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KIDS

HANDBOOK



Welcome to our SomaKids Volunteer Team! Thank you for serving in our children's ministry. You are now part of a ministry that has the privilege to bless, encourage and teach a precious group of children.

In Matthew 19:13–15, the story is told of how Jesus took the children into His arms and blessed them. Here at Soma, we want to be the extended arms of Jesus. When we hug a child, it is our prayer that the child feels like they are in the arms of Jesus. When we teach a child, it is our prayer that heaven opens up over that child. When we pray for a child, it is our prayer that Jesus is standing in their midst. When children leave LittleSoma and move on to the next ministry, we want them to already know and love the Lord.

This manual is provided for you in order to communicate the vision, policies and procedures of SomaKids. In addition, it contains the guidelines necessary to allow an orderly and organized ministry.

Please read the entire manual and keep it handy as a reference guide. This is a working document which will change over time. We will hand out additions as policies are added or changed. A copy of this handbook will be placed in each classroom's binder.

Thank you for dedicating your time to this ministry. It is exciting to see the children learn and grow in our classes. We thank the Lord for the awesome opportunity to bless these children, and we thank you for allowing Him to work through you. We pray the time, love and blessings you give these children will be multiplied beyond your expectations. You are a blessing.

Finding a Replacement

Please review the monthly schedule as soon as you receive it. If you need to make a schedule change, it is your responsibility to find someone else on your team to replace you and let your coordinator know as soon as possible.

Pre-service Meeting:

Please promptly meet at the early scheduled meeting time (below) with your Director for prayer and to receive any last minute details about the service.

- Saturday night: 4:30 PM
- Sunday morning: 9:30 AM

Male Workers

We are blessed to have men serving within the Soma Children's Ministry. A male worker has all the responsibilities of a female worker with the exception of changing diapers and assisting children in the bathroom.

Check-in Procedure

All children must be provided a name tag before entering a classroom. All children will check in at the SomaKids sign-in table. When checking in, a name tag and security tag will be printed. The name tag is to be placed on the child, with the parent/guardian keeping the security tag portion of the printout. The security tag contains an alphanumeric code which corresponds to the child's name tag.

If the check-in table is unavailable, a manual name tag can be used to check in the child. Manual name tags can be issued at the child's classroom.

The child's tag will contain the parent's phone number, any allergies or vital information.

Check out Procedure

Each teacher will be given an iPad or iPhone to use the Check-Ins App to check out all kids.

If a security tag has been lost or misplaced the parent must show a driver's license and their name needs to be on the child's list of approved people who can check them out.

Wellness Policy for Children and Ministry Workers

Soma Church follows the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation that a child or childcare worker should not attend church when the following symptoms exist:

- A fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Diarrhea or Vomiting, currently or within the last 24 hours—no matter what the cause is (medication, teething, etc.)
- Any symptom of childhood diseases such as Scarlet Fever, German Measles, Mumps, Chicken Pox or Whooping Cough
- Common cold
- Sore throat, constant cough or croup
- Colored mucus (runny nose that is not clear)
- Any unexplained rash
- Any skin infection: boils, ringworm, impetigo or any open sores that leak fluid/blood even if the condition is caused by eczema or other benign skin conditions
- Pinkeye or other eye infections/mucus or redness of the eye
- Lice, including the presence of eggs or nits
- Any communicable disease

These rules apply to all children and all Ministry Workers. If you have any of these symptoms or your children have any of these symptoms, do not come to work. If you suspect a child is sick during class, contact your Coordinator. The Coordinator will text or call the parent if needed. All children and Ministry Workers must have been free of symptoms without medication for 24 hours.

No Medication Policy

No medication may be administered by Soma Kids Ministry Workers with the exception of an EpiPen® in the case of life-threatening reactions. We must have a Medical Release Form in our possession to administer the EpiPen®. All other medication, both oral and topical, such as teething gel, teething drops, eye drops, etc., must be given by the parent.

Soma Kids Ministry Workers are prohibited from opening or taking medication while in the classroom. In the event that the Ministry Worker is in need of medication, they must leave the classroom to administer it to themselves.

