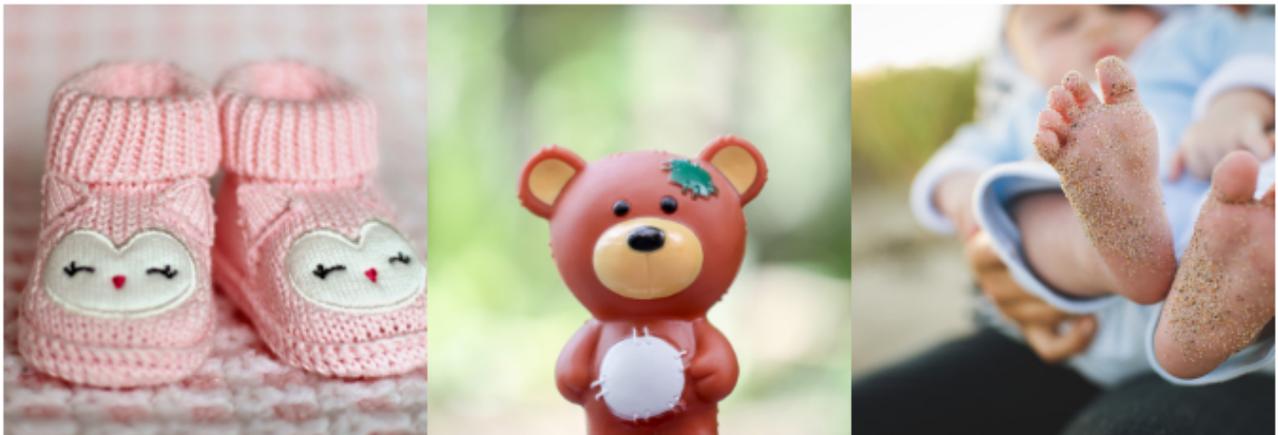




pathwayCHURCH

Nursery Volunteer Manual



"And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me."

- Jesus, Matthew 18:5

Dear Pathway Nursery Volunteer:

We are so honored to serve beside you! It is our desire that God will richly bless you for your obedience and faithfulness to His call. Together we will change the lives of children to build up a Godly generation! God has equipped each of us with specific gifts, and we are so thankful that you are willing to use those gifts in the nursery.

This handbook will give you insight on training, procedures, and safety policies currently in place in the nursery.

Be confident, God is working in the lives of children. Be assured, you can make a difference in the life of a child. Be blessed, your life will be changed, your mind renewed and your heart filled through His calling as we serve together.

Nursery Goal:

The Children's Ministry at Pathway Church was created with children and parents in mind. The goal in the nursery is to introduce

6week – 3-year-old children to the love of God through nurture, play, security, stability, patience and monthly curriculum.

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Ministry Leaders

Josh Light – Next Gen Pastor

Samantha Freds - Executive Pastor (oversees Early Childhood ministry)

Training Timeline

1. Submit a background check form.
2. Shadow 1 service
 - You will be teamed up with a coach for your shadow. They will walk you through a typical Sunday.
 - We will reach out and ask if you have any questions.
3. You will receive your T-Shirt and be placed on the email/text list and officially join the team! Yeah!

Volunteer Arrival Times

Please arrive NO LATER than 15 minutes before the service. The doors open 15 minutes before service, so being on time is key.

Attire

Please wear appropriate attire while serving. You will be provided with a volunteer t-shirt that you should wear each week. At times you will be sitting on the floor to interact with the children who may spit up, vomit, or drool – keep that in mind when you are picking out your outfit.

Attendance

It takes numerous volunteers to ensure that the service runs smoothly. Your attendance, punctuality, and involvement are crucial for a successful service. It's a comfort to the kids and parents to see the same smiling faces each week, so consistency is important. Please make sure to let the nursery director know if you are not going to be able to serve, as soon as you can. That way, they can try to get your spot covered.

Vacation

Plan and enjoy vacation. You being happy makes us happy. As a team, we work together, good or bad. Let us know as soon as possible when you plan to be on vacation. Don't feel guilty, enjoy it. The earlier we know the better we can do to fill that spot. Please attempt to switch on your own though. Ask other nursery workers if they could switch you that week or cover for you. If this occurs then let the nursery director know that you switched, so we are not surprised. Nursery team numbers are available in the volunteer lounge located across from the infant nursery. Check the cork board for those details.

