

LIL **SPROUTS**



A POLICY MANUAL FOR LIL SPROUTS

The Childrens Ministry of Rooted Church.

Updated May 2020



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lil' Sprouts Team:

Ashley Shead - Lil' Sprouts Co-Director

Liz Macy - Lil' Sprouts Co- Director

Jeremiah Coon - Youth Ministry Coordinator

Children
are
A  gift
FROM THE
Lord.
THEY are
A
reward
from Him.
PSALMS 127:3

1 LETTER TO PARENTS
& SPROUTS VOLUNTEERS

2 PROMOTION

2 OPPORTUNITIES FOR
PARENTS

3 PARENTAL
RESPONSIBILITIES

4 THINGS TO BRING

4 ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

5 FOOD POLICIES

4 SPECIAL REMINDERS

6 SECURITY PROCEDURES

7 SANITATION HYGIENE

9 VOLUNTEER DESCRIPTION
& TRAINING

10 DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

11 PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL
& SEXUAL ABUSE

12 EMERGENCY
PROCEDURES

WELCOME

We want to welcome you and your family to Rooted Church! We value children. We value their gifts. We show that we value them through striving to create an atmosphere that is relational, application-oriented, creative, fun and safe.

We pave the way for children by guiding them to take their first steps toward faith...these steps toward faith are not random, haphazard or effortless.

Children need opportunities to interact and communicate with others. They need positive interaction with adults who will listen and respond to them.

We often say that children are the church of the future, but they are also a part of the church TODAY! Focusing only on the future involvement of children often leads to a limited view of how children can participate in the church now.

The desire of Sprouts is to provide your child with the best care possible while instilling godly principles in these vitally important, foundational years of life. We appreciate your kindness, respect and understanding as we seek to teach your children as best as we can.

Much of how your children develop physically, socially, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually occurs during the early years of life. That is why we are committed to care for children and to assist parents in nurturing a Christ-centered home.

You can assist us as we seek to accomplish these tasks by reading this handbook. If after reading this handbook you still have unanswered questions, we would love to meet and talk with you. Thank you for allowing us to minister to your child.

Sincerely,

The Lil' Sprouts leadership team

Promotion

We welcome kiddos from birth - 8 years old. We have a nursery for infants and toddlers and then we divide by age group for our other students.

Additional classes and teachers continue to be added as the need arises. We evaluate this every June in anticipation of changes being made by September of each year.

Opportunities for Parents

There are multiple opportunities for parents to help share in Sprouts, these include:

1. A Sprouts Teacher
2. A Teacher's Helper
3. A Nursery Worker

Sprouts is entirely dependent on volunteers. All members are encouraged to serve this ministry. Please let us know your areas of interest, and we will contact you with further information.

Parent Responsibilities

GENERAL

- a. Parents are requested to be available via text during service. If your child is inconsolable or if a diaper change is needed you will receive a text.
- b. If any child demonstrates unacceptable behavior while at Sprouts, the parent will be asked to remain with the child until this behavior ceases.
- c. Parents should notify the teachers of any allergy or special circumstances their child might have.
- d. Parents are strongly encouraged to keep immunizations up-to-date.

ATTENDANCE

- a. Regular attendance, positive conversations about church and patience will alleviate most separation anxiety problems. Parents will be notified after 10 minutes if their child remains inconsolable and unable to adjust.
- b. Parents are asked not to bring their child to Sprouts if any of the following conditions exist:
 - Temperature of 100 degrees or higher in the last 24 hours
 - Vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - Uncontrolled Coughing
 - Colored nasal drainage
 - Pink eye
 - Head lice
 - Undiagnosed rash
 - Open skin lesions
 - Any communicable disease

c. Parents are asked to contact a member of Sprouts leadership if their child contracts a communicable disease (such as chicken pox, head lice, fifth disease, etc.) within 24 or 48 hours after attending service.

d. Children who appear, or become, ill at church will be isolated from the other children, and the parent/guardian will be summoned immediately.

Things to Bring

For the Nursery :

- a. Bring an extra change of clothes.
- b. Bring only plastic bottles or sippy cups for milk, juice or water.
- c. Place your child's name on his/her diaper bag, and label all items brought with your child (bottles, pacifiers, etc.).

