



WELCOME TO THE TEAM!
SONLIGHT AND STUDENT MINISTRIES
VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR OF CHILDREN AND STUDENT MINISTRIES

Dear Sonlight and Student Ministries Volunteers:

Thank you for your willingness to serve in Sonlight and Student Ministries. Your dedication to WCC's infants, children and students is greatly appreciated, and your commitment to care for, support and encourage our young ones and build relationships with them is a true testament to your desire to further the Kingdom.

First and foremost, the ultimate goal for volunteers is to teach children about the Gospel and nurture them so that one day, they will choose to live their lives in personal relationship with Jesus Christ. That objective, however, can take years. But I hope that as you serve, you will plant seeds and then water them by supporting, encouraging and leading our children as they mature in their relationship with Christ.

A second objective is to ensure our children remain safe while they are in our care. Please review the policies and procedures included in this handbook and promise to abide by all the rules and regulations. We want all families who allow their children to be a part of Sonlight and Student Ministries to know their children are loved, protected, safe and learning about Jesus while they are in our care.

Thank you again for serving as a Sonlight or Student Ministries volunteer.

Sincerely,

Ryan Langeland

Pastor of Children and Student Ministries



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CLASSROOM BREAKDOWN

Sonlight

- Early Childhood | Infants, Crawlers, Walkers and 2- and 3-year-olds (toddlers)
- PreK/K | Prekindergarten/Kindergarten | Children 4 to 6 years old
- First to Third Grade | Children in Grades 1, 2 and 3
- Club 456 (C456) | Students in Grades 4, 5 and 6

Student Ministries

- Middle High | Students in Grades 7 and 8
- Senior High | Students in Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12

DIRECTORY

Staff Directory

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MISSION STATEMENT, GOALS AND CORE VALUES

WCC Mission Statement

Growing deeper in our relationship with Christ and sharing the hope of the Gospel

Sonlight and Student Ministries Goals

- Gospel | The Gospel is presented multiple times each year and is central to classroom teachings.
- Resourcing | Parents are provided materials that complement the teachings and are encouraged to be actively involved.
- Ownership | Children and students are provided opportunities to claim and share their faith and God-given talents.
- Welcome | The church is a place of safety, community and relevance and Jesus Christ is the priority.
- Transition | Children and students will learn that discipleship is a continual process and will become familiar with the next steps and milestones in the process.
- Highlight | Volunteers, Christ-centered families and faith decisions will be celebrated as models for parents, children and students to follow.

Core Values

God's truth will be taught:

- With authority and knowledge of His Word through the Holy Spirit.
- In a fun, relevant and creative way with equipped volunteers.

The following relationships will be encouraged:

- Students with God
- Students with small group leaders
- Students with their families
- Students with others

A safe environment will be provided by:

- Collecting applications, conducting background checks and obtaining references on all volunteers.
- Ensuring physical safety in all classrooms.
- Creating an emotionally safe place for children to be with adults.



SPIRITUAL VALUES OF VOLUNTEERS

As a Sonlight or Student Ministries volunteer, you must be committed to WCC's mission and to the mission and values of the ministries you serve. In addition, you must desire to reach children for Christ through ministry opportunities. The Christian life is a process that involves continual growth, and the hope is that you will mature in your relationship with Christ as you serve.

The spiritual values noted below were not established for volunteers as goals to be accomplished, but instead as guidelines to follow when serving. You are asked to uphold the values, and with God's help, obediently fulfill them. As *John 15:5* states, "Apart from God, we can do nothing."

Personal Purity

The main responsibility of Sonlight and Student Ministries volunteers is simply to follow Christ. You are to do as He would do, live as He would live, dwell on things that are excellent and praiseworthy and live a life that is a Godly example to others. The goal is to seek God daily and continually grow and learn through a personal walk with Him.

"Finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things." | *Philippians 4:8*

Relational Integrity

Volunteers' relationships with others should be honorable, pure and loving on every level. Because children are impressionable and vulnerable, you must respect the unique needs of each child and always conduct yourself in a manner worthy of Christ, knowing that you will be held accountable for everything you do or say. We must all be "Jesus in the flesh" to the children we care for.

"In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us." | *Titus 2:7*

Exercising Spiritual Gifts

All volunteers are placed according to their gifts and abilities. The goal is for you to understand your role and serve with passion and enthusiasm. In turn, the hope is that you are rewarded with a sense of fulfillment and purpose and find serving a joyous experience.

