



Welcome to children's ministry at Restoration Church. Our goal is to make disciples in a safe environment. We want the children entrusted to our care to learn about the character of God, discover biblical truth, and learn what it means to follow Jesus Christ.

This handbook is designed to familiarize parents and volunteers with our children's ministry procedures and our child protection policy. The specifications contained in this handbook apply to official children's ministry occurring during our regularly scheduled corporate gathering on Sunday morning for children who are infants to 5th grade.

**[Restorationchurchdc.com/kids](https://restorationchurchdc.com/kids)
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Mission & Vision

What would happen if children began learning about the greatness of God at an early age? What if they began to recognize in concrete ways how God relates to absolutely everything in life? Imagine if they not only learned about God's great love for them in Jesus Christ but also began to embrace it with all their hearts. Imagine the impact if week in and week out they were taught by people who loved God and treasured His Word. We want kids at Restoration Church to have this kind of story.

Restoration Kids exists to equip, support, and encourage parents to fulfill their God-given responsibility to train their children in the "instruction and discipline of the Lord." We don't simply provide childcare so parents can attend our Sunday morning gatherings. Rather, we disciple children in a safe environment by intentionally teaching them about Jesus Christ and how the entire Bible tells the story of his redeeming grace. We desire to partner with parents to impart God-centered, age-appropriate, faith-building truth from the Bible. We strive to do this in a way that is not only faithful, but also fun for the kids.

The members of Restoration Church have covenanted together to raise the children under our care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The ministry of Restoration Kids is not only beneficial for the children but for all members. It helps those who do not have children meaningfully understand the importance of family and discipleship. It is beneficial for the entire body of Christ to see and hear the children in our church because it calls us to pray for them, disciple them and care for their souls. The kids of Restoration bring an energy and joy to the rest of the church body that reminds us of life in our church. Our prayer is that as we make disciples of the children God has entrusted to Restoration Church, they will come to understand the character of God and walk in the goodness of His grace at an early age.

Sunday Experience

Restoration Kids provides care and offers classes for infants through 5th grade. The children are divided into four age groups: 1) Infants – Age 2; 2) PreK, Ages 3-5; 3) K – 1st and 4) 2nd – 5th grades. As Restoration Kids continues to grow, it's our desire that the number of classes and age groups grow as well.

This class is a structured environment where basic childcare is provided in a safe and secure environment. All of our leaders have been carefully screened and are committed to the safety of the children.

There is a short lesson read and Bible songs sung in an age appropriate manner. With advancement in age comes advancement in structure and content of the class. The children will play with one another, worship through song and Scripture, and participate in lesson activities.

Beginning with those in Kindergarten, we ask kids to attend the first part of the worship service with their family until they are dismissed to their class for the duration of the service. Our goal is to prepare children for the transition of worshipping God in the main corporate service with their family.

Volunteer Qualifications

Discipling the children in Restoration Kids is both a privilege and responsibility, so it's our desire to do all we can to provide a safe, welcoming, and organized environment. To this end we:

- Reserve all Restoration Kids volunteer positions for active members in good standing who are at least 17 years of age
- Screen all children's ministry volunteers including background checks
- Require training for all children's ministry volunteers

Volunteer Expectations

All Restoration Kids volunteers share a particular responsibility for:

- Loving the children as Christ loves them
- Setting an example of proper Christian conduct in the way they live their lives
- Ministering to the children
- Understanding that the opportunity to care for children is not a right, but a privilege; and this privilege embodies responsibilities to God for ministering to and caring for the children

Scheduled Rotation for Workers

Every volunteer will receive the volunteer schedule weeks in advance of their scheduled rotation as well as a reminder email the week of their rotation.

If the volunteer is unable to work during their scheduled time, it is up to the individual to trade with another volunteer within their assigned classroom and then email the coordinator with the replacement. *It is not the responsibility of the coordinator to find a replacement.*

Also, each volunteer should manage their schedule the best way possible, so that an individual is not out of town one week and then in childcare the next week and missing two or more Sunday services in a row.

