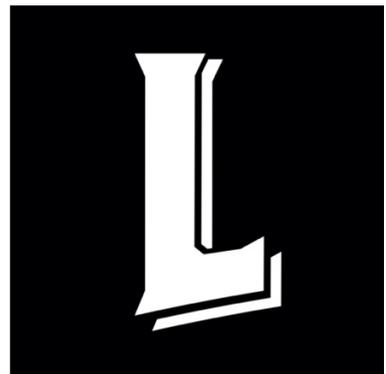


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# **LOCAL Kids**

## **Policy & Procedures Handbook**



# **LOCAL Kids | Helping children understand that the Bible is one story with Jesus as the Hero**

Local Church St. Pete’s mission of disciples making disciples starts with LOCAL Kids. Thank you for partnering with us - together we are laying a foundation for our children to recognize Jesus as the central figure in God’s amazing rescue plan.

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# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

## SCREENING & TRAINING

Local Church St. Pete requires LOCAL Kids applicants to be members or committed to the membership process.

Local Church St. Pete requires LOCAL Kids team members to complete four screening and training steps before placement begins:

### **Sexual Abuse Awareness Training**

LOCAL Kids team members are prohibited from abusive behavior of any kind and are required to report any abuse or policy violations they observe to the LOCAL Kids Director or Church Administrator. To equip team members with information necessary to recognize abuse, abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, Local Church St. Pete requires all team members to complete sexual abuse awareness training. This training will be renewed every two years.

### **Criminal Background Check**

Local Church St. Pete requires that all LOCAL Kids team members undergo a criminal background check. Background checks will be renewed every 2 years.

### **Screening Process**

LOCAL Kids team members are required to complete Local Church St. Pete's Screening Process:

- completion of the LOCAL Kids application
- a meeting with the LOCAL Kids Director and the Team Lead

### **Policies & Procedures**

LOCAL Kids team members are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page indicating that they have read and understood the material and agree to comply with policy requirements.

## ABUSE TOLERANCE

Local Church St. Pete has zero tolerance for abuse of any kind, including sexual, physical, verbal and emotional:

- SEXUAL – inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection; sexually oriented conversations; possession/transmission of sexually oriented materials
- PHYSICAL – striking, spanking, shaking or slapping
- VERBAL – threatening, harsh or intimidating communication
- EMOTIONAL – shaming, humiliation, comparison or criticism

## **REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS**

All LOCAL Kids team members are charged with the diligent enforcement of all child protection policies. In the event a team member observes any inappropriate behavior (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.), suspected abuse or behavior intended to 'groom' a child for sexual abuse - it is that individual's responsibility to immediately report their observations to the LOCAL Kids Director, Church Administrator or Pastor.

Local Church St. Pete is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, ALL reports of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and will be reported to the appropriate government or law enforcement agency for an independent investigation.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PHYSICAL CONTACT**

The following guidelines are to be carefully followed to ensure any physical contact between LOCAL Kids team members and children promotes a positive, nurturing environment while protecting children:

- Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places, in the presence of other LOCAL Kids team members and should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal conduct of LOCAL Kids team members must be above reproach and foster trust at all times.
- Brief hugs, pats on the back and high-fives are examples of appropriate physical affection between team members and children. Alternatively, a child's preference not to be touched must be respected and physical affection should never be forced on a reluctant child.
- No form of physical discipline is acceptable. Please review the section on DISCIPLINE for more guidelines on appropriate behavioral management of children.
- LOCAL Kids team members are responsible for protecting children under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by other adults and children.
- Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by another LOCAL Kids team member must be reported immediately to the LOCAL Kids Director, Church Administrator or Pastor.
- Any suspicion that a child may be being abused or neglected in a home, school or community context must be reported immediately to the LOCAL Kids Director, Church Administrator or Pastor.

## **GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICATION**

- Verbal interactions between LOCAL Kids team members and children should be positive, encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children.
- To this end, team members should not talk to children in a way that is or could be construed as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, team members are prohibited from swearing in the presence of children.
- LOCAL Kids team members should never conduct one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interactions with children. Another LOCAL Kids or Safety team member should always be present.
- LOCAL Kids team members are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with children and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any child in the program.
- LOCAL Kids team members are prohibited from possessing (or transmitting to a child) any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) on church property.
- Any inappropriate communication or suspected abuse by another LOCAL Kids team member must be reported immediately to the LOCAL Kids Director, Church Administrator or Pastor.