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." | *1 Peter 4:10*

Christlike Servanthood

All volunteers serve God by serving children. God calls us to serve with all our heart knowing that ultimately, we are accountable to Him for our every action and word. We should allow Him to fill us with His power, strength, wisdom and direction as we fully surrender to His plan and let Him use us according to His purpose—not our own—in every situation. When Jesus washed His disciples' feet, He gave us a profound example of love and a perfect example of serving others.

“Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does.” | *Ephesians 6:7*

“Do you know what I have done to you? You call me teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, the Lord and Teacher washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.” | *John 13:12-15*



GENERAL VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Dress Code

Being fashionable is fun, but certain styles just don't work well for volunteers who are down on the floor interacting with children and students. Be considerate of the young, impressionable minds and other volunteers in the room and avoid wearing revealing, low-cut and/or spaghetti-strap tops, low-rise jeans and extremely short shorts. These items are not appropriate when you are sitting on the floor, bending over and leaning down to assist children.

Finding a Substitute

Sonlight counts on volunteers to be present for the shifts to which they have committed. Extra volunteers are not scheduled, so your absence creates a big void. When unexpected circumstances arise and commitments cannot be fulfilled, you are responsible for finding your own substitute. Program leaders will provide instruction for this process. Substitutes should be secured by the Thursday prior, but keep in mind most program leads do not work on Fridays and Saturdays.

Sharing Information

Sonlight cares about you beyond what you provide to our children when you serve. Please keep your program leader informed about what is going on in your personal life. Do you have a joy to share or a prayer request? We care about you and want you to involve us in your life outside the church.

Social Media

WCC seeks to maintain the safety and anonymity of children and appropriate boundaries governing the interaction of volunteers and children. Digital messaging and social media use, defined here, include:

- E-mail
- Texting via cell phone or other digital devices
- Engagement via digital applications or platforms, including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, or X



between volunteers and minor children or students outside of their family, accessed through WCC programming, is limited to these formats and practices:

- **Birth through Grade 3:** No interaction is permitted.
- **Grades 4-6:** No interaction permitted, unless made through parents. Volunteers must pass messages through parents directly and must receive information from parents.
- **Grades 7-8:** Interaction permitted only with directly expressed parental consent.
- **Grades 9-12:** Interaction permitted with parental knowledge that communication is coming from the volunteer.

When permitted, all message threads must be potentially observable by a third party and maintained for reference until students are 18 years old. Parental consent affirmations should also be maintained and provided upon request.

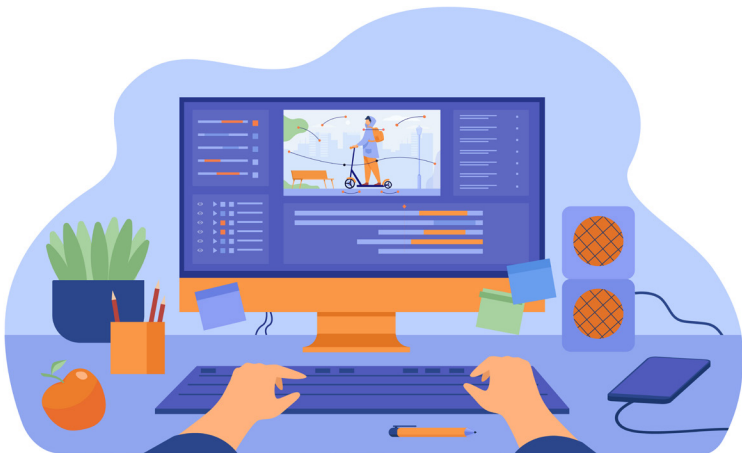
Under no circumstances may volunteers engage children or students under the age of 18 in applications, message threads, or platforms that:

- Delete the communication
- Are known to be endorsing or espousing views or behaviors that would be in opposition to Beliefs and Values of the church
- Are harassing or sharing confidential or sensitive information
- Allow participation of children without the consent of adults

Pictures of any child or student under the age of 18 may only be posted on official WCC pages, groups, or platforms. Volunteers may not take nor keep images of children or students under the age of 18, except for purposes of posting on said pages, groups, or platforms. After this posting has been done, images of children or students under the age of 18 must be deleted from personally-owned devices.

WCC will provide notice, possibly with other written consents, when photographs or videos are taken of children or students. Parents or guardians will have the option of opting out of having depictions of their children being used for the generally-applied practice of posting these to WCC pages, groups, or platforms.