Setup and Cleanup

Due to the nature of our location, much work is required in setting up and taking down Restoration Kids. A checklist is provided for each classroom along with a schedule. Each worker is expected to arrive before 10:00am to set up and pray, as well as stay after the service until everything is returned to the storage room.

Safety Procedures

We take precautions to ensure that the children are safe while they are in our care. To this end we:

- Use a parent authentication identification system
- Employ scheduling procedures and volunteer/child ratios that optimize safety
- Provide a first aid kit
- Adhere to a healthy child policy for admittance to children's ministry

Protecting the Children: Arrival & Departure

Arrival and Departure Times

Volunteers should arrive promptly and be ready to accept children 15 minutes prior to the start of the service so that parents have enough time to transition their children before the service begins.

Parents are encouraged to pick up their children immediately after the conclusion of the service. In the event that a child is not picked up within 10 minutes of the end of the service, volunteers will locate the parents.

Checking a Child into Restoration Kids

Any parent who would like his/her child to participate in a children's ministry program will check the child into the appropriate classroom when he/she arrives, granting permission for the child to participate in that RC event or program. This will authorize RC to secure medical services for the child in the event of an accident or injury if the parents or legal guardians are unavailable. The parent should also use this opportunity to note any allergies or special needs the child may have.

At check-in the child will receive a sticker with a family-specific identification code. We will also provide a matching sticker for the parent. This is used to match parent to child.

At the end of the session when the parent/guardian comes to pick up the child, the children's ministry volunteer will bring the child to the door and remove the child's sticker. If the child or parent is unknown to the volunteer, the volunteer will check the parents' and child's stickers to ensure that they match. A child is officially checked out of Restoration Kids when their sticker is removed.

Protecting the Children In Our Care

Two Volunteer Rule

At least two qualified adult volunteers must be present in the classroom at all times. We consider adults to be age seventeen and older. Two male volunteers may not serve together without a female volunteer also being present.

Bathroom Basics

Transparency is the heart of this policy. We can't anticipate every situation. But our responsibility in every situation is to cheerfully assist in a way that maximizes openness and transparency in order to protect the children.

Parents are asked to take their children to the restroom prior to checking them into Restoration Kids. Therefore, most children will not need to use the restroom during RKids. However, in the case of an emergency:

- For the 0-2 and PreK classrooms: Parents will be called out of service to take their child to the bathroom. The floater will either find the parent directly or provide the child's code to the person at the sound station in the service. The code will be flashed on the screen, directing the parent to the child's classroom.

- For the lower and upper elementary classrooms:
 1. Only female volunteers may take children to the bathroom.
 2. The female volunteer must always take at least two children at a time, if possible of the same age/gender.
 3. All children (both genders) must use the women's restroom.
 4. The volunteer will check to make sure that no one is in the bathroom, then will stand outside the bathroom making sure no one enters. If the second child does not need to use the restroom, they should stand with the volunteer outside the bathroom.
 5. Children must wash hands before returning to the classroom.
 6. While the female volunteer is out of the classroom there still must always be two adult volunteers (one female) with the remaining children.
 7. If a parent is needed, the floater will either find the parent directly or provide the child's code to the person at the sound station in the service. The code will be flashed on the screen, directing the parent to the child's classroom.

Appropriate Discipline

All children's ministry volunteers are responsible for providing a loving, respectful, and orderly atmosphere in which children can learn, play, and interact with others. This atmosphere should be maintained by preparing beforehand, proactively directing children towards acceptable activities, verbally encouraging positive behavior, and, when necessary, correcting or redirecting inappropriate behavior.

Acceptable means of redirecting inappropriate behavior include correcting the child verbally, withholding a certain privilege or activity for a brief time, or separating a child from the group for a brief time (particularly if his behavior is endangering or upsetting other children).