## **CHECK-IN / CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES**

LOCAL Kids Check-in team is responsible for providing the important function of welcoming and registering the children of members and guests into LOCAL Kids each Sunday. Any time that a child has been entrusted to LOCAL Kids team members, Local Church St. Pete incurs responsibility for their safety until released back to their parent or guardian.

Team members should ensure that each child entering LOCAL Kids has a complete profile in Planning Center. The most important aspects related to child safety include the child's full name, age/grade, name and phone number of a parent or guardian and allergy information.

After completing the check-in process in Planning Center, a name tag for each child will print automatically. Team members should check that the above safety information is visible on each name tag and ensure that the name tag is affixed to the child's shirt.

An additional code will automatically print for each parent. Parents should be instructed to keep their check-in code – it will be required to be shown to the LOCAL Kids team member in the classroom at check-out time and may be used to page them (displayed on the screen during the Sunday gathering) if any issues arise.

Team members should confidently communicate relevant aspects of the Child Safety Policy to new families during the check-in process (i.e. team members are screened and trained, a Safety team member is stationed upstairs at all times and parents will be paged via check-in code or texted if any issues arise, etc.).

At the end of class, LOCAL Kids team members are responsible for releasing children in their care only to parents or guardians or a person of their designation who is in possession of the child's check-in code. In the event that team members are unsure, they should contact the LOCAL Kids Director or Church Administrator before releasing the child.

\*Please see section on staff ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES for more information on the responsibilities of Check-in team members and Teachers.

## **BUILDING SAFETY**

The entire upstairs LOCAL Kids area, including the hallways, bathrooms and classrooms is a restricted area. Only currently scheduled LOCAL Kids team and Safety team members, and parents and their children who are currently checked-in to LOCAL Kids may have access. All team members should have their name tag and lanyard clearly displayed, each child's name tag should be visible on their shirt and parents must display their child's check-in code. Balcony seating is permitted only for parents of children currently checked-in to LOCAL Kids (must display their child's check-in code).

The LOCAL Kids Director and a member of the Safety Team will be responsible for ensuring that LOCAL Kids classrooms and bathrooms are monitored during the Sunday gathering. This will include monitoring and enforcement of the bathroom policy and monitoring of team members and children in classrooms.

No child will ever be left unattended in any LOCAL Kids classroom or bathroom. LOCAL Kids team members are prohibited from being alone with an individual child in any room. Two adult team members must be present in each classroom. In the event a team member finds himself/herself alone with a child, that team member should immediately take the child to a room occupied by others (i.e. if a child is the last in a class to be picked up by a parent, move to an adjoining room where other team members are present).

After every Sunday gathering, the LOCAL Kids Director and Safety team member must ensure every room and restroom is checked prior to leaving.

## **EMERGENCIES**

Fire: Lead your class down the nearest stairway towards a fire exit (fire exit maps are posted in each classroom). Team members will work together to assemble kids in front of the building on the sidewalk adjacent to 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.

Tornado / Inclement Weather: Seek shelter in the nursery and upstairs hallway as far from outside windows as possible.

Violent threat or Active Shooter: Lock your classroom door, turn off the lights and assemble children as far away from the door as possible. If the situation permits, members of the Safety team will lock the doors at the top of both staircases and lead all team members and children up the ramp, into the Chapel classrooms, locking the double doors behind them.

In all instances, please remain with the children until the situation is deemed safe and their parent or guardian can pick them up according to normal check-out procedures.

# CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The following is expected of all LOCAL Kids team members:

- Regularly attend Local Church St. Pete Sunday gatherings and have a growing understanding and love for the Gospel.
- Follow all LOCAL Kids procedures as outlined in the LOCAL Kids Policy & Procedures Handbook.
- Serve at least once a month with LOCAL Kids and use Planning Center as the primary tool for LOCAL Kids scheduling and communication.
- Promptly respond to scheduling requests and find a replacement when unable to serve your assigned week.
- Be responsive to email communications from the LOCAL Kids Director and Team Lead and attend team meetings and training sessions.
- Build positive rapport with LOCAL Kids team members, children and their parents.