Volunteers, within their programming scope and duties, may not solicit children or their families for purchases or participation in events outside of WCC programming. This includes digital solicitation or invitation.



The best practices of digital messaging and social media use with children and students, accessed through WCC participation or programming, utilize:

- Parental consent (or parental knowledge for high school students)
- Maintaining messages
- Thorough consideration of what is being posted and how it might be received

Inappropriate or suspicious posts, or posts indicating dangerous thoughts or actions, should be reported to the Pastor of Children and Students.

Volunteers should understand that the meaning of phrases, emojis, gestures, and abbreviations may change often in the cultural milieu. They should also understand that these artifacts may mean different things to the recipient than what was intended. Digital communication should be used to accent and accompany direct conversation, not to replace it.

Group chat applications, often used to good effect for sharing information and prayer requests, should be thoroughly investigated for adherence to the above policies before being utilized for communication with children or students.

Sonsation Meetings

Every six to eight weeks, the PreK/K, Grades 1 to 3 and the C456 program leaders meet with small group leaders on Sunday mornings for interactive team building and training. They want to ensure you feel appreciated, encouraged and equipped throughout the year. Regular programming continues during the meetings, which last about 30 minutes, while helpers care for the children. Leaders return to the classroom in time to lead their groups.

Weekly Communications

Volunteers receive regular communications about upcoming lessons and schedules. Volunteers working the upcoming Sunday should receive an email the prior Wednesday or Thursday with general information as well as information about additional responsibilities and expectations, such as special attire, schedule changes, items to bring or tasks that may require advance preparation. Please pay close attention to these emails and read them faithfully.



EARLY CHILDHOOD BASICS

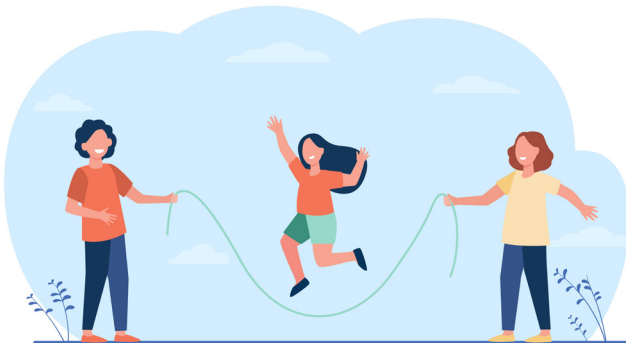
In the Early Childhood area, special attention has been given to details to create a safe and nurturing environment for infants through 3-year-olds. Each Sunday, more than 100 volunteers commit to the particulars of their roles and work together seamlessly to ensure Sonlight families have an exceptional experience.

To ensure each child is well cared for on a Sunday morning,

- Follow safety and emergency procedures at all times.
- Label diaper bags, cups and bottles clearly.
- Ensure children are wearing their nametag at all times.
- Comply with the adult-to-child ratios posted outside each room.
- Give bottles and juice cups to children per parent's instructions. The only food given to children in this area is an occasional snack in the walkers room.
- Keep the room safe and clean. At the end of each service, wipe down toys, books and playpens with an antibacterial spray.
- Clean up spills and potty accidents with paper towels then notify the coach or coordinator to ensure the area is properly cleaned and treated.
- Follow diaper changing and restroom policies when changing diapers and taking children to the restroom.
- Do not allow children into the room who show signs of illness, such as croup, diarrhea, fever, rash and/or a green runny nose. Ask the coach or coordinator to locate the parents, if a child has these symptoms.
- Report all emergencies to the coach or coordinator immediately.
- Ask the coach or coordinator to alert parents via text message if children continue crying for more than 10 minutes after being dropped off. If a coach isn't available, ask one of the check-in volunteers to send the text.

Early Childhood Age Requirements

- Volunteers must be 16 years old to serve in any room.
- Volunteers 12 to 15 years old may serve in the Walkers and 2- and 3-year-old rooms or as a floater in any room.
- Volunteers 10 to 12 years old may serve with a parent.
- Children under the age of 10 are not eligible to serve in Early Childhood.



TYPICAL SUNDAYS

PreK/K and Grades 1 to 3

A typical Sunday in the PreK/K and Grades 1 to 3 classrooms may include the following:

Activity Stations: Children and small group leaders work together at different stations, which include crafts, games and physical activities. This is a time for children to let their guard down. Adult and student volunteers are encouraged to interact and play with the children to build strong relationships.

