

TrinityLife Church

NextGen Policy Manual

All Family Ministries

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OVERVIEW OF SAFETY SYSTEM

Because we care for students and desire to protect them, TrinityLife Church requires all leaders working with children or students to complete **FIVE SAFETY STEPS** before ministry work or volunteer placement begins.

STEP 1: Complete Growth Track & Apply

Volunteers are required to attend Trinity's Growth Track to learn the vision and beliefs of our church, as well as the responsibilities of membership. After completion, they may submit a leader application with previous ministry experience and gifts to be placed in the ministry that best suits their strengths.

STEP 2: Screening and Observation

Leaders are required to complete the Trinity's Screening Process, which includes:

- A Leader Application
- A face-to-face interview
- References to be checked

*A volunteer must attend TrinityLife Church for six months before being eligible to serve in positions interacting with children or students.

STEP 3: Orientation

Leaders are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page indicating that he or she has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

Trinity policies require that leaders avoid abusive behavior of any kind. Leaders are required to report any policy violations to a supervisor or a member of Trinity Leadership. Leaders should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and 'grooming' behaviors. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or 'gatekeeper'), manipulate the child into inappropriate activity and keep the child from disclosing it.

STEP 4 Training

Ongoing training to communicate vision and goals, leadership principals, and expectations of NextGen Ministry volunteers.

STEP 5: Guidance

We have leader meetings every season of the year to set goals, plan events, and work through scenarios related to leading kids/youth. Attendance at these meetings is expected. Volunteers will receive one-on-one feedback and coaching with ministry directors to continually grow and improve in current best practices.

REPORTING

Trinity has a **zero tolerance for abuse** in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer at TrinityLife Church to act in the best interest of students in every program.

In the event that any leader observes any inappropriate behavior (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse or neglect (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is that individual's responsibility to immediately report these observations to his or her ministry director.

TrinityLife Church is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for students and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be promptly reported and investigated thoroughly, in accordance with this policy and state law, to Child Protective Services, or another appropriate agency.

ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES

TrinityLife Church leaders who supervise other staff or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all TrinityLife Church policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for disciplinary action, including suspension from Serve Teams, reassignment or dismissal, for both volunteers and staff members. Any person accused of committing a prohibited act will be suspended from participation during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective agencies.

Failure to report a policy violation is grounds for termination of an employee. Volunteers who fail to report a policy violation may be restricted from participation in any NextGen activities at Trinity.

REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

NextGen Volunteers at TrinityLife Church are required to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect, or any inappropriate behavior of a colleague or co-worker, to supervisory staff as soon as possible after the incident and fill out an incident report.

After receiving a report from a NextGen volunteer, the ministry director will inform Trinity leadership and the appropriate law enforcement agencies when necessary.

For Abuse/Neglect of Minors

1. Communicate to Ministry Director
2. Baltimore County CPS Hotline:
410-887-8463 (8am-4:30pm M-F), 410-583-9398 (after-hours)

LEADERS MONITORING PLAN

Monitoring of staff and volunteers will include regular observations in each program to provide supervisors the opportunity to observe staff member and volunteer interactions with students.

BUILDING SAFETY

Ministry directors will be responsible for ensuring that the NextGen Ministry areas are monitored during ministry, including monitoring of staff members, volunteers and students in student classrooms or meetings.

No student will ever be left unattended or unsupervised during NextGen ministry times. Volunteers are prohibited from being alone with an individual student in any room or building. In the event a leader finds himself/herself alone with a single student, that leader will take the student to a room or building occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others. (Example: If a student desires additional conversation or counsel with a leader after regular programming has concluded, move to an adjoining room where other staff members or volunteers are present, or into a public space.)

Kids leader should circulate watching during play periods giving particular attention to the areas not easily seen. I.E. Playground, Zoo, etc.

After every programming event, leaders must ensure every room and restroom is checked prior to leaving.

Any two students together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to a supervised area.

NUDITY

Leaders in TrinityLife Church's NextGen Ministries should never be nude in the presence of students in their care. In the event there is a situation that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes in a locker room or group sleeping area during a pool party, overnight retreat, missions trip, etc.), the leader leading the event will communicate a plan to the NextGen Ministry Directors concerning arrangements for private showering and changing of clothes.

