



HINSON BAPTIST CHURCH

Child & Volunteer Protection Policy

Revised July 2019

Welcome!

Welcome to children's ministry at Hinson Baptist Church (HBC). It is our goal to create a safe and loving environment in which the children entrusted to our care are taught about the character of God, discover biblical truth, and learn what it means to follow Jesus Christ.

This handbook is designed to familiarize parents and volunteers with our procedures and our child protection policy. The specifications contained in this handbook apply to official children's ministry occurring during the four regularly scheduled weekly meetings of the church (Sunday morning, Sunday evening, Wednesday evening, and Thursday Women's Bible Study). "Children's ministry" refers to classes and programs for aged newborn to eighteen. In addition, this applies to Hinson Small Groups that provide childcare.

**If you have any questions or comments, please contact Daniel Schreiner or
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Mission

The children's ministry of Hinson Baptist Church exists to glorify God by:

- Maintaining a safe and secure environment
- Supporting and encouraging parents who are primarily responsible for teaching biblical truths to their children. (Ephesians 6:4)
- Making the whole counsel of Scripture known to children with special emphasis on the Gospel. (Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Romans 1:16-17)
- Praying for the children and relying on the Holy Spirit to regenerate their hearts through the faithful teaching of His Word. (Romans 10:17; Ephesians 2:4-10)
- Living faithfully before the children and modeling how Christians are called to respond to God, interact with one another, and with the world around us. (Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 11:1)

Volunteer Expectations

All volunteers are expected to:

- Be on time, prepared and ready to accept children at the designated start time
- Get a substitute for yourself when you are sick or away
- Love the children as Christ loves them
- Set an example of proper Christian conduct in the way we live our lives
- Understand that the care of children is not a right, but a privilege; and this privilege embodies responsibilities to God for ministering to and caring for the children
- Regularly attend the main morning church service

Child Protection Policy Overview

Our primary concern is that the children are safe in our care.

To this end we:

- Screen all volunteers
- Require training for all volunteers
- Release preschool age children ONLY to the parent/guardian or mature sibling with the corresponding sticker
- Employ scheduling procedures and volunteer/child ratios that optimize safety
- Have a first aid kit readily available
- Educate our volunteers to signs of potential child abuse and encourage them to report any known or suspected abuse to church leadership and to appropriate governmental authorities consistent with applicable laws
- Adhere to a "healthy child" policy for admittance to classes
- Adhere to a two-volunteer/room policy
- Ensure that volunteers are not in isolated settings with children
- Have installed and monitor security cameras in the children's ministry area

Protecting the Children Before They Arrive

Volunteer Screening Procedure

To ensure safe and quality care, HBC has established several criteria that all volunteers must meet in order to work with our children:

- Be HBC members in good standing who have been attending for at least six months prior to serving (exceptions require approval from a pastor)
- Be eighteen years of age or older. Youth who are at least twelve years of age and are children of members are welcome to assist but must go through the same screening process as adults
- Complete the volunteer application
- All reference checks must be satisfactorily completed
- Criminal record checks and other appropriate screening checks must be completed for all volunteers over the age of 18
- Take a tour of children's area
- Be approved by the Children's Ministry Administrator

Volunteer Training & Remaining Cleared

In order to remain cleared to serve in Family Ministry, we require the following:

- Attend training sessions as required
- Stay current with safety videos and accompanying quizzes

Protecting the Children As They Arrive and Depart

Arrival and Departure Times

Volunteers should be ready to accept children 15 minutes prior to the start of any session, so that parents have enough time to transition their children. Be in classroom 1st hour at 8:45am, 2nd hour at 10:15am, and at 4:45 pm for Sunday Evening prayer service.

Parents are encouraged to pick up their children immediately at the conclusion of the session.

In the event that a child is not picked up within 10 minutes of the end of any church service, volunteers will send other volunteers to locate the parents.

Special Needs

Parents of children with special needs are encouraged to contact the Children's Ministries Administrator before signing the child into class. This is to give us any particular instructions or suggestions on how to care for your child.