Kid Connection Time: In their small groups, children gather with their leader to answer questions that encourage them to share about themselves. The questions are tied to the key concept of that day's lesson.

Large Group Time: Children are led in a fun, upbeat worship time, then large group leaders teach the day's lesson using games, puppets, videos or storytelling. This is usually a 20-minute period.

Small Group Time: Children gather in their small groups where they focus on building relationships with their leaders. Small group leaders usually have 15 to 20 minutes to creatively review the lesson with their group.

Special Services: Several times throughout the year, the PreK/K and Grades 1 to 3 classes combine for special services, such as Christmas, Easter, Missions Week and Worship Weekends.

Club 456

A typical Sunday in C456 may include any combination of the following:

Hangout Time: C456 doors open 15 minutes prior to the start of services. This provides a great opportunity for students and leaders to socialize and participate in a variety of preclass activities.

Large Group Teaching: Intentional biblically based lessons that focus on topics preteens face in today's world are taught in the large groups setting. The goal is to encourage spiritual growth and engage students in thinking critically about spiritual truths. Students sit in their small groups during this time and should follow their leader's example and listen attentively. Leaders are also responsible for helping with crowd control in their groups.

Small Group Time: Small groups provide an opportunity for children to talk about what they heard and learned during the lesson. Teachers will provide volunteers with instructions on how to guide the conversation.

Games/Activities: Some weeks, games are played to simply have fun and enjoy each other's company. Other weeks the games and activities will directly tie to the teaching and help emphasize a point. Leaders should set a good example for students through their attitude, performance and competitiveness.



SAFETY PROCEDURES (SONLIGHT)

WCC families must feel the church is providing a safe and nonthreatening environment for their children who are participating in Sonlight ministries. These policies have been created to protect children and volunteers and must be carefully and enthusiastically enforced since more than 300 children are cared for each week.

Volunteer Safety Policy

- Screening is required for all Sonlight volunteers. Volunteers must complete a Sonlight Volunteer Application form, have a completed interview on file and sign an authorization for a criminal background check.
- Volunteers must wear a volunteer identification tag at all times.
- If an accident occurs, big or small, volunteers should complete an Accident Report Form with a staff member's assistance.
- Volunteers should report suspicion of child abuse/neglect immediately to the Sonlight staff and complete a report. This includes knowledge or observation of the abuse/neglect that is within the volunteer's scope of duty.

Diaper Changing Policy

Every child should go home with a dry and clean diaper. This communicates to parents that their child is loved and that the child's health and safety is a top priority. Please note that WCC policy states that only women may check or change a child's diaper. Female volunteers should adhere to the following procedures when changing a diaper:

Infants and Crawlers

- Change diapers only in the designated changing area—nowhere else in the room.
- Assemble and ready all supplies before starting, including diapers, wipes, gloves and changed/checked labels.
- Never leave a child alone on the diaper deck.
- Return the child to the play area in the infants' and crawlers' room after changing a diaper.
- Dispose of gloves then place the soiled diaper in a red hazard bag and insert the diaper into a Diaper Genie. Use antibacterial spray to disinfect the changing area.





Toddlers

- Change diapers only on the diaper deck in the changing area—nowhere else in the room.
- Keep the top half of the restroom's split door open when changing diapers.
- Assemble and ready all supplies before starting, including diapers, wipes, gloves and changed/checked labels.
- Never leave a child alone on the diaper deck.
- Return the child to the toddler play area after changing a diaper.
- Dispose of gloves then place the soiled diaper in a red hazard bag and insert the diaper into a Diaper Genie. Use antibacterial spray to disinfect the changing area.

Restroom Policy

For the protection of children and volunteers, WCC policy states that only women may escort children to the restroom and assist them. If no female is available, a woman from another classroom should be summoned. Female volunteers should follow these procedures when taking children to the restroom:

Toddlers

- There is a restroom in every Early Childhood classroom. Children should not be taken out of their assigned room to use a different restroom.
- When assisting children who are potty training, leave the top half of the split door open at all times. Encourage children to do as much as they can for themselves.
- Children who are potty trained do not require as much assistance. Therefore, volunteers should not enter the restroom with the child. Keep the top half of the split door open in case the child asks for assistance while also providing privacy. Encourage children to do as much as they can for themselves.

