



Volunteering With Minors Policy 2017-2018

Bloomingtondale Church | KidsQuest - PAK - Youth Group - Mentors

NEXTGEN VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

Bloomingtondale Church prioritizes the safety of the children, teens, and families we serve. NextGen volunteers:

- Are safe people who who love God and others
 - ◆ Abstain from pornography, cohabitation, illegal consumption, and drunkenness
 - ◆ Have satisfactory references checked by Bloomingtondale Church staff
 - ◆ Clear background check (Applicants under 21 complete verbal interview)
- Have regularly attended Bloomingtondale Church for at least six months
- Read and follow [NextGen Volunteering with Minors Policy](#)
- Complete annual application ([online](#) or paper)
- Receive pastoral staff approval

NEXTGEN SAFETY POLICY

We desire to provide a safe and welcoming environment in which healthy spiritual formation can take place.

TWO ADULTS IN EACH ROOM

- There are to be a *minimum of two adults physically present in any room with minors at all times* during a NextGen program or event, including childcare.
- If an adult needs to step away, ensure that an adjoining room door is open and the class is within view of a second adult.

SAFE TOUCH

- Appropriate touch (4 H's): *Hello, handshake, highfive, half a hug*
 - Additional examples: Holding a young child's hand when walking to an activity; arm around shoulder when comforting; patting a child's head, hand, shoulder or back when encouraging
- Inappropriate touch: Non-brief physical contact or any violation of laws against sexual contact between adults and children

SAFE DISCIPLINE

- *Encourage good behavior.*
- *Redirect* a misbehaving child/teen by moving them to a new area. If needed, contact parent/guardian. If necessary, request parent/guardian to pick up child/teen.
- Physical contact is never to be used in any sort of disciplinary action.

SAFE COMMUNICATION

- *If a person shares that they are being harmed, are self-harming (or intending to self-harm), harming (or intending to harm) others, never promise to keep this information secret.* (See Reporting - Abuse/Harm, pg 4)
- *Opt for face-to-face* communication in public settings.
- *Do not privately contact students of opposite sex.* The only exceptions are if you include another adult of same sex as student in the message or send a mass-text.
- No "ghosting" messaging apps (ie SnapChat) are to be used to contact a student.

MOBILE PHONE USE

Volunteers should *not use their mobile phones* while present with children or students.

PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINE

*Please use good judgment. We should assume that our social media activity will be viewed by the students and families we serve and people we serve alongside. Please ask yourself: **Are you comfortable with others viewing what you post? Does it honor Jesus Christ and adhere to Ephesians 4:29?** (Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.) Please refer to [Bloomingdale Church Social Media Policy](#).*

PHOTOGRAPHY

Bloomingdale Church staff or designated official photographer take photos.

- KidsQuest events: Volunteers are *not allowed to take photos at KidsQuest events*.
- PAK/Youth events: *Volunteers must ask leadership for permission to take a photo at a program.*
- Volunteers are never allowed to post photos online.

OFFSITE EVENTS & TRIPS/RETREATS

- *Parental consent forms are required* for each child to participate.
- All events will be supervised by a *minimum* of two approved adult leaders.

DRIVING

- *It is preferred that volunteers drive students of same gender.* If driving a student(s) of opposite gender, at least one additional passenger must be present in the car.
- *When giving a minor a ride home,* volunteer must obtain verbal/written/text parental approval.
- *Drivers for offsite events must adhere to the following:*
 - Be at least 21 years old.
 - Submit driver's license for driving record check (via NextGen volunteer application), and not have major violations in past 10 years (reckless or negligent driving, DUI/DWI, hit and run, fleeing from a law enforcement officer)
 - Follow all rules of the road and passenger safety.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- [Incident Reports](#) *must be filled out immediately* when anyone was involved in an incident that resulted in personal injury or property loss and/or significant infringement of Volunteering with Minors policy. *(available in classrooms, check-in desk, NextGen office)*
- Procedures for emergency situations (below) are posted in classrooms and on check-out clipboards.

Fire or any emergency requiring evacuation:

1. Children are lined up at the door with adult leading the line. (Nursery: Children placed in rolling crib.)
2. Count all children to ensure everyone is accounted for. (Use room roster if possible.)
3. Move across parking lot into grass area on west side of property.

Tornado or severe weather: Take everyone into designated areas where there are no external windows.

Intruder: Take all children into the back section of the room away from doors, lock all doors if possible, turn off the lights, stay away from all windows, and call 911. Count all children (using room roster if possible).

Medical:

- In case of emergency, call 911 and be prepared to provide information on your location and situation.
- *First aid kits are available* in the church office, at KidsQuest Check-in Desk, and in most classrooms.
- *Immediately contact a parent* when an injury occurs. Report it to the ministry leader or onsite staff.