Check-In

The Parent/guardian must check-in elementary aged and under using the online check-in. Parents/Guardians of preschool children must return with the corresponding child's sticker to remove the child from class. We will only release the child to the parent/guardian or older sibling who has the corresponding tag.

Elementary Arrival & Departure

1st Hour Sunday: Parents/guardians may drop off their children at the appropriate class on Sunday mornings at 8:50. Elementary School children will be released unless parents have specified they will pick them up.

Youth Arrival & Departure

Parents are welcome to drop off or pick up their youth at the designated location for regularly scheduled youth group events and meetings. There is no identification system or sign-in procedure for this age group.

Protecting the Children While They Are In Our Care

Reducing Isolation:

- For Nursery and Children's Ministry, two "cleared" volunteers must be present in each classroom at all times. One of those volunteers must be a woman.
- If two family members serve together, a third non-family member must also serve in that classroom.
- Volunteers must interact with youth and children in a context where they can easily be observed by other volunteers and/or parents.

Child-to-Volunteer Ratios

In addition to always having two adult volunteers present, the following ratios are maintained during the regularly scheduled meetings of the church:

- Children ages 0-24 months: 1 volunteer to 3-4 children
- Children ages 2-5: 1 volunteer to 4-5 children
- Children 1st-3rd grade: 1 volunteer to 9-12 children
- Children 4th-6th grade: 1 volunteer to 12-14 children

Restroom Procedure

Parents are encouraged to take their children to the restroom or change a soiled diaper prior to signing them into a class.

Preschool

In the event that a child needs to use the restroom, a female volunteer stands outside the restroom but must not enter the restroom unless the child asks for help. If in the event that the child needs help, another volunteer (male or female) will stand outside the restroom while a female volunteer assists. Both children and the volunteer must wash their hands with soap and water before returning to the classroom.

Elementary

Any child needing to use the restroom shall go with another child of the same age and sex. Only female volunteers can accompany children to the restrooms. Due to the location of the women's basement restroom, a woman volunteer may accompany the pair to the hallway by the restroom. The children must wash their hands with soap and water and return to their classroom. We ask that adults refrain from using restrooms in the children's wing.

Youth

Youth (Middle & High School) shall use the appropriate restroom on their own.

No volunteer or other child should accompany him/her. No adult should use the Annex basement restrooms during youth events or meetings.

Appropriate Discipline

All volunteers are responsible for providing a loving, respectful, and orderly atmosphere in which children can learn, play, and interact with others. This atmosphere should be maintained by preparing beforehand, proactively directing children towards acceptable activities, verbally encouraging positive behavior, and, when necessary, correcting or redirecting inappropriate behavior.

Acceptable means of redirecting inappropriate behavior includes:

- Correcting the child verbally
- Name on the board
- Withholding a certain privilege or activity for a brief time, or separating a child from the group for a brief time (particularly if his/her behavior is endangering or upsetting other children).
- If the behavior is uncontrollable or the child does not respond to the discipline measures above, the parents will be notified to come remove their child from class. Depending on the severity of the offense some of the above steps could be omitted.
- Volunteers should communicate to parents any inappropriate behavior.

Be consistent with all the children in your care. Volunteers should never yell at, spank or hit a child. For further information regarding discipline, please speak with appropriate church leaders.

Physical Touch Policy (Volunteer-to-Child)

While appropriate physical contact with children can be an effective means of aiding in communication, redirecting attention, calming restlessness, or of showing godly love and care, it can also be easily misinterpreted.

- Always remain in open sight of other adults
- Appropriate physical contact will vary according to the age of the child. What is appropriate for nursery children (holding, rocking, sitting in laps, diapering, assisting in the restroom, etc.) will not be appropriate for grade school children
- In the nursery, only females change diapers. Only females will take children to the bathroom and/or assist in the restroom.
- Sitting on laps is only appropriate for ages 0 through pre-K
- All volunteers should refrain from the following activities: rough-housing, wrestling, or giving shoulder or piggy back rides to children.
- Use care and discernment when hugging a child. Brief side-hugs when greeting or comforting a child are generally appropriate. Prolonged, frequent, or frontal hugs are not appropriate. In older classes, workers should not initiate hugs, particularly towards children of the opposite sex; if an older child

initiates a hug, redirect them to a more appropriate contact, such as a brief side hug or a gentle "high-five," etc.