During Service

Our main goal is to keep the children happy and safe while their parents attend service. In the event that the child isn't happy and is crying, we do have some guidelines.

- While in the room, attempt to comfort the child for 10 minutes.
- If the child is still crying after 10 minutes, please see if the child would like to ride in the "whambulance", wagon.
- If they are still crying after another five minutes then the coach will text the parents.

While it may seem best to keep an unhappy and crying child in the nursery so the parents can worship, that is not in the best interest of the child. Please follow the lead of the coach on when to make the call to the parents and when to keep trying to calm the child.

During check in, there will be a video with music playing for the toddler and infant rooms. This will help the children stay occupied during this time and will hopefully limit their separation anxiety. After drop off, there will be a period of play time and then snack time. Before the end of each service, all diapers will need to be changed.

Below is an example of a typical service schedule:

10:00-10:15 am: Worship DVD/Drop Off

10:15-10:30 am: Play Time

10:30-10:40 am: Snack Time

10:45-11:00 am: Worship/Story Time

11:00-11:15 am: Play Time/Change

After all the children have been picked up:

- Toys should be wiped or sprayed with approved cleaners after each service.
- Changing tables, counter tops and all surfaces must be wiped down with approved cleaners after each service.
- All washable cups should be washed and put on the drying racks in the rooms.

Diaper Changing

Whenever you are changing diapers, please follow these guidelines:

- Diapers must be changed on changing tables only
- Check infants twice per service and toddlers once per service
- Two team members must be present at the time of diaper change
- **NEVER** leave a child unattended on the changing table
- Place a new liner on the changing table and wear a new pair of disposable gloves with each diaper change
- Dispose of the dirty diaper in a baggie in the diaper pail, not the trashcan
- Disinfect the diaper changing table and wash your hands after each diaper change

Cleanliness/Illness

Working with children also means you are coming in contact with a lot of germs. To minimize the spread of germs to you and other children you interact with, cleanliness is very important. Wash your hands often and regularly while in the nursery. **If you are sick, yourself, do not come to volunteer.** The immune systems of the children in the nursery are not as good as ours. Keep this in mind; when in doubt, sit it out. Notify a staff member as soon as you know that you are ill and will not be able to volunteer. A child who has been sick (had a fever in the last 24hrs) or is sick should not be in the nursery. Please use the check in app to contact the parents and if no parent arrives then speak with the safety team or Josh Light about contacting the parents. **Remember to lovingly remind parents of this policy.** It is not your policy (not your fault) it is Pathway's policy. They are welcome to speak with the Kid's Pastor about their concerns.

Food and Beverage

There is a volunteer lounge in progress located across from the infant nursery. Please try and eat your snacks before service, so

that you are not eating in front of the children. If you have a drink in the room, make sure it is all the way to the back of the counter top away from tiny hands. Please avoid bringing any hot beverages, such as coffee, into the room. Hot beverages are very dangerous, especially for curious little ones.

General guidelines for interacting with children

As a Pathway Church volunteer, there are some strategies that when put into action will produce positive outcomes for all involved.

Please keep the following techniques in mind:

- When parents are dropping off their children in our care, they are entrusting us to be completely devoted to them. A smile and word of enthusiasm while maintaining our two leader rule ensures that their children are in good hands, allowing full trust.
- Visual supervision is mandatory for ALL children at ALL times.
- We should be careful to only speak words of encouragement, kindness, and love, even in difficult situations.
- We are here for the children. Personal visiting and cell phone use should be avoided while you are serving in the nursery. Make the children your primary focus.
- Play with the children! Every child loves this time of interaction with you as a leader; there is no substitute for one-on-one interaction.
- Please exercise appropriate play at all times (see Appropriate Touch section below).
- Pray over the children as you are comforting them, playing with them, and changing diapers.
- Remember that when parents are returning to pick up their children, be positive and encouraging.
- Never be alone with a child. For safety and accountability, we always have 2 leaders in every room.
- If a child has had a fever within the last 24hrs then they are not permitted to stay in the nursery.

