying during drop-off time or a parent is worried about their child crying during class:

- The Dream Team leader should tell the parents they would love to pray and work with their child.
- Ask the parents how long they would want them to allow their child to cry before contacting them.
- If a child is crying uncontrollably and no instruction was given on how long to let them cry, pray over them and try to calm them by doing different activities.
- Do not allow a child to cry by the door. Gently and calmly move them as far from the door as possible to try and work with them.

2. Leader & Parent Communications: Connect Church encourages an open culture of communication.

- If a parent or leader has any concern about a leader or policy, they should immediately contact a Connect Church Staff member or the Kids Pastor who will handle the situation.
- A parent will be contacted by a Dream Team Leader or Connect Church Staff member in the event that the child is inconsolable, ill or injured, has a severe disciplinary problem, or is a danger to their self or other children.

3. BEHAVIOR & DISCIPLINE

1. Zero Tolerance Behavior: The following will require contacting the parent.

- Biting
- Fighting
- Hitting

- Kicking
- Spitting
- Tantrums

2. Contacting a Parent: Connect Church does not contact a parent until after the service unless there is an emergency.

- The “zero tolerance behaviors” will be addressed each time they occur. The parents will be contacted so they can discuss the behavior.
- If the parent returns the child to the department after discussing the behavior with the child, the child should be greeted again as enthusiastically as they were when they first arrived.
- The Kids Pastor is the only one who can address the behavior with the parent.

3. Working & Praying Through the Behavior:

- If there is a behavioral issue, one Dream Team leader should be assigned to that child at all times to carefully watch over the child and encourage appropriate behavior from the child. When the parents come to pick up the child, make sure they know whether their child did great or if there were any issues.
- If inappropriate behavior from a child continues multiple times after speaking with a parent and trying to work with the child, notify the Kids Pastor.
- Parents will not be allowed into the department to address the child’s behavior.

4. Discipline: Physical discipline is never permitted at Connect Church. Children are to be disciplined using “breaks” and other non-physical methods of behavior management.

Follow these rules for discipline:

- Consistency: Discipline must be consistent to be effective. Correct a behavior the first time and every time.
- Response: Make a prompt and individualized response to inappropriate behavior. Do not threaten a consequence without the intention to follow through.
- Resolution: Seek to both resolve the conflict and reconcile relationships.

- **Reward:** Acknowledge and reward positive behavior. Encourage children who are behaving well and following the rules.
- **Preparation:** When teaching a lesson, be a confident, prepared teacher as this is the best deterrent to discipline problems. Be prepared to change activities to keep children engaged and positively interacting.
- **Prayer:** Pray for the children and patience as a leader consistently. Ask the Lord for guidance throughout the lesson and service. There are many people at Connect Church that would love to pray with you and for you before the Kids Ministries begin!

With discipline, Dream Team leaders should observe the following guidelines:

- Verbally redirect the child before physically intervening. With younger children some physical redirection may be necessary (for example, removing a toy from the hands of a child that is hitting another).
- If the behavior does not cease, remove or direct the child to an area of the room away from everyone else, but avoid being alone with the child.
- Provide the child with a simple, understandable reason for the “break”, and provide the child with a clear explanation of the expectations (for example, telling the child they need to sit quietly in the chair for four minutes because they did not stop hitting another child after being asked).
- Be verbally reassuring, as being removed from the group may upset the child. Do not physically hold the child in a “break.”
- Use this time as an opportunity for discipleship and gently remind them of the Connect Kids expectations. Remind them they are loved and help them understand their behavior is unacceptable in a nice and gentle manner.

If the behavior continues:

- Dream Team leaders should contact the Kids Pastor or Staff member for assistance.
- The Kids Pastor or Connect Church Staff member will determine what further actions should be taken (contacting the parent, discussion with the parent, etc.).
- The Kids Pastor or a Connect Church Staff member should be the only people to have a discussion with a child’s parent about discipline problems.

SECTION 6.

Screening & training

1. SCREENING

1. Screening Process:

- Each potential Dream Team leader must be an active member of Connect Church for at least three (3) months before being able to serve in the Kids Ministries. Kids Ministries include Nursery (ages 0 through 2), Pre-K/Kindergarten (ages 3 through Kindergarten), Elementary (grades 1st through 5th), and Camp Connect (VBS)
- They must fill out an online application, called KidSafe.
- The application asks questions such as: if the potential leader has accepted Christ as Savior, if they are a member of Connect Church, to list experience of working with children, if they have children, if they have been suspected, accused, charged, or alleged to have committed an act of neglect, abuse, or molesting a child, along with requiring two references to be given, and agreeing with the Applicant Statement.
- Once the online KidSafe application is received, it will be reviewed and then a background check will be conducted on the potential Dream Team leader.
- The background check will go through Checkr, and alert a Connect Staff member whether the potential Dream Team leader is cleared to volunteer within Kids Ministries. If a question has arisen within the background check, a meeting may be scheduled with you and the Kids Pastor
- The potential Dream Team leader's social media will also be checked by the Kids Pastor or Connect Church Staff member.
- Once the application and background check are approved and cleared, you will be notified by a Connect Church Staff Member and will be placed into a Kids Ministry department.

2. TRAINING

1. Training:

- When there is a new Dream Team leader approved to volunteer within Kids Ministries, they will shadow an experienced Dream Team leader in the department they are interested in for the first 2 weeks.
- After shadowing for a few weeks, the new Dream Team leader will be placed on the schedule for volunteering in the department of their choosing and rotate out with the other Dream Team leaders.
- After a few weeks the Dream Team leader will have a meeting with the Kids Pastor to see how they are liking their role. During the meeting the dream team leader may be asked what challenges have they experienced, if they enjoyed the children, if they do not feel well-trained, and more. This will give the Dream Team leader the opportunity to provide feedback on how to improve, how the effectiveness of the ministry is, and their personal opinions about Connect Church's Kids Ministries.