- Only touch children in "safe" areas and for brief times, with no rubbing or massaging. "Safe" areas generally include hands, arms, shoulders, upper back, or gentle pats on the top of a child's head. Never touch a child on or near any region that is considered private or personal, unless changing diapers or assisting preschool children in the restroom.
- Never touch a child out of frustration or anger. Physical discipline is not an appropriate means of correcting someone else's child.
- If there are any questions about how to interact with children in an appropriate manner, feel free to direct your concerns to appropriate church leadership.

Accidents and First Aid

The children's area is equipped with basic first aid kits (mounted on wall outside of children's bathroom near Room 115). Volunteers should be familiar with their contents and uses. In the event of life-threatening injury or illness, emergency medical services (9-1-1) will be called first and the parents will be informed immediately. Volunteers will complete two Incident Report Forms for all injuries, whether major or minor. A copy of this form will go to the parent upon pickup of the child and to the Children's Ministry Administrator.

Food & Drink

One of the ways we protect children is to limit food and drink allowed in classrooms. Children may bring in a water bottle but no outside food is allowed in the classrooms. If you need to give your child a snack, you should do that in the Community Hall or Welcome Center. Contact the Children's Ministry Administrator for questions regarding approved food/snacks. If a teacher wishes to bring in any outside food or drink, they must contact the CMA ahead of time.

Administering Snacks and Food to Pre-School

Volunteers should always check each child's sticker tag.

The volunteer MUST check with both the Children's Ministry Administrator and the attendance book to determine the nature of the allergy before any food is given. If instructions are not clear, no food should be given to the child without clarification from the parent/guardian. No food except for the church-supplied snack and water will be permitted to be eaten anywhere in the classrooms for newborn-3 year-old children unless the Children's Ministry Administrator has been notified previously.

Under 2 years-olds

No snacks will be served in the nursery. Parents are encouraged to provide an appropriate labeled cup for their own child to drink from. Once the child is done drinking a bottle/cup, it must be put back into diaper bag of that child.

2 Year-Olds to Kindergarten

Only water and snacks on approved list below will be served to children while they are signed in under our care. If a parent desires to feed their child at a certain time during the services, we ask that they check their child out of class and administer the food personally to their individual child in the Community Hall. This is to reduce the risk of allergic reactions.

Snacks for Elementary & Youth

Elementary Age

Teachers may on occasion serve a snack in class or send home a treat as long as they notify the CMA of what snack they plan to provide.

Youth

Food will often be served food at youth group or at activities. We expect that youth are old enough to know of their allergies or limits and parents should have conversations with their youth to what is allowed within their family.

EPI PENS:

1. A personalized plan will be developed with parents/guardians based on the completion of our Special Medical Needs Agreement form, for those children that have an Epi Pen.
2. A green piece of tape will be placed on shoulder of child which says Epi Pen (written with Sharpie) and green tag added to nametag.
3. "Epi Pen" needs to be written on attendance sheets by child's name.
4. Inform Children's Ministry Administrator and all teachers in the classroom of the Epi Pen and child.

Healthy Child Policy

Universal Precautions

Universal precautions are employed such that all human bodily fluids are treated as if they carried infectious diseases. Universal precautions are applicable in a nursery setting and should be utilized. This method is very effective for protecting both the children and volunteers in the nursery from illness. This is not to imply that any children or volunteers in the nursery are carrying infectious diseases. By treating all bodily fluids as if they are infected, any infections or contaminants can be avoided at all times, providing a safer and healthier environment for volunteers and children alike.

Important Points of Universal Precautions:

- Wash hands before and after any contact with bodily fluids, including wiping noses, changing diapers, cleaning vomit, and treating a blood spill
- Always wear disposable gloves when dealing with any bodily fluids. Gloves should be changed between each diaper change
- Treat all soiled linen (i.e. sheets, clothing) as potential infectious agents
- Remove toys that children have mouthed from the general play area. Set them in the container by the sink and wash
- At the end of the session, disinfect the room. Wipe down all surfaces thoroughly

Communicable Disease Policy

In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases among the children, four rules are in place concerning these types of disease. Both parents and volunteers must be familiar with these policies.