ZERO TOLERANCE

Violence; Harassment; Possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or weapons

VOLUNTEER AGE MINIMUMS

- PAK leaders must be in at least 10th grade.
- Jr High youth leaders must have graduated from high school.
- High School youth leaders must be at least 21 years old.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC POLICIES

RESTROOMS [0-4th Grade]

- *We recommend that parents take their children to the restroom prior to the program.*
- If a child needs to use the restroom:
 - *Males never assist.*
 - *At least two female volunteers must be present: One outside doorway of restroom and one within direct view of restroom.*
 - In case of emergency or if child needs assistance, volunteer should intervene (and notify staff member or ministry leader as soon as possible).
 - If possible, direct children to use restrooms adjacent to the Kid's Quad/Check-in.
- *Only one child should go into the restroom at a time to prevent child-on-child abuse, if possible.*
 - Day Camp only: Multiple children may be in the restroom with the door propped open.
- *If a child is potty-training:*
 - Volunteer should stay outside door and give verbal assistance. Female volunteers may assist with clothes and wiping needs if written approval is given via "Nursery Parental Preferences."
 - If child is in Sunday School, Cubbies, or Children's Church, parents are to use discretion in preparing their potty-training child (i.e. wearing pull-up).

CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT [Awana, Nursery, Children's Church, Sunday School, Day Camp]

We require an adult to check their children in at the KidsQuest Check-in or Nursery desk.

1. Child will receive name tag (with security code).
2. Adult will receive matching security code (to be used at check-out).

An adult with the matching security label must pick up child(ren) in their classroom, as follows:

1. KidsQuest worker collects matching security label from adult and places on classroom roster.
 - *If adults displays check-out label on phone or saving label for additional check-out, adult prints name on classroom roster.*
 - *If security label is misplaced or a designated adult is picking up a child: Ask adult to go to Check-In Desk. Adult shows photo ID. Adult's name must appear as parent, emergency contact, or designated pick-up adult. New label is printed.*
2. Child exits classroom with adult.

NURSERY (0-3 years)

- *Children (including volunteer's children) over the age of three are not allowed.*
- *Diapering is only completed within the Nursery by parents or female nursery volunteers (if written approval is given via "Nursery Parental Preferences.")*
- *Nursery workers are required to be familiar with [Noah's Ark Nursery Manual](#).*

CHILDCARE (Non-NextGen Program)

- *Only volunteers approved to work with minors may oversee children.*
- *Children's classrooms must be scheduled via [CBC](#) in advance.*

REPORTING - ABUSE & HARM

Definitions of Abuse

- *Physical Neglect*: Failure to meet the basic requirements for supervision, housing, clothing, medical attention, and nutrition for the child
- *Physical Abuse*: Non-accidental physical injury of a child
- *Sexual Abuse*: Sexual exploitation of a child

Signs of Abuse to Watch For:

- Unexplained bruises, burns, fractures, or abrasions
- Consistent hunger, inappropriate dress, poor hygiene, or unattended medical needs
- Moves with discomfort and shies away from physical contact; difficulty sitting or walking
- Extremes of aggression or withdrawal including listlessness and depression
- Inappropriate sex play or knowledge
- Sudden changes in school performance, appetite, or self-worth

For more information and training, go to: <https://www.dcfstraining.org/manrep/topTabs/signs.jsp>

When A Child Discloses Abuse Or Neglect

Try to be on the same eye level as the child. Respect the child's space. Try to maintain a calm expression. Never put words in a child's mouth.

Disclosure of Self-Harm or Suicide

Never promise that you will keep anything a secret. Immediately notify staff member or program point leader.

Reporting

Any person who has reasonable cause to believe that a child/student has suffered abuse or neglect is to *report or cause a report to be made*:

- Member of the pastoral staff and/or program point leader should be contacted immediately.
- Document everything using [Incident Report](#).
- If contacting anonymous DCFS hotline (1-800-25-ABUSE), be prepared to give a brief description of the incident(s) of abuse.

Follow-Up

- In cases where the child is not in immediate danger, a staff person, point leader, and/or a third party with reasonable cause will contact the parents. If there is reasonable cause to suspect child abuse, the proper authorities will be contacted.
- In cases where a volunteer is involved: a pastor, point leader, and/or a third party with reasonable cause will interview the person suspected of child abuse and determine truthfulness of claim.

"Keep in mind that many parents who see news reports about incidents that occur at churches silently audit your security procedures and form opinions about their effectiveness. Give them peace of mind that their children are in good, careful, and diligent hands. You'll never regret it." (Essential Guide to Children's Ministry Safety)