Lil' Sprouts Class:

- a. Please label all your child's belongings (sweaters, jackets, etc.).
- b. Dress your preschooler in comfortable, washable clothing. Remember, preschoolers are active learners and need to be free to participate in learning activities.

Arrival & Departure

Kids will be dismissed from the gathering near the beginning of the gathering and parents will be asked to accompany them to the Sprouts rooms . Please pick your child up promptly following the gathering so they will not feel left behind.

Food Policies

A snack of water or juice and goldfish, animal crackers or a fruit snack will be served to children. If the lesson plan calls for any snacks or food tasting other than these, an Allergy Alert will be posted at the check-in station to inform parents.

Please let the teacher know if your child may not taste these foods or has an allergy.
ALLERGY ALERTS ARE VERY IMPORTANT FOR ALL CHILDREN.



"I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way. What you have done is wonderful. I know this very well."
Psalms 139:14

Security Procedures

Sprouts screens all caregivers. A background check will be done on anyone who works in Sprouts. Some screening and application questions for plant team members include but are not limited to: applicant's name, address, description of church membership and volunteer work over the past few years and two references. All children's workers are provided training.

When bringing your child into the Sprouts facilities:

- A classroom check in form will be completed.
- Please make sure to check in and provide a number where you can be texted.
- Parents must remain on the church premises while your child is in Sprouts.
- PLEASE MAKE IT KNOWN AT CHECK IN IF YOU CHILD HAS ANY FOOD ALLERGIES.



Sanitation & Hygiene

Children are a gift from God. Sprouts is dedicated to providing the very best environment possible in a loving, accepting and safe manner. However, the very nature of childhood behavior can create an environment that has the potential to spread infection. Common childhood diseases can be communicated by fecal-oral contamination, by contact with respiratory secretions, by person-to-person contact, or by contact with saliva, waste products and blood. Therefore, it is our commitment to try and maintain the safest, cleanest atmosphere possible to ensure the health and welfare of all children.

Universal Precautions

- a. Disposable gloves are to be worn when contact with body fluids is anticipated. This includes blood, stool, urine, nasal discharge, eye secretions and vomit. They must be discarded after each use and are never to be washed and reused.
- b. A disinfectant spray will be used to sanitize areas that are routinely in contact with children, such as diaper changing stations, toys, cribs, mattresses, walkers, etc., after each service and during the session if needed.

Infectious Diseases

We define an infectious disease as any disease that spreads from one person to another person. These may include, but are not limited to, HIV, tuberculosis, hepatitis, etc. We at Sprouts feel that God has called us to minister to all people and will, therefore, strive to provide a safe environment that is safe and accepting of everyone. These guidelines have been instituted to protect those who are not infected as well as those who are.

Confidentiality

The medical condition of any child or worker in Sprouts shall be disclosed only to the extent necessary to minimize the health risks to the child and others. Sprouts Leadership Team will be provided with the appropriate information concerning any special precaution that may be necessary. Sprouts shall not disclose the health status of any individual without the express written consent and permission of that individual, or in the case of a child, their parent or guardian. Parents of children involved in Sprouts activities shall not be privy to any confidential medical information.

First Aid

Although we strive to maintain the safest environment possible, it is known that the nature of children's activities occasionally leads to accidents. A first-aid kit equipped with disposable latex gloves, gauze pads, adhesive bandages, adhesive tape and scissors will be accessible per the discretion of the Sprouts leadership team.

It is the policy of Sprouts to first notify the child's parents in the event of a medical incident. In the event that the parents are not immediately available, childcare workers will administer appropriate treatment measures such as applying pressure or a bandage to a bleeding wound. No pharmacological treatment, oral or topical, will be administered except in case of an emergency. If your child has severe allergies that would require an EpiPen in the case of a reaction the parent will need to notify the check in coordinator and/or teachers.

Life-threatening situations will, of course, be handled as emergencies with appropriate treatment measures being immediately instituted. 911 and parents will be notified immediately. Rooted will not be responsible for any "Good Samaritan" assistance offered by any of its members.