Hand Washing

When to Wash Your Hands:

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

Restroom Policy

- The door should be propped open if/when a child requires assistance.
- Let the child do as much as they can by themselves
- No worker or adult is allowed in the restroom with children while the door is closed for any reason
- If a child needs assistance, an adult female may assist a child if necessary

Diaper Changing Policy

When changing a child's diaper, remember these points:

- Only females may change diapers
- Have all diaper changing items ready before bringing a child to the table.
- Never, ever, ever leave a child on the table unattended for even a second
- Wash hands with soap and water after each diaper change or wear gloves when changing the diaper. Put on a new pair for each diaper change
- Place all soiled clothing in a scented bag before placing it into the child's diaper bag
- Between changing each child, clean the changing table with Clorox wipes (Do not use Clorox wipes on a child!)
- Wash your hands

*Cloth diapers: If a parent brings a child in a cloth diaper please inform them that the volunteer will call them if their child needs a diaper change. If the parent wants the volunteer to change their child's diaper, they will need to put a disposable diaper on the child before sending the child to class. We can supply them with a disposable if they need it.

Potty Training Policy

A potty training policy has been implemented for sanitary reasons.

Potty Trained vs. Potty Training

We describe a child as potty-trained if the parent can drop off the child with no special instructions about taking the child to the bathroom. The potty-trained child will tell a worker if they need to go.

If a child needs to be asked whether they need to go to the restroom or if the parent tells you to take the child at certain times or time intervals, the child is potty-training. A parent who is potty-training a child must send their child in a pull-up until they can independently tell a Volunteer that they need to go to the restroom.

If a parent is not aware of the policy and sends the child in underwear, explain the policy, and offer to supply a pull-up for that day. Explain that the next time the child arrives they should be in a pull-up until the parent is sure that the child will let the Volunteers know that they need to go potty.

Open Door Policy

Classroom doors without windows must be open at all times.

The only people allowed in the classrooms are:

- Volunteers
- Age-appropriate children
- Soma Staff members

Parent Serving Policy

We ask that all parents that serve with us please check their children in the classroom they are assigned. In order for a child to serve in SomaKids or LittleSoma they must be 10 years of age and fully trained. Thank you all for your understanding.

Crying Threshold Policy

When a child is dropped off to class and is clearly having a hard time. You the worker is required to ask the parent/guardian what their crying threshold is. This means how long they are ok with them being upset till they want to be notified.

Once a child has it the point they parent wants to be notified then you text the coordinator of your class and they will talk with the parents.

Our heart is that every child is able to stay in class to hear the gospel in a way they understand. Also so the parent can be blessed by the sermon.

See our Supplemental DISCIPLINE POLICY for further guidelines.

Children in the Hall

1. Children in the following classrooms are not allowed in the hallways unattended at anytime: Babies, Toddlers, Pre-school. In the event that you encounter an unattended child (from Babies-Preschool) in the hall, direct them back to their parent or guardian or to their appropriate classroom.

2. Children who attend the KidsChurch (Kinder-5th grade) are permitted to go to the restroom and get water unattended.

**If you encounter a child in the hallway and are unsure of what class they attend, check their tag.

Abuse Awareness Policy

If you suspect physical or sexual abuse or neglect, immediately report it to church authorities and the proper legal authorities.

Technology in the Classroom

Technology in the classroom is limited to RightNow media and approved YouTube content.

Clean-up Duties

- Put all the toys away, spray them down with disinfectant and let them dry
- Spray all sitting areas, door handles, and tables with disinfectant
- Wipe tables, check for crumbs on the floor-vacuum or sweep if needed
- Change all trash liners

BigSomaKids: ADDITIONAL-Cleanup Duties

With recent health concerns – we have added a few extra areas that need to be thoroughly sprayed with disinfectant. Before leaving please spray/wipe down the following areas with the given disinfectant spray or wipes:

- Bathrooms- bathroom door handles, faucet, soap dispenser, toilet handle and seat, light switch
- Hallway door handles
- Front and back door handles

Junior Volunteer Participation policy

We are so blessed that you have committed to serving in the SomaKids Ministry. As you are serving, please keep the following in mind:

- It is important to remember that you are serving and not a part of the class.
Please be sure you are assisting the teacher.
 - For example: passing out papers, helping children to stay in a straight line, passing out snack, etc.)
- You are a role model.
 - You are a role model to the children you serve! Please be sure to abide by the same rules we ask of our children- Respect each other, Respect the teacher and Respect God. It is important for them to see you participate in obedience!
- Have fun! ;)

SomaKids Handbook Acknowledgment

I have read and agree to comply with the SomaKids handbook. I completely understand all aspects of the handbook and will do my best serve the SomaKids team well.