Pre/K, Grades 1 to 3 and C456

- There is a restroom in each of the PreK/K and Grades 1 to 3 classrooms. Children should not leave their room to use a different restroom.
- Assist children with their clothing upon their request in the open doorway before the child goes in and after the child comes out. Encourage children to do as much as they can for themselves.
- Volunteers should never be alone with a child in a restroom.
- Club 456 students may leave to use the restroom located outside the classroom after notifying a volunteer who will watch for the student's return.



SECURITY POLICIES

Early Childhood, PreK/K and Grades 1 to 3

- Doors to the programming areas must be locked during services.
- Parents receive a numbered security tag after checking a child into Sonlight. A matching tag is placed on the child.
- Parents must present the security tag to claim their child.
- Volunteers must ensure the numbers on the parent's and the child's tag match before releasing the child.
- If parents lose their tag, a staff member must contact check-in volunteers to reprint the tag before releasing the child.

C456

- Parents are not required to check their students into C456. As a means of independence, students may check themselves in with the check-in volunteer. Security measures are in place for these students as well as for the younger children.

Miscellaneous Rules

- If someone looks out of place, ask the person if help is needed. Volunteers are the children's protectors and must help ensure the hallways remain safe. Remember, doors lock when the service starts.
- Cell phones should be put away while volunteers are serving because they can be a distraction and prevent volunteers from providing a safe environment for children.
- Taking pictures with cell phones and cameras is not allowed. Only WCC staff and volunteers on the WCC Photography Team may take photographs to use for future WCC promotions with parents' permission.
- Volunteers should refrain from bringing weapons of any kind into the church, including the Sonlight, Club 456 and Student Ministries areas.



Student Ministries

- Volunteers must complete a face-to-face interview, volunteer application and criminal background check before serving.
- Parents may be asked to volunteer in different roles throughout the year. Parents who are simply attending meetings or assisting in a limited capacity with no direct contact with other students do not need to complete screening procedures.
- Volunteers should remain in sight and/or hearing distance of other people when working with students individually or in small groups.
- Volunteers should ensure exterior doors are locked after students have entered the building and programming has begun.
- Volunteers should be quick to approach/assist any adult on the premises they do not recognize or who looks suspicious.
- Small group leaders should know the whereabouts of their students at any given time and should report a missing student to the program leader immediately.
- At least one volunteer must watch the parking lot for reckless activity, the flow of drop-off and pick-up traffic and to ensure students go home with the appropriate people before and after programming.
- Cameras will be capturing lessons, but volunteers should monitor students' cell phone pictures and videos to ensure images are appropriate and produced with student or volunteer devices.
- When traveling for youth activities, volunteers (and students) must wear seatbelts at all times and follow traffic laws.
- Volunteers must keep track of who is absent from their group and the duration of the absence, such as during restroom breaks. Students should not use time away from programming to hide, play games or socialize. If needed, volunteers should seek assistance from other volunteers to help get students where they need to be.
- Student relationships should be monitored closely. No volunteer or student may harass, intimidate or make others uncomfortable.
- An Accident Report form should be completed for any intervention, including basic first aid, that is provided to a student outside of regular programming.



CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

WCC is committed to reducing the risk of child abuse/neglect, to safeguarding children, protecting staff and volunteers from allegations of sexual abuse/neglect and limiting the potential of legal risk and liability. WCC staff and volunteers who have direct contact with children, such as babysitting, teaching or leading children must undergo a background check before starting and undergo a repeat check everything three years.

In Indiana, allegations of suspected child abuse or neglect must be taken seriously and must be shared with the appropriate authorities. Since WCC is in the state of Indiana, WCC staff and volunteers must report suspected abuse/neglect and must cooperate with law enforcement and the government agencies involved after reporting the suspicion. "Reason to believe" means the evidence, if presented to individuals trained to recognize the signs, would be valid enough to determine the child is/has been abused or neglected.

To report a child abuse/neglect suspicion, call:

- Indiana State Child Abuse Hotline | 1-800-800-5556 (answered 24/7)
- Kosciusko County Child Protection | 574-267-2576
- Warsaw Police Department | 574-372-9511

Remember that discretion is of the utmost importance. All matters pertaining to such allegations and the parties involved must be held in strict confidence to the fullest extent possible without interfering with an investigation.

Child Abuse/Neglect Definitions

Emotional abuse conveys the message that a child is worthless and undeserving of love and care. It can take the form of threats, critical words, demeaning terms or names, deprivation of affection or similar emotional cruelty. It can be spoken or unspoken.