## TEACHERS & TEACHER ASSISTANTS

Your week of service:

- Be on time: 8:20am for 1<sup>st</sup> Service / 10:40am for 2<sup>nd</sup> Service. Please communicate in advance with LOCAL Kids Director and Team Lead if you are going to be late.
- Print your name tag at the Check-in table upon arrival. Always wear, and keep visible, a Local Kids lanyard and name tag while serving.
- Team members scheduled for 1<sup>st</sup> Service will participate in Pre-Gathering prayer at 8:25am.
- Check your classroom and complete any final preparation before service begins.
- Report to your classroom after worship, before the break, in order to be in place to greet children and parents.
- Nursery team members should be in their classroom no later than 8:45am for 1<sup>st</sup> Service and 10:45am for 2<sup>nd</sup> Service.
- Remain in the classroom until all children have been picked up by a parent/guardian. \*Please review the Check-out procedures in the Child Protection Policy for more information.
- After class, thoroughly clean the classroom and sanitize tables and toys according to the End of Class Checklist posted in each classroom.
- Communicate any concerns you experienced during class with the LOCAL Kids Director or Team Lead.

## **CHECK-IN TEAM MEMBERS**

Your week of service:

- Be on time: 8:20am for 1<sup>st</sup> Service / 10:40am for 2<sup>nd</sup> Service. Please communicate in advance with LOCAL Kids Director and Team Lead if you are going to be late.
- Print your name tag at the Check-in table upon arrival. Always wear, and keep visible, a Local Kids lanyard and name tag while serving.
- Team members scheduled for 1<sup>st</sup> Service will participate in Pre-Gathering prayer at 8:25am.
- Ensure iPads are turned on and ready to use and the Check-in table is neat.
- Be in place and ready to greet families and check-in kids by 8:45am for 1<sup>st</sup> Service / 10:45am for 2<sup>nd</sup> Service.
- Check-in team members are expected to serve as ambassadors for LOCAL Kids: providing special attention to new guests, assistance in registering their children and answering any questions they may have. LOCAL Kids Welcome Cards should be given to new guests and reviewed verbally as appropriate.

## **YOUTH HELPERS (13yrs and up)**

Your week of service:

- Communicate in advance with the LOCAL Kids Director and Team Lead if you are going to be late.
- Print your name tag at the Check-in table upon arrival. Always wear, and keep visible, a Local Kids lanyard and name tag while serving.
- Assigned duties may vary based on the classroom level and teacher but may include playing and reading with children, assisting in the transition from one activity to the next, helping children with crafts or coloring, distributing snacks and helping to keep the classroom clean and organized during and after class.
- Youth Helpers are prohibited from being alone with any child and do not count as adult team members for purposes of the Child Protection Policy.

## **CURRICULUM**

Curriculum resources and the lesson schedule for each class level are located in binders in each classroom. These materials can also be accessed under Resources in the class level Group in the Church Center App.

It is expected that all LOCAL Kids team members will follow the curriculum provided and come prepared each week to cover the indicated lesson, while incorporating their own creative ideas.

## HEALTH

To protect the health and safety of all our children, families and team members, children who are sick or have been in the last 24 hours are not permitted to participate in LOCAL Kids.

As children arrive, please do not admit a child with any of the following conditions:

- Elevated temperature (anything over 99 in the last 24 hours)
- Nausea or vomiting
- Any colored nasal drainage
- Sore throat
- Productive (wet) cough or croupy (barking) cough
- Rashes, or open skin lesions
- Skin infections (boils, ringworm, etc.)
- Eye infection or drainage
- Any communicable disease or infestation (such as lice)
- Looks or acts unusually tired, pale, irritable or restless

A child must be fever-free and have stopped diarrhea and vomiting for 24 hours before participating in LOCAL Kids. A child must be lice AND nit free for 48 hours before participating in LOCAL Kids.

If a child shows signs of sickness, please isolate them from the other children, and contact the Safety Team member to notify the parents, LOCAL Kids Director and Church Administrator immediately.