Print Name

Sign Name

__ Date_____

We ask that you exercise caution and care when choosing to attend services and place your children in SomaKids if you have knowingly been around someone that is sick, or you (or your kids) are sick.

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Discipline Policy

It is the heart of SomaKids to make every effort possible to ensure the safety and well-being of anyone who enters our doors. There may be occasions when some children have a difficult time adjusting to a classroom environment. Children's Workers and Volunteers are asked to be proactive in reporting any instances in which our standards are being compromised by a child.

If a child is **NOT** Respecting God, Respecting themselves or others, or Respecting property, the following disciplinary actions will be taken:

1. Verbal Warning: Reminding the child of the behavior expected in class. A worker should go to the child and communicate with them personally. We want to use as much positive verbal correction as possible, along with praising the child for good behavior. The SomaKids Directors will be the only one to discuss behavior with the parents.

**We correct in private and praise in public.*

2. 1st Group Separation: If a child is consistently disregarding correction from a Children's Worker or Volunteer, the Worker or Volunteer may choose to remove the child and sit them separate from the rest of the class and the behavior pattern. (2 minutes).

3. 2nd Group Separation: If consistent disregard for correction, as described in #2 above *continues*, the child will be separated again from the rest of the class and the behavior pattern. (2 minutes)

4. Paging a Parent (Possible Removal):

If unacceptable behaviors resulting in #1-#3 above occurs, paging of the child's parent will be required. The SomaKids Director will be notified, and parents will be paged so they can discuss the behavior. If the behavior did not involve physically or verbally hurting anyone, the parents will have the *opportunity* to take their child from the classroom and discuss the behavior with them and then return them to class to "try again." It is our heart to correct the behaviors as they are exhibited and give every opportunity for grace and forgiveness. If the behavior did involve physically or verbally hurting anyone, the child will be asked to leave the class for the remainder of the day.

Incident Report

A Notification of Incident Report form needs to be filled out in great detail when a child is *disruptive, not responding to correction or involved in an incident (physical/verbal)*. Documentation of these incidents is necessary in the event of future occurrences that warrant paging parents or removal of the child from the classroom following repeated unacceptable behaviors.

While Children's Workers and Volunteers may be involved in documenting behaviors for a **Notification of Incident Report**, Children's Workers and Volunteers should never discuss any negative behaviors with parents. The SomaKids Directors will confirm the completion of the form and subsequently discuss the issue with the parent when necessary.

Examples of behaviors resulting in **Paging a Parent, Removal from Class** & completion of a **Notification of Incident Report**:

- Biting, Hitting, Spitting, or Kicking
- Fighting
- Hair-Pulling
- Verbal Abuse
- Repeated disobedience that does not improve with verbal correction
- Tantrums (uncontrolled crying or screaming and flailing of the arms and/or legs)

Once a child is returned to the classroom after being removed for the day, each further incident will result in disciplinary actions to include the possible loss of rights to attend SomaKids. *In these instances, attendance in SomaKids may be suspended for a minimum of 2 weeks.*

Working and Praying Through the Behavior

It is never our heart to turn away a child, however sometimes for the safety and wellbeing of the other children, having parents pick them up for the day is the best option. When children who have had previous issues return to class, a Children's Worker or Volunteer will watch carefully over that child to encourage them in appropriate behavior.

If the unacceptable behavior happens again that day or another day, removal of the child from the situation will occur, the SomaKids Directors will be notified immediately.

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HEALTH POLICY

SICK CHILD

If your child is feeling unwell, or experiencing any of the symptoms listed below, we ask that you keep them from LittleSoma and BigSoma Kids classes until they are 24 hours fever and symptom free (without fever-reducing or symptom masking medications):

- Fever, Cough, Runny Nose, Diarrhea, Rash, Vomiting.

We ask that you exercise caution and care when choosing to attend services and place your children in SomaKids if you have knowingly been around someone that is sick, or you (or your kids) are sick.