Appropriate Touch

Maintaining a safe and secure environment is important for all our children and Pathway Church leaders. Here are some guidelines to

ensure safety for our children and leaders while providing ways to show affection to our children without compromising their integrity.

Hugs

- Hugging a child is a natural response when children seek affection.
- Side hugs are the most appropriate

High Fives

- High fives are a great way to show encouragement or a great way to say, "Way to go!"

Holding

- Some children may seek to be held by a leader as a form of security or affection.
- Holding an infant is appropriate if it is necessary for their comfort or safety.
- Piggy back or horsey rides are not appropriate in any Pathway Church environment.
- Youth volunteers under the age of 16 are not allowed to pick up children in the nursery.

Volunteer Lounge

The lounge is located across from the infant nursery. Extra snacks, nursery shirts, nursery tags, water for the kids, nursery schedule, cleaning supplies, curriculum, contact info for switching the others, and more can be found in this room. Check it out.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Drop off

When parents arrive, they can go to any computer kiosk to check in their child. A name tag and pick up ticket will be issued. There is a number located on the name tag. The pickup ticket will have the same number. The parent will then place the name tag on the child's back. Do not allow a child into your room without a name tag. New parents will need to check in with the host team located in the lobby outside the nursery to fill out the necessary paperwork to get their child checked in.

Pick Up

Children will be released from their room ONLY to an adult with the corresponding pick up ticket. If an individual attempts to pick up a child WITHOUT a corresponding pick up ticket, DO NOT release the child for any reason. Please refer the individual to the service leader.

Evacuation/Severe Weather/Other Emergencies

Evacuation

On the rare occasion that it is necessary to evacuate the building, please follow the instructions provided in your room. The cribs in the rooms are portable and all children in your room should be placed in the cribs. As a group, we will wheel the cribs to the designated spot. At Pathway Church the route is out the Honeybee's exit located down the east hall immediately outside Honeybees. Head to the center of the lawn until staff or service leader gives the 'All Clear'. We will then line up the cribs and make sure each and every child checked into your room is accounted for. It is natural for parents to want to take their child during a time like this; however, we cannot release children to parents until the 'All Clear' has been given.

Severe Weather

In the event of severe weather place each child into the portable cribs. At the direction of the nursery service leader move the children and the sign in notebook to the designated spot.

- The Infant room will move into the Nursing Mom room.
- Toddlers will stay in their room.

It is natural for parents to want to take their child during a time like this; however, we cannot release children to parents until the 'All Clear' has been given.

Other Emergencies

In the highly unlikely event that any other type of unforeseen emergency occurs and the church is on lock down, move to the designated spot.

Everyone will need to stay in your rooms. Make sure both doors are locked. Make sure each child checked in is accounted for. In the safety bag, there are red and green cards along with a sharpie. If anyone in your room is unaccounted for or injured, you will need to write the name of the individual or child and a brief description of the problem on the red card and slide it under your door. If nobody is injured and all are accounted for, slide the green card under the door. Do not open the door for anyone unless it is a police officer, medic, or a Pathway Church staff member.

In an emergency

- Always remain calm. The children will react to your behavior.
- Take a head count prior to leaving your area.
- Do not take any personal belongings.
- Take a head count of your kids and take the safety bag with you.
- Take a head count when you reach the safe zone.
- Never release a child to anyone, even a parent, during an evacuation.
- Parents are welcome to evacuate with you, but they are not allowed to remove the child from your care.
- Children will not be released until an ALL CLEAR has been given by the proper authorities. At which time the child will ONLY be released to the individual with the corresponding pick up ticket.

Injury/Medical Emergency

Please contact your service leader if a child is injured in any way. An incident report will be completed for all injuries, even the very minor. Please be observant as the service leader will ask for details of the event.

In the event of a medical emergency, notify the service leader immediately so that the proper people can be notified. One volunteer in the room should remove all the healthy children from the room. Try and keep all the children calm during this time.

Child Abuse

Please contact a staff member if:

- You suspect that a child is the victim of abuse
- A child makes accusatory statements of abuse
- Any instance you suspect abuse of any kind

Do not attempt to gather information from the child and do not speak with parents regarding your concerns. A Pathway Church staff member should handle all matters regarding a child's safety only.