Physical abuse is nonaccidental physical trauma or injury inflicted on a child or failure to protect a child from another person who has physically abused the child. In its most severe form, physical abuse may cause great bodily harm or death.

Physical neglect is the failure to provide for a child's physical survival needs to the extent the child's health and safety are at risk or the child is harmed. This may include abandonment; the inability to meet basic clothing demands; lack of medical or dental care, shelter or supervision; lack of adequate nutrition that places the child below the normal growth curve; or life-endangering physical hygiene. In its most severe form, physical neglect may result in great bodily harm or death.

Sexual abuse is the internal or external touching of a child's intimate parts with any part of the body; indecent exposure; a sexual act performed in a child's presence; using a child for prostitution; the manufacturing of child pornography; or showing or speaking about sexually explicit material with a minor. Child sexual abuse is also the willful failure of the parent or the child's caretaker to make a reasonable effort to stop another person from sexually abusing a child.



Symptoms to Note and Document

Behavioral Symptoms

- Acting out sexual behaviors
- Nervousness or hostile behavior toward adults
- Severe anxiety when approaching the classroom
- Sexual knowledge beyond what is expected from peer group
- Withdrawal from church activities and friends

Physical Symptoms

- Difficulty urinating
- Discomfort when sitting
- Irritation, pain or injury in/to the genital area
- Lacerations, bruises and/or swollen areas on any part of the child's body
- Torn or bloody underclothes
- Venereal disease

Verbal Symptoms

The statements below may be in reference to a family or staff member or someone else entirely. These statements require a limited degree of follow-up to determine reason or to clarify. If any concerns persist beyond reason and clarity questions, immediately inform the pastor of Children and Student Ministries.

- "I don't like (name of person)."
- "(Name of person) does things to me when we're alone."
- "I don't like to be alone with (name of person)."
- "(Name of person) touched me."
- "(Name of person) did something to me."



Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect

If you see any of the noted symptoms of abuse:

- Contact 9-1-1 if the situation is a life-threatening emergency.
- Secure the safety and anonymity of the child first. Do not confront the accused.
- Go immediately and directly to a WCC staff member.
- A WCC staff member will notify the parent/guardian of the child. If the parent/guardian is the suspected perpetrator, defer notification to child protection or law enforcement authorities.
- Do not prejudge the situation. Note that all statements and information will be used to form the basis of the suspected abuse/neglect.
- Complete a WCC child abuse or neglect report form immediately.
- The WCC staff member will immediately notify the executive pastor of Growth and Maturity, or in her absence, the executive pastor of operations, who may, if advisable under the circumstances, contact the police to prevent additional or imminent physical or emotional harm to the child.
- Notify the pastor of operations of the incident so the WCC insurance carrier can be contacted.
- The pastor of operations may, if advisable, contact legal counsel for guidance.

If the accused is a WCC staff member or volunteer:

- A volunteer who is the subject of the investigation will be removed from his/her position pending completion of the investigation.
- A staff member who is the subject of an investigation will be removed from his/her position with pay, pending completion of the investigation. If the staff member admits guilt, he/she will be terminated.
- A staff member found guilty of the alleged abuse or molestation will be forbidden to work with children, youth and the disabled. WCC will seek legal counsel to determine if termination of employment is indicated.
- Staff members, ministry leaders and elders will fully cooperate with law enforcement or government agencies investigating allegations of injury, abuse or molestation in connection with WCC activities.
- For the protection of its minors and ministries, WCC, in its sole discretion, may amend or modify these procedures and policies concerning ministry staff as circumstances require.



EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Lost-Child Procedure

If a child is missing:

1. Look for the child, asking other volunteers to fill in for you in the classroom. Knock on the nearest bathroom door and look under tables and through the doors into hallways and adjacent rooms.
2. Ask the coach, other volunteers and children in the small group if they have seen the missing child.
3. Inform the coach or program leader that the child is missing. He or she will organize a search that will include at least one member of the WCC security team, if the team is on duty. Programming will not be disrupted during the search.
4. The search team will check bathrooms and the building, working from the program area outward.
5. If 10 minutes elapse from the last sighting of the student (30 minutes for middle and high school students), the child's parents must be texted using the contact information provided during check-in. If the parents do not respond, they should be called. These steps should be repeated until the parents respond.
6. If after being contacted the parents report the child should still be in the classroom, all available church staff, security volunteers and the on-call EMT will conduct a search that includes a review of the video monitoring system and a search of the pond.
7. If the search is successful, all members of the search party will be notified.
8. If 30 minutes elapse from the last sighting of the student (45 minutes for middle and high school students) or if there is reason to suspect the child may be in danger, the police must be called.