Children's ministry volunteers and staff members should never yell, spank, or hit a child. If behavior is uncontrollable or the child does not respond to the discipline measures above, the parents will be called out of the service to attend to their child.

Accidents and First Aid

The RKids cart is equipped with a basic first aid kit. Volunteers should be familiar with its contents and uses. In the event of life-threatening injury or illness, emergency medical services will be called first and the volunteers will locate and inform the parents immediately.

Snacks and Food

We do not provide or administer snacks and beverages during Restoration Kids. Some lessons may suggest providing candy as a prize. If candy is provided, it will be wrapped and peanut-free. Children will not be permitted to eat the candy in class, but rather will be told to ask their parents for permission to eat it after class. At pick-up, volunteers will tell parents if candy was distributed during class.

Healthy Child Policy

Communicable Disease Policy

In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases among the children, four rules are in place concerning disease. Both parents and volunteers must be familiar with these policies.

1. Children with infectious diseases should be kept home until they are no longer contagious. If a child is exhibiting symptoms of illness such as fever, diarrhea, open skin lesions or blisters (as in chicken pox), or persistent nasal discharge, the parent should keep the child home.
2. Volunteers will use latex gloves and proper hygiene procedures to change diapers, wipe noses, and handle blood spills.
3. Hand washing or usage of anti-bacterial hand sanitizer must be a regular habit for both children and volunteers.
4. Toys and equipment are washed and disinfected regularly. Restoration Church is dedicated to preventing the spread of disease among the children.
5. Volunteers and church leaders have the right to refuse a child on the basis of questionable symptoms. To prevent this, parents are asked to comply with the following guidelines. A child should not participate in a class if and when any of the following exist:
 - Fever (Note: Children should be free of a fever for 24 hours after a contagious disease before coming back to church.)
 - Vomiting or diarrhea
 - Any symptom of childhood diseases such as scarlet fever, German measles, mumps, chicken pox, or whooping cough
 - Common cold – from onset through one week
 - Sore throat
 - Croup
 - Any unexplained rash
 - Any skin infection – boils, ringworm, impetigo
 - Pink eye or other eye infection
 - Thick green, yellow or constant nasal discharge
 - Any communicable disease

Children who appear ill during a class will be kept at the Restoration Kids check-in table with a volunteer until the parents are located.

Please inform the volunteers or church leader(s) if your child appears to have contracted an illness while attending a Restoration Church event so that other parents may be notified if necessary.

Neither volunteers nor church staff is allowed to give any medication to any child.

Universal Precautions

Universal precautions are employed such that all human bodily fluids are treated as if they carried infectious diseases. Universal precautions are applicable in a nursery setting and should be utilized. The method is very effective for protecting both the children and volunteers in the nursery from illness. This is not to imply that any children or volunteers in the nursery are carrying infectious diseases. By treating all bodily fluids as if they are infected, any infections or contaminants can be avoided at all times, providing a safer and healthier environment for volunteers and children alike.

Important Points of Universal Precautions:

- Wash hands before and after any contact with bodily fluids, including wiping noses, changing diapers, cleaning vomit, and treating a blood spill.
- Always wear disposable gloves when dealing with any bodily fluids.
- Treat all soiled linen (i.e. sheets, clothing) as potential infectious agents.
- Remove toys that children have mouthed from the general play area. Disinfect them with Lysol spray.
- At the end of the session, disinfect the room with Lysol disinfectant spray.

Child Protection

All members of Restoration Church stand ready to receive information related to suspected child neglect, abuse, or molestation. We are committed to addressing all allegations in accordance with the principles of Matthew 18 and in harmony with the Restoration Church covenant and the laws of the District of Columbia. Any children's ministry volunteer or staff member who witnesses a violation of the Child Protection Policy, short of abuse, should first notify the person violating the policy and encourage compliance. If the person violating the policy refuses to comply, a leader of Restoration Church should be notified immediately. Any children's ministry volunteer or staff member who witnesses or suspects neglect, abuse, or molestation should report their concerns immediately to a leader of Restoration Church.