TRANSPORTATION

NextGen leaders may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for students with parental permission. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of students:

1. Students should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Leaders should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one student in transport.
2. Leaders should avoid physical contact with students while in vehicles.
3. No cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving vehicles owned or rented by TrinityLife Church, unless in an emergency.
4. No drivers under age 25 may drive Church-owned or rented vehicles.

PARENTAL CONTACT

Parents whose student is participating in NextGen Ministry activities and programs will be contacted if their child becomes severely ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in Student Ministry programs.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

TrinityLife Church is committed to protecting students in its care. To this end, Trinity has implemented a 'physical contact policy' that promotes a positive, nurturing environment for our Family Ministry programs. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in Family Ministry programs:

1. Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members or volunteers and students are important for student's development and are generally suitable in the church setting.
2. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to an immediate supervisor, Kids/Youth Pastor.
3. Physical contact should be for the benefit of the student, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a leader.
4. Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other students or student leaders. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted as such when physical contact is open to observation.
5. NextGen Leaders are responsible for protecting students under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.
6. Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse must be reported immediately to an immediate supervisor, the NextGen Ministry Directors.

SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS

It is anticipated that certain NextGen activities may occasionally require that overnight sleeping arrangements be made for students and leaders (i.e. lock-ins, mission trips, ski trips, etc.). In the event an activity requires sleeping arrangements, leaders will strictly observe the following rules:

1. All adult leaders must have previously completed the Church's screening and training process.
2. Overnight sleeping arrangements must be submitted in writing to and approved by the NextGen Ministry Directors prior to the activity.
3. Appropriately modest sleeping attire must be worn; both tops and bottoms.
4. In the event of a sleepover on campus that involves both boys and girls, boys and girls must sleep in separate rooms, properly supervised by NextGen Leaders of the same gender.
5. NextGen Leaders will monitor sleeping students by periodically conducting visual bed checks to ensure that sleeping students remain in designated sleeping places. During bed checks, leaders should never physically touch a student.

6. Whenever possible, at least one leader will sleep in the same room (but not same bed) as students, or in an adjoining room with the door between the rooms kept open.
7. In the event that overnight arrangements do not include standard beds, each staff member, volunteer, and student will use single sleeping bags or blankets. In these instances a “one-person-to-one bag or blanket” rule will be observed.

TRINITY KIDS

AGE QUALIFICATIONS FOR LEADERS

- All volunteers must be 18 years of age or older unless under the supervision of an adult.
- 12-13 year olds may assist in Preschool Ministry
- 14-15 year olds may assist in Preschool or Nursery Ministries
- 16-17 year olds may assist in Preschool, Nursery, or The Port Elementary Ministries
- No one under 18 may assist in infant care

LEADER TO CHILD RATIOS

Trinity is committed to providing adequate supervision in all Kids’ Ministries programs. Accordingly, the following worker to child **minimum ratios** will be observed:

Program	Workers	Children
Nursery	2	8
Preschool, 2 and 3 years old	2	12
Preschool, 4 and 5 years old	2	18
Elementary	2	20
VBS	2	20

If a leader is ‘out of ratio’ it is his or her responsibility to immediately notify the ministry director. Supervisors will make diligent efforts to find substitute leaders to immediately bring worker to children ratios into compliance with the NextGen policy.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in which their child is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their child’s program will be required to complete the NextGen leader application and screening process.

DISCIPLINE

It is our policy that volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children. **No form of physical discipline is acceptable.** This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, biting or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate

behaviors by children. Children are to be disciplined using time-outs and other non-physical methods of behavior management. In employing this procedure, volunteers should observe the following guidelines:

1. 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).
2. If the behavior does not cease, remove or direct the child away from the group to a corner of the room where the group is meeting (avoid being alone with the child).
3. Provide the child with a simple, understandable reason for the time-out, and provide the child with clear explanation of your expectations. (“Jamie, you didn’t stop hitting Chris when I asked you to, so you need to sit quietly in the blue chair for three minutes.”) In addition, be verbally reassuring, as being removed from the group will likely upset the child. Do not physically hold a child in time-out.
4. Provide the child with a chair to sit in or a “spot” to sit on (using a pillow, blanket, carpet square, etc.) until their time-out is complete.
5. Follow the guiding rule that a time-out is ineffective if it lasts longer than one minute for every year of the child’s life (3 years old, 3 minutes).
6. Monitor the child through the entire time-out without giving your undivided attention. For longer time-outs give intermittent praise to reassure the child and keep them on task. (“Jamie, you’re doing a great job of sitting quietly – just 2 more minutes.”)
7. Praise the child once he or she has completed the time-out and tell them that their reward is being able to rejoin the group. Remind them that repeating their initial behavior will result in further time-out. Follow this with praise.

Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to parents and the Ministry Director.

BATHROOM SUPERVISION AND ASSISTANCE GUIDELINE

Nursery Children

Because nursery children may require complete assistance with their bathroom activities, all volunteers will observe the following policies:

Diapering

- 1) Only female nursery workers or the child’s parent or legal guardian will undertake the diapering of children of either sex.
- 2) Changing of diapers should be done in plain sight of other nursery workers.
- 3) Children will never be left unattended on changing tables.

- 4) Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in nursery will be recorded on the registration cards (“Seth Adams has a medicine in the bag for rash.”)
- 5) Children should be re-diapered and re-clothed immediately upon the completion of changing their soiled diaper.
- 6) Children should be changed on changing stations only.

Toilet training

- 1) No child will be forced to toilet train.
- 2) Only female nursery workers or the child’s parent or legal guardian will participate in toilet training efforts with children of either sex.
- 3) When children are taken into bathrooms the door will be left partially open.
- 4) Young children will never be left unattended in bathrooms.
- 5) Parents should be consulted on each child’s progress in the toilet training process before leaving the child with volunteers or staff members. Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in the nursery will be recorded on the registration card (“Georgia can use the toilet, but she needs to be reminded – ask her if she needs to go.”).
- 6) Children should be verbally assisted where possible. If physical assistance is necessary, another staff member or volunteer should be present, when possible.
- 7) “Accidents” should be handled by reassuring the child and completing the changing of diapers or underwear and clothing. Extra clothing and diapers are available in the Kids’ area, if the parent has not furnished a clothing change.

School Age Children

School age children may be accompanied to the restroom for supervision and assistance when needed. Children should receive the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities. Volunteers should never take a lone child to the restroom.

If a staff member or volunteer must go into the restroom to check on an individual child, he or she should seek out another worker to accompany him/her. If another worker is not available to accompany, he/she should go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance. If the child requires assistance, the worker should leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child in completing their activities, while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall. Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another staff member or volunteer.

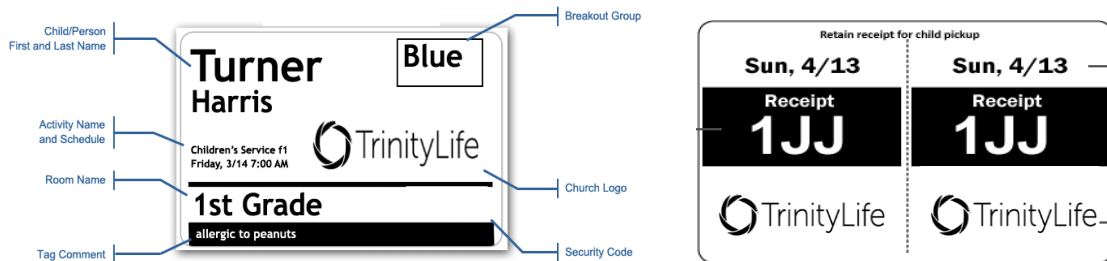
Special Needs

Parents will offer instruction to staff members or volunteers to change the diapers of special needs individuals. After the age of 4, parents or legal guardians will change all special needs individuals.

KIDS’ CHECKIN PROCEDURES

Drop-off of children

1. You will access your family account using a barcode. You will not be able to access your account with a fingerprint any longer. This barcode can be your driver's license, grocery discount card, or purchase a TrinityLife barcode tag for \$2.
2. Upon arrival, during a TrinityKids service time or event, you will scan the registered barcode with the barcode scanner.
3. When your family account appears on the screen you will select the kids in your profile that you are checking in for the service or event and select print.
4. Two tags will print – one name tag for your child to wear at all times and one security tag to pick up your child. You will not give a security tag to a volunteer when you drop off your child, only when you pick up your child at the end of service.
5. Below you can see the check-in tags. Notice the child's name tag and the security tag have the same code. This insures the child goes home with an approved guardian.
6. Hold onto the security tag for when you pick up your child. Your child will only be released to an adult with a matching security tag.