Armed Attack or Active Shooter

Run, Hide or Fight

Armed attacker and active shooter situations evolve rapidly. In each of these situations, there are three options: 1) evacuate 2) shelter in place or 3) stop the attacker. How you respond depends on your proximity to the gunman. The top priority in these situations is the preservation of life, so remove yourself from potential danger first, and then try to help others.

Evacuate

If after evaluating the three options—run, hide or fight—you determine it is safe to leave the building, move as quickly as possible. Remember, your safety and the safety of those around you are the top priorities. As the event unfolds, staff members will use their best judgment to minimize injuries and loss of life. When evacuating, follow these guidelines:

- Evacuation is recommended only if you know the event has passed or is happening in another part of the building.
- Move away from the suspect or the sounds of gunfire to the nearest safe exit.
- Go to a safe area outside the building or the designated rendezvous point.
- If the event takes place on a Sunday morning, the congregation will be dismissed by sections, starting with the most-endangered section.
- Only accept a confirmed “all clear” from a member of the safety team, a staff member or a first responder.

Evacuation Announcement Sample

“Ladies and Gentlemen: Evacuation proceedings will begin momentarily. Please keep _____ (specify area) clear, and please use _____ (specify exits). Please follow the directions of the safety team, ushers and staff to _____ (designated location). Children are also being moved to a safe location, so please do not attempt to go to the Sonlight or Student Ministries areas. Parents may claim their children from the secure location after an “all clear” is confirmed. Please do not attempt to leave the parking lot in your car until after the police and fire departments are on site and activated and have directed you to exit.

Shelter in Place (Hide)

If you determine it is best to shelter in place, follow these guidelines:

- Get out of hallways and go into a room. Do not run down a long hallway to get to an exit since you may encounter the shooter.
- Lock the doors and close the blinds.
- Hide yourself and others if you can and stay close to the floor.
- Silence cell phones and be quiet.
- Use tables, furniture and other objects to barricade the door.
- Look for objects you can throw or that could be used as a weapon against the shooter.
- Provide detailed information to first responders, if asked.

Attack the Attacker (Fight)

This option is the last resort. If evacuating or sheltering in place are not possible and lives are in imminent danger, take on the attacker.

- If the shooter is in close range and you cannot flee, attempt to take the active shooter down.
- If several people are in the room, try to distract the shooter by throwing objects or making loud noises so someone else can take him down while he is distracted.

Fire

Exiting the Building

- Everyone in the church will exit the building whenever the alarm sounds, even for false alarms. WCC staff will help volunteers evacuate children.
- Early Childhood volunteers and children on the main level should use the emergency exit at the end of the hall near the 3-year-olds' classroom. Use rolling cribs to transport infants and crawlers. Exit the building and go directly to the meeting spot. Remember to take the sign-in sheet with you.
- PreK/K and Grades 1 to 3 volunteers and children on the lower level should use the exit between Rooms 41 and 51, which is located under the outside stairwell. Ask the children in each small group to hold hands, then lead them calmly and quickly to the meeting spot.
- C456 volunteers and students on the upper level should use the back stairs near the administration offices to descend to the main level, then exit out the emergency doors on the south side (back) of the building and go directly to the meeting spot.



The Meeting Spot

- The meeting spot for all Sonlight volunteers, students and staff, including C456, is the lower-level parking lot near the dumpster.
- Small Group Leaders should use the sign-in sheet and perform a head count to ensure all children are present.
- Parents will be directed out of the church and may then proceed to the lower-level parking lot to claim their children.
- Match each child's tag with the parent's tag before releasing a child, following the same procedure as when inside the building.

Tornado

Exiting the Room

- WCC staff will help volunteers relocate children to the lower level.
- Children in Early Childhood (infants to age 3) will be taken to Rooms 31/32 on the lower level. Use rolling cribs to transport infants and crawlers.
- Children in PreK/K (Room 51) will move across the hall and join the children in the Grades 1 to 3 classroom (Room 41).
- Students in C456 on the upper level will descend the stairs outside the classroom and join the younger children in Room 41 on the lower level.

After Arriving

- Small group leaders should use the sign-in sheet and perform a head count to ensure all children are present.
- Parents will be directed to the new location to claim their children.
- Match each child's tag with the parent's tag before releasing a child, following the normal procedure.