Family Worship Sundays

Restoration Kids exists to partner with parents in the discipleship process. We desire to disciple children by teaching them the truths of God's redeeming grace in the classroom and in corporate worship. One of our goals in the classroom is to prepare children for the transition of worshiping God in the corporate service with their parents.

With that goal in mind, Restoration Church will periodically host Family Worship Sundays, about once a quarter. On these specific Sundays, the older children's classes, currently K-5th Grade, will stay for the entirety of the main service. This will create an opportunity to train our children to worship corporately, both as members of our immediate families and the family of God. As we gather together with all ages singing songs of adoration and hearing the supremacy of Christ proclaimed in the Scriptures, let us remember that we are being the Church and displaying God's glory to the kids of Restoration. The sermon may be shorter, the service may seem livelier than ever but the gospel will be proclaimed to all ages as we gather to worship from oldest to youngest.

Curriculum Review

We use *The Gospel Story* curriculum in our classes for children ages 3 through 5th grade.

This curriculum was developed by Marty Machowski, in conjunction with Covenant Fellowship, a Sovereign Grace Ministries church in Glen Mills, Pennsylvania. The Gospel Story for Kids is a unique, nine-year program that helps churches and families ground children in the gospel story from Genesis to Revelation. Using 156 stories (78 Old Testament and 78 New Testament), this interactive program empowers churches and families to connect and reinforce the same, core biblical truths with their children. All resources use the ESV Bible. The Gospel Story curriculum is unified, meaning all ages are learning the same story.

Children who began this program at age three will have learned and absorbed the gospel story from Genesis to Revelation three complete times. At each age level children are taught the gospel through age-appropriate illustrations, activities, coloring pages, object lessons, and memorization using the *Gospel Story* Sunday school curriculum, an illustrated children's storybook Bible, *The Gospel Story Bible*, and two family-friendly devotionals, *Long Story Short: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God (OT)* and *Old Story New: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God (NT)*.

Common Questions & Answers

What is the goal of using this curriculum?

We want to use a curriculum that focuses on God's Word and teaches children important truths about God, albeit in a simple and fun way for the teachers and children!

Who will be in charge of telling the story?

There are generally two volunteers per classroom. However, we will designate one person to be the story lead and will note this on the schedule. If one of you has a preference (either to tell the story or not to tell the story), you should feel free to switch amongst yourselves.

I hear there is a craft involved. What if I'm not good at crafts?

You can rest easy because these are very simple crafts, and all of the materials that you need will be provided.

What if it seems that the children don't understand or are not paying attention to the teaching?

Children do have a short attention span, but this should not discourage you. God has promised us that His Word "shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose . . ." (Is. 55:11)

What if the children would rather play instead of having the story time?

We know that sometimes it would be much easier to let the children play the entire time instead of trying to corral them into paying attention to the story and other teaching. But one way we love the children under our care is by graciously and

patiently instructing them in God's Word, even if that is not their top priority at this time. It is a good reminder for us of the way that God lovingly and graciously continues to work in our lives even when we would rather "play" instead of being in God's Word.

What are other things that I should keep in mind?

One thing that is often forgotten is children probably do not read or do not read very well yet. Even though we have the Bible verse and Biblical truths written out, you will need to read these to them and repeat throughout the class so that they can retain the information.

How can I know what lesson is being taught each week?

We desire to equip parents to impart God-centered, faith-building truth from the Bible, so we post free parent resources on our website. The posted information includes the story, memory verse, and discussion questions to help you engage your kids with the Gospel through the week. For more information please refer to restorationchurchdc.com.

Where can I get more information regarding the curriculum?

The curriculum is online at gospelstoryforkids.com.