Questions concerning any child's health will be addressed to the parents by the LOCAL Kids Director or Church Administrator. The medical condition of any child will be disclosed only to the extent necessary to minimize the health risk to others involved.

LOCAL Kids team members are prohibited from administering over the counter or prescription medicine to any child.

First aid kits are available in each classroom for minor medical incidents. Team members should alert the Safety Team member to notify the child's parents and the LOCAL Kids Director while administering appropriate treatment measures such as applying pressure or a bandage to a bleeding wound.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, please alert the Safety team member to dial 9-1-1 and notify the parents, LOCAL Kids Director and Church Administrator immediately.

## **FOOD POLICY**

LOCAL Kids team members must be alert to children with food allergies by carefully checking name tags and receiving verbal confirmation from the parent when a new child joins the classroom.

LOCAL Kids provides a small snack (including gluten and dairy-free options) and water for each child. Please get pre-approval from the LOCAL Kids Director before bringing any outside food items for your class.

## **BATHROOM / DIAPER-CHANGING POLICY**

### **BABIES & TODDLERS IN DIAPERS**

- Only the child's parent or legal guardian or a female LOCAL Kids team member may change a diaper. At drop-off ask parents if they would like to be notified if their child needs a diaper change or if they are comfortable with a team member assisting their child. Youth Helpers are not permitted to change diapers.
- Children should be changed on changing stations only and in plain sight of other team members. Never walk away from a child on a changing station.
- Use the child's personal supplies. Where none are provided, use classroom supplies stocked at each changing station.
- Children should be re-diapered and re-clothed immediately.
- Team members should sanitize their hands before and after changing a diaper and wipe down the changing table with disinfectant after each use.

### **POTTY-TRAINED TODDLERS & PRESCHOOLERS**

- Potty-trained children must be escorted to the bathroom by a LOCAL Kids team member. Ensure that the bathroom is empty before the child enters. The team member should then stand outside the bathroom with the door cracked.
- The Safety team member will move near your classroom door while also keeping you and the bathroom entrance in view. This ensures that no team member is alone with a child.
- Children should be verbally assisted if possible and reminded of basic hygiene procedures. If a child needs physical assistance in the bathroom, notify the Safety team member to contact the parent.
- Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another team member.

## **SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN**

- School age children may walk from the classroom to the bathroom on their own after the Safety team member confirms that the bathroom is empty.

LOCAL Kids classes are 45 minutes long. When possible, encourage parents to complete diaper changes or take their potty-training children to the bathroom prior to entering the classroom.

## **DISCIPLINE**

The role of LOCAL Kids is to support and supplement parental training by upholding high standards of behavior, respect and discipline. Some of the expectations we have for children include:

- Participating with a willing heart, eager to learn and obey, with an attitude of respect to authority.
- Avoid being disruptive or distracting to the mission and purpose of LOCAL Kids.
- Examples of unacceptable behavior include biting or hitting, inappropriate or unkind communication, persistent talking, distracting others, not following instructions.

LOCAL Kids team member should use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement. Conflict situations should be treated as opportunities to model asking for and extending forgiveness.

After a verbal correction or reminder, the incident is over and the child is treated with the same affection shown to the other children.

If a child fails to respond to repeated verbal correction and encouragement or becomes a significant distraction, alert the Safety team member to notify the LOCAL Kids Director or Church Administrator. After assessing the situation, the Director or Administrator may communicate with the parents and remove the child from class for the remainder of that Sunday gathering.

No form of physical discipline is acceptable. Physical restraint is used only in situations necessary to protect the child or others from harm, and only administered with the minimum force necessary.

Gentle physical redirection may be appropriate with younger children (i.e., removing a toy from the hands of a child that is hitting another).

Team members must use these same guidelines with their own children while serving in LOCAL Kids, realizing that our guests do not know which children belong to team members and which do not.

## **LOCAL Kids' Policies & Procedures Handbook**

### **Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement**

I have received and read a copy of LOCAL Kids' Policy & Procedures Handbook and understand the importance of the matters set forth within the handbook. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service in LOCAL Kids.

I also acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to fulfill the duties listed in the handbook.

Printed Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_