Volunteer Description and Training

Anyone working with Sprouts should:

- “Love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, and strength.” (Deut. 6:5-9)
- Love Children.
- Pray for the children and their families.
- Have a good attitude, be a team player and be teachable.
- Display high moral character.
- Be a covenant member of Rooted Church.
- Be willing to keep your commitment.
- Fill out a confidential volunteer application.
- Undergo background and reference checks.

Training teachers, volunteers and staff at Rooted who work with and around children is an important responsibility. Training sessions will be held periodically in which policies and procedures are discussed in detail and hands-on opportunities are made available for each specific classroom.

Specific responsibilities of childcare workers are as follows:

- Pray for the children and the preparation of the lesson.
- Prepare all materials for the lesson in advance.
- Arrive at least 20 minutes early.
- Greet each child and family as they arrive.
- Remain until parents pick up all children.
- Clean up all messes.
- Attend training days throughout the year.
- Have fun, and share the love of Christ.



Guidance Procedures

- Praise children for good behavior.
- Use lights out or sing songs to help kids be quiet. Be creative.
- Use a firm tone only when necessary.
- Discuss obeying and being respectful with your class often.
- Watch your example. Kids are great imitators.
- Don't ask kids to do activities that you are not prepared to do yourself.
- Be consistent.
- Walk or stand by a child who is being disruptive.
- Make eye contact with children. Get on their level. Know their names.
- Try to re-direct the child to a new activity.
- Use choices with the child.
- Use time-outs when necessary.
- Never touch a child for disciplinary reasons.
- Deal with disruptive children individually, away from others.
- Encourage repentance and apologies when necessary.
- If the above steps do not correct a behavior, ask that the parent remain in the classroom until the unacceptable behavior ceases.
- Share the situation with the child's parents when class is over.
- Expect God to work in the child's life!!!

Physical, Emotional, & Sexual Abuse

(From the Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, Department of Health and Human Services, P.O. Box 1182, Washington D.C. 20013. Telephone: 301-251-5157)

There are many signs of child abuse. Any one sign may not mean anything, but if there are a number of signs, or if they occur frequently, you may suspect maltreatment. Some signs are:

Physical:

- Unusual bruises, welts, burns, fractures or bite marks.
- Frequent injuries, always explained as accidental.
- Wears concealing clothes to hide injuries.
- Child seems frightened.
- Child seeks affection from any adult.
- Unpleasant, hard to get along with, demanding, often does not obey.

Emotional:

- Self-destructive, apathetic, depressed, withdrawn, passive.
- Seems overly anxious when faced with new situations or people.
- Disorganized, distrustful, or rigidly compulsive.
- Takes on adult or parent roles and responsibilities.
- Throws tantrums, seems impulsive, defiant, antisocial, aggressive.
- Fearful, hyper-alert, lack of creativity and exploration.

Sexual:

- Has torn, stained, or bloody underclothing.
- Experiences pain or itching in genital areas.
- Has venereal disease.
- Appears withdrawn or engages in fantasy or baby-like behavior.
- Has a poor relationship with other children.
- Is unwilling to participate with other children.
- States that he or she has been sexually assaulted.

It is important to know that over 80% of the time, the abuser is someone known to the victim, most abuse takes place within the context of an on-going relationship, the usual offender is between the ages of 20-30 years, 20% of sex offenders begin their activity before the age of 18, and finally, child abusers often are married and have children. (Taken from: Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in your Church” by Richard Hammer).

If child abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, malnutrition) is suspected, notify a member of the Sprouts leadership team or another Rooted Pastor immediately. DO NOT DISCUSS WITH OTHER CHILDCARE WORKERS.

Emergency Procedures

Fire

In the event of a fire, personnel are asked to remain calm, count all children in the room and lead the children out of the room in an organized, quick fashion. All children will be taken to the parking area away from the building. Class role will be taken once again when outside the building. Fire drills will be conducted throughout the year.

Tornadoes, Storms, Severe Weather

Children will be calmly escorted to an enclosed part of the building, such as an inside hallway or the lowest section of the building. They will be taught how to sit with their back against the wall, knees tucked under their chins, arms wrapped around the knees, and heads bent down.

Earthquakes

Personnel are asked to keep children away from heavy hanging objects, tall or heavy furniture, ruptured hot water heaters, gas lines, flammable liquids and electrical wires. Children will be gathered under a supported doorway or sturdy table and kept calm and secure.