7. Please provide the below information to pre-register your account with a barcode number. Parents and/or guardians can share barcodes or have separate barcodes.

Release of children

At any time that a child has been entrusted to TrinityKids leaders, Trinity incurs responsibility for the safety and welfare of the child. Volunteers must act to ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of children in their charge.

TrinityKids staff members or volunteers are responsible for releasing children in their care only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians at the close of services or activities.

It is presumed a person who drops off a child has authority to pick up that child.

In the event that staff members or volunteers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they should immediately locate or contact their ministry director or the Kids' Pastor before releasing the child.

TRINITY KIDS SECURED AREAS POLICY

TrinityKids is a secured area and can only be entered with a security tag.

There will be a volunteer at the entrance of these areas verifying your security tag. You get a security tag when you check your children in at one of the check-in stations. If you misplace your security tag you must go to the check-in area in the BAC lobby for assistance. You will not be allowed in a TrinityKids ministry area without a security tag. Please have your security tag ready to be checked by a volunteer.

Kids check-in opens 20 minutes prior to the start of the service.

Kids can no longer check in prior to Wednesday evening dinner. Once a child checks in, they are under the care and responsibility of TrinityKids. After checking in, parents need to take kids to their age-appropriate ministry area. Kids are not allowed to exit the TrinityKids area until a guardian with a matching security tag checks them out.

Doors to TrinityKids' secured areas open 20 minutes prior to the start of the service.

Once kids are checked in they are to be taken to their age-appropriate ministry area. Once they are in a secured TrinityKids area they can only exit after a guardian with a matching security tag has checked them out.

Doors to TrinityKids' secured areas close 20 minutes after service starts in TrinityKids secured areas.

To limit wandering kids, adult access, and limiting service interruptions, the doors to enter TrinityKids secured areas will be closed 20 minutes after service starts. There will be a volunteer at the entrance to open door for emergencies. You can only enter secured areas if you have a security tag from our check-in stations.

Kids can only play in the Preschool Playland with adult supervision.

If a guardian plans to let their child play in The Zoo Playland after Wednesday night dinner, a guardian must be present while they play. If a child does not have a guardian present, the child cannot enter.

WELLNESS POLICY

Because we are all susceptible to catching the flu, colds, and other viral infections, the following policy is in place.

If a child is exhibiting the following symptoms, we cannot permit them into the classroom at this time.

Fever: Child should be fever free for 24 hours without medication.

Vomiting/Diarrhea: Child should be episode free for 24 hours.

Strep Throat: Child should have started antibiotics 24 hours before attending.

Yellow or Green Nasal Drainage: Child should not attend until clear.

Sore Throat/Cough: Child should not attend with a sore throat, cough, or persistent coughing associated with respiratory infection.

Pink Eye: Attend only after 24 hours of antibiotics, no matting or drainage occurs, and the child is no longer rubbing the eye.

Chicken Pox: Child may not attend until all spots are scabbed over and the child is no longer scratching or touching scabs

Rash: Child with an unexplained or contagious rash should not attend.

Lice: Children should not attend until after treatment, and all live lice and visible nits have been removed.

TrinityYouth

COMMUNICATION POLICY

We believe that teaching students to love and serve God faithfully, happens best through relationships; and healthy relationships are built through healthy communication. We work hard to screen and approve the very best volunteers, with a compatible passion, perspective, and character to our beliefs and mission. This is the communication policy we follow.

1. We endorse modern communication methods in our changing world such as digital messaging and social media.
2. We endorse a male to male and female to female discipleship model, one on one communications should follow that practice.
3. In instances of physical abuse, sexual misconduct, self-harm, or suicidal threats, volunteers should follow the reporting guidelines on Page 3.
4. Appropriate communication etiquette is expected from students as well as leaders. Any bullying or immodest language, photos, videos or requests should be reported quickly and not engaged. Ministry communication will not be communicated through vanishing media (i.e. Snapchat, etc.).
5. We endorse James 3 as it applies not only to "Taming the Tongue," but all communication. Before posting, texting etc. we encourage the use of the 4-Way Test. i. Is it the truth? ii. is it fair to all concerned? iii. Will it build goodwill and better relationships. iv. Is it beneficial to all concerned?

ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH STUDENTS

TrinityLife Church recognizes that meeting the emotional needs of students will at times require staff member and volunteers to minister to them on an individual basis. Volunteers should observe the following guidelines when interacting with students.

Individual Meetings

Leaders should conduct one-to-one meetings with an individual student in public where interactions can be easily observed. If a closed-door meeting must occur, the volunteer must the ministry leader before the meeting occurs, and the door must remain unlocked.

STAFF TO STUDENT RATIO

Trinity is committed to providing adequate supervision in all Youth activities and programs. Accordingly, the following ratios will be observed for Youth activities and programs:

For every 10 students there will be at least 1 volunteer supervising.

If a volunteer is out of ratio it is his or her responsibility to immediately the notify ministry leader responsible for the program or event, who will make diligent effort to immediately bring student ratios into compliance with this policy.

DISCIPLINE

It is the policy of TrinityLife Church that volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for behavior management. **No form of physical discipline is acceptable.** This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction or inappropriate behaviors by students. If a student is unruly or fails to comply with verbal warnings or instructions from NextGen leaders, that student will be asked to leave (if not endangered by doing so) or the student's parent will be contacted to pick up the student. In the event of a fight or physical altercation, staff members will verbally redirect students involved and only bring physical intervention/de-escalation to prevent the harm of other students. Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to parents and the ministry director.

Identity Policy | Belief-Guided Practices on Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation

Our view of sexuality and gender identity is grounded in our understanding of Christian sexuality, which is rooted in the Bible. We confess that sex and gender are gifts from God. At birth, a human being is born as either a physiological male or a physiological female; by extension, gender is an immutable, exclusively binary characteristic rooted in the physiology of each human being. Any blurring of the boundary between maleness and femaleness, such as identifying oneself as a transvestite, transsexual, or transgendered, is contrary to biblical standards. We also

confess any sexual orientation other than strict heterosexuality to be a deviation from God's good design for human sexuality.

In the event that a student presents a gender different than his or her biological sex, we expect them – when involved in [our] official and unofficial events – to live and present in accord with their biologically assigned sex. This includes but is not limited to pronouns, dress, appropriate bathrooms, locker rooms, assigned sleeping arrangements, groupings, classes, etc. We must view the actions or intentions of those seeking fundamental changes of any kind from one's sex at birth as a rejection of the biblical and theological understandings to which [our congregation] is committed and hence as grounds for removal from activities and the Student Ministry. The same is true for persistent or exaggerated examples of cross-dressing and other expressions or actions that are deliberately discordant with birth sex. Decisions will be handled on a case-by-case basis in a pastorally sensitive manner. Every case should be brought to the attention of the NextGen Ministry Directors immediately before any correction takes place.

No student, however, will be turned away from any event because he or she struggles with his or her gender identity or sexual orientation. We welcome everyone [to our gatherings] as long as he or she is working toward a repentant, life-transforming relationship with Jesus Christ that is obedient to the ethical demands of the Old and New Testaments.

Volunteers are expected to be compassionate, understanding that the culture has confused and deceived to many image-bearers about the nature of gender and sexuality. They are to compassionately explain our policies and lovingly invite them to participate even if the student feels uncomfortable presenting something other than their own perceived gender. Only after manifold, compassionate exhortations to repent and experience the life-transforming grace of the Lord Jesus Christ will students be asked to no longer participate in [our] student activities.

Policies and Procedures
Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement

I have received and read Trinity's NextGen Ministries Policies and Procedures and understand the importance of the matters set forth in this manual. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service at Trinity.

Further, I understand that the manual may be modified at any time, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time by Trinity.

I also acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to fulfill the duties listed in the Manual. While, ideally, I will serve in this ministry for the agreed term, I understand that I may choose to end this relationship at any time. If possible, I will provide two weeks' notice to my supervisor.

I further acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this handbook in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between Trinity and me. If I am applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no compensation for hours worked.

Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed as well as manual guidelines that are changed or deleted.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of Trinity's NextGen Ministries Policies and Procedures.

Leader's name (please print)

Leader's signature

Date

This page is to be signed and delivered to the NextGen Ministry Team.