1. Children with infectious diseases should be kept home until they are no longer contagious. If a child is exhibiting symptoms of illness such as fever, diarrhea, open skin lesions or blisters (as in chicken pox), or colored nasal discharge, the parent should keep the child home.

2. Volunteers should use latex gloves and proper hygiene procedures to change diapers, wipe noses, and handle blood spills or vomit.

3. Hand washing is a recommended regular habit for both children and volunteers.

4. Toys and equipment are washed and disinfected regularly. HBC is dedicated to preventing the spread of communicable disease among the children. Volunteers do have the right to refuse a child because of questionable symptoms. To prevent this, parents are asked to comply with the following guidelines:

A child should be kept at home when any of the following exist:

- Fever
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Any symptom of childhood diseases such as scarlet fever, German measles, mumps, chicken pox, or whooping cough
- Sore throat
- Croup
- Any unexplained rash or open sores
- Any skin infection – such as but not limited to; boils, ringworm, impetigo
- Pink eye or other eye infection
- Thick green, yellow or constant nasal discharge
- Any communicable disease
- Lice (untreated)

Note: Children need to be free of any of these conditions for 24 hours without medication before returning to children's ministry

Children who appear ill during a class will be kept at the children's desk with a volunteer until the parents are located.

Please inform the Children's Ministry Administrator if your child appears to have contracted an illness while attending a HBC event so that other parents may be notified if necessary.

Neither volunteers nor church staff are allowed to give any medication to any child. See Epi Pen section.

General Information

Visiting Adults in the Classroom

If a new child is visiting HBC and would feel more at ease, it is permissible to allow a parent to join the child in class until the parent and the child feel comfortable. However, the presence of an adult non-member in the classroom should not become normative, and the guest is not to be considered as a volunteer, and therefore is not entrusted with caring for the children. Give the parent a "visitor" badge if they will be staying in the classroom for longer than 30 minutes. We recommend that this procedure only be allowed twice.

Mobile Devices

Volunteers must refrain from using mobile devices while serving in classrooms except for emergencies. If a volunteer must use their mobile device, he/she should step outside of the classroom.

Photography

We ask our volunteers to not take pictures or selfies with the children. Photos may be taken for bulletin boards, cubbies and special events by pre-approved volunteers. If a parent desires that absolutely no photos be taken of their child they should submit a request in writing to the Children's Ministry Administrator so plans can be put in place.

Documenting a physical injury or exposure incident

If a child or teen is injured while attending our church or using our facilities or is exposed to bodily fluids (blood, urine, stool, or vomit) other than their own as a result of a child or teen's injury or illness, the ministry supervisor (or designee) must immediately:

- Seek proper medical care for the child
- Complete an *Injury or Exposure To Bodily Fluids Incident Report*
- Forward a copy of the report to the Children's Ministry Administrator

Lost and Found

The Lost & Found is located behind the staff boxes in the Welcome Center (in the hallway closet on the way to the bathrooms). Items left in classrooms longer than two weeks will be taken to the Lost and Found closet. Lost and found items are periodically displayed on tables outside the library before being donated. Families will be notified when this will take place.

Help Needed

When extra help is needed in a children's classroom, #99 is displayed on the reader board in the Auditorium and Community Hall. Any "cleared" volunteer may come to the children's desk and be assigned to a class.

Hinson Small Groups

- If children from more than one family are not visible during the majority of the small group meeting, two cleared Hinson volunteers must provide childcare.*
- Small Groups must present the Family ministry pastor or administrator with their child care plan for pre-approval
- Children must go to the bathroom alone. If a child requires bathroom help, ONLY that child's parents may provide help.
- Bedrooms: Children are never to be alone with another child or adult (other than parent) in a bedroom.

* Two unrelated teen helpers who are Hinson "cleared" may provide the childcare. At least one must be female.