

La Crescenta Presbyterian Church Volunteer Guidelines

Revised September 25, 2017

Thank you for your interest in serving as a volunteer in Children's or Student Ministry at LCPC. The goals of both ministries are to teach young people biblical truth, encourage them to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and inspire them to love and serve God with their whole heart. Therefore, we seek adults who love Christ, love children and youth and seek to display joy and patience in all they do.

A. Protecting Children and Youth

- ❖ Discipline should never be physical or demeaning.
- ❖ If a child is unusually upset or scared, contact staff or the minor's parents.
- ❖ A volunteer should avoid being completely alone with a minor.
- ❖ Doors and blinds should be left open if possible.
- ❖ LCPC's objective is to have a minimum of two volunteers (high school age or over) or staff in every children's programming room and at every Children's Ministries event."

B. Interaction

- ❖ Avoid obvious favoritism and make socially awkward minors feel welcome.
- ❖ Use discretion when showing affection and do so in front of other people. Appropriate displays of affection might include hugs or pats on the back.
- ❖ Do not show affection with minors who are reluctant to receive it. A good guideline is to let a minor initiate a hug and you end it.
- ❖ Avoid touching private areas of the body.
- ❖ Try to notify staff if you are in a situation in which you are alone with a minor.
- ❖ No evidence of drinking or drugs by volunteers will be tolerated.
- ❖ Smoking must be done away from the presence of minors.

C. Leadership

- ❖ Volunteers must be Christians by commitment and experience when in teaching positions. Volunteers in other areas are ideally Christians by commitment and experience but exceptions may be made at the discretion of the staff.
- ❖ Use great discretion in sharing information that minors or their families may want to keep confidential.
- ❖ Talk to staff if you have reason to suspect a young person is in danger because of destructive behavior (e.g. cutting, an eating disorder, drug or alcohol use) or abuse by others.
- ❖ Stick to the plan and the timeline for all programs and events unless it is clearly unreasonable to do so.
- ❖ Never use the Lord's name in vain.
- ❖ Use discretion with language. Try to avoid crass words common in youth vernacular such as *crap*, *pissed off*, *frickin'*, *sucks*, etc.
- ❖ Volunteers who teach alone on Sundays or Wednesdays must be known by staff for a minimum of three months.

D. Spending Money

- ❖ Obtain staff approval in advance for purchases over \$25 that require reimbursement.
- ❖ Keep any receipts and submit them to staff for reimbursement by LCPC.
- ❖ Avoid lending money to minors.
- ❖ Use discretion in giving and try to avoid the appearance of favoritism.

E. Driving/Travel

- ❖ Drivers must be at least 18 years of age or older.
- ❖ Volunteer drivers should ensure speed restrictions are safe for the prevailing road conditions, not exceeding the posted speed limit, and under no circumstances exceeding 70 mph while driving personal vehicles or church vans during LCPC trips.
- ❖ Try to avoid driving alone with a minor.
- ❖ If driving a minor alone, always let someone know when you are leaving (e.g. a parent or a staff member).
- ❖ Volunteers should inform staff and give contact information if they are driving minors off campus.
- ❖ In order to drive a Church/CFC van you must be at least 21 years of age or older. A driving record from the DMV must be received by the church before you may drive a church van. No one with 3 points or more on their driving record will be allowed to drive the van. Your record must be pulled each time you drive a van or you may submit your license to the CFC to be put on an automatic notification system.

F. Discipline

- ❖ While public discipline is acceptable to maintain control, it is usually better to discipline privately.
- ❖ Avoid using time outs.
- ❖ Never discipline children 6th grade or younger by sending them outside alone.
- ❖ In cases of extreme misbehavior allow staff to deal with consequences and parental contact.

G. Bathroom Policies

- ❖ Minors in 2nd grade and above may walk to the bathroom by themselves.
- ❖ Minors cannot be refused permission to go to the bathroom, but it helps to confront children who are seeking to separate from the group.
- ❖ Preschoolers may be accompanied into a stall if an adult is needed.
- ❖ Volunteers may never be in a restroom alone with a child with the door closed.
- ❖ Diapers are only to be changed in designated areas and in the presence of other volunteers.
- ❖ Children should have as much privacy as possible. Enter a bathroom only when absolutely necessary to assist the child. Keep the door open.”

H. Application and Screening Process

- ❖ Volunteers are required to fill out a volunteer application for Children’s Ministry and Student Ministry.
- ❖ All volunteers over the age of 18 are required to submit to a confidential, internet- based screening process designed to inform staff of past criminal behavior.

I. Responding to Problems

- ❖ Contact staff for any concern or an emergency situation so that the staff can take appropriate action.
- ❖ Sensitive information shared between volunteers and staff should remain confidential.

J. Problems with Volunteers

- ❖ Do not seek to resolve disagreements among leaders in front of youth and children.
- ❖ It is the responsibility of the staff to deal with inappropriate volunteer behavior.
- ❖ Volunteers with concerns or criticisms about a program on ministry should discuss them privately with staff.
- ❖ Participation by minors who are volunteering will be monitored by staff.
- ❖ LCPC staff, session and committees reserve the right to determine who can and cannot volunteer with youth and children.

Please talk to a staff member if you have questions about any of these guidelines.

“I have read and understand the La Crescenta Presbyterian Church Volunteer Guidelines and agree to be bound by these terms and conditions, in the scope of performing my duties as a church volunteer. I understand that, as a volunteer, I will be required to submit to a confidential screening process designed to notify the LCPC staff of any prior criminal activity.”

Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Approved by Session September 25, 2017