Refer to the maps in each classroom.



HOW TO LEAD A CHILD TO CHRIST

Leading a child to Christ is a great privilege and joy and an awesome responsibility. One of the greatest gifts you can give a child is the eternal gift of Jesus Christ. Reaching kids for Christ is a top priority, and it's important all volunteers are prepared and equipped to experience this wonderful event. Asking children if they want to place their faith in Jesus and ask Him to be their savior should be considered an honor.

Children are invited to accept Jesus as their Savior several times a year in large group settings. All small group leaders should be comfortable with the process as well and be ready should a student initiate the conversation.

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope you have." | 1 Peter 3:15

Oftentimes, volunteers may feel unsure of how to lay out the plan of salvation in a concrete, understandable and child-targeted way. The following tips should help ease that uncertainty.

Pray Beforehand

Volunteers should always be praying for their students, but praying for this moment is especially important for students you know haven't yet asked Jesus to be their Savior. Ask God to prepare their hearts to clearly understand the message and to give you the wisdom and words to answer their questions and paint the picture of who Jesus is and why we all need a relationship with Him.

Know Your Story

Children best learn through stories, not lectures, and each of us has an amazing story to tell. The change God has made in our own lives is what we know best and what we should be comfortable sharing.

1. Begin by describing yourself before you met Christ. Staying within appropriate boundaries, honestly tell the children what you were like and what you thought about God. What was it that caused you to consider Christ? Is this something a child can relate to?
2. Next, describe what realization you came to that motivated you to accept Christ. Explain how and when you prayed the prayer.
3. Finally, tell the child about your life after accepting Christ. How has it changed, and what are the benefits of having Christ in your life. Make your examples concrete, clear and age appropriate.

Resources are available to help you think about your story and how to share it. Talk to your leader if you are interested in these materials.

Know and Share the Gospel

Volunteers must know and understand the Gospel. The word Gospel, which literally means “good news,” is the story of God’s relationship with humanity. More specifically, the Gospel is the story of Jesus, what His true identity is and how He was there at the beginning of creation and came to reconcile us in our relationship with God. The core elements of the Gospel are:

1. God **created** us. | *Genesis 1:27*
2. Sin **separates** us from God. | *Romans 3:23*
3. We are **fallen** and can’t be saved on our own. | *Isaiah 64:6*
4. Jesus gave us the free gift of **grace** by paying for our sins. | *Romans 6:23*
5. We are **restored** to our original relationship with God. | *John 3:16*

Volunteers should use *Romans 10:9-10* as their guide when they share with children how to be saved. Those verses, in conjunction with the core elements of the Gospel, paint a great picture of how to talk to children about their salvation. When asking children to respond, follow the ABC’s:

- **A**dmit that you are sinful and cannot save yourself from sin.
- **B**elieve in Jesus and what He did for you by dying on the cross and rising on the third day.
- **C**hoose to accept the gift of salvation through Jesus.

“If you declare with your mouth “Jesus is Lord” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.” | *Romans 10:9-10*



Pray the Prayer

Children cannot be forced to accept and follow Jesus Christ. That happens only with the help of the Holy Spirit when the child is ready. Don't insist on making it happen. Once a child decides to ask Jesus to be their savior, pray this simple prayer with the child:

"Jesus, I love you and thank you for creating me. I realize that I am a sinner and I have been living for myself. I realize that I need you. I repent and ask you to forgive me of my sins. I believe you died on the cross for me and you rose on the third day so that you could have a relationship with me. I ask you to live in my heart and be my Savior. Help me live every day for you. I love you, and I thank you. In Jesus's name I pray, Amen."

This is just one way of reciting this prayer. The most important part is that student works through the ABCs of admitting their sin, believing in Jesus and what He did for them and choosing Him as their Savior. (Sometimes we use the phrases "forever friend" or becoming "a part of God's family.")

Celebrate

After children have decided to follow Jesus, celebrate with them and share that the angels are having a party because of their decision! Follow up with a phone call or card, and in the following weeks, continue to ask about their growth, and help them apply God's Word to their everyday lives. If they sense your excitement, they will be encouraged to pursue their new friendship with God.

Honor the Privilege

To be the one chosen by God to lead a child to Christ is the greatest of all privileges. Trust Him to give you the words, then watch Him perform the miracles.







WCC

warsaw **community** church

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