

Gateway Kids Safety Procedures

At The Gateway Church, we believe that children are an integral part of our church body and we are committed to coming alongside parents in the raising of them. Together, our goal is to see kids come to know who Christ is, experience how He works in their lives, and to integrate them as important and valuable members in the life of the church. In doing so, it is pertinent that we maintain a safe environment in which our children can learn and play.

The following procedures help to ensure these expectations are met.

Volunteers

All Gateway Kids volunteers are approved by the Gateway Kids Director and will provide release to conduct a criminal background check and abuse registry check. Volunteers will complete required training, including abuse and safety training, and will wear a designated Gateway Kids t-shirt and name tag as identification while serving with the kids.

Volunteer/Child Ratio

All Gateway Kids volunteers adhere to a 2:1 ratio when working with children. There are always either two or more adults present with one child, or two or more children present with one adult.

- If an adult must be alone with a child, an open door, glass door, or window should allow others to see the interaction.
- There should never be one adult with one child alone behind closed doors.
- Whenever possible, we have at least two adults present with two or more children.

Check In/Check Out

Parents/guardians check their children in at the centrally located check in table in our upstairs lobby using an electronic check-in service. New visitors are asked to provide their name, their child's name, their phone number, child's birth date, and any special instructions, including allergies.

- Once children have been signed in, a name badge is printed for both the child(ren) and parent with a matching code. Parents may then escort their child to the nursery or preschool room, or head to service with their elementary child.
- Once the service starts, all classroom doors are closed. Parents are informed that if there is a problem with their child, the Kids volunteer will send a text message to their cell phone during the service.
- When parents pick up their children in their designated classrooms, they must present their badge with the matching code. Volunteers are instructed not to return children to anyone without a code that corresponds to the code on a child's name badge.

Classroom Visitors

No one except Gateway Church staff, approved volunteers, family members/guardians, or other staff-approved visitors are allowed to be in the children's area while classes are taking place. If someone who is not approved is found wandering around the children's area, a volunteer or the Gateway Kids Director will approach that person, ask who they are looking for, and explain that, for the children's safety, adults cannot wander into the classroom areas. The staff or volunteer will help direct the person to the main service area.

Restroom Visits

It is preferred that parents take their children to the restroom before they come to class. We understand, however, that when a little one has to go, they have to go.

- Gateway Kids volunteers taking children to the restroom must adhere to the 2:1 ratio as discussed above.
- If the children visiting the restroom are elementary school age or older, the volunteer will stand outside the bathroom door in the lobby and wait for the children.
- If the children are Kindergarten age or younger, the volunteer may enter the bathroom but will only enter a restroom stall to assist a child if absolutely necessary.
- All children Kindergarten age or younger will be taken to the ladies restroom.

Diaper Changing

Gateway nursery workers should always change children's diapers in the designated changing area in the presence of other adults.

Injury

In case of minor injury, a first aid kit is available in the preschool room and elementary room. The child's parent/guardian should be notified of any minor injury when the child is picked up.

- In case of serious injury, volunteers will call in the Gateway Kids Director who will then determine if it is necessary to call the child's parent/guardian or emergency services.
- In cases such as broken bones, seizures, fainting, unconsciousness or other injuries of serious nature, the Kids volunteer will remain calm and remove all other children from the situation. They never move the injured child or leave him/her alone.
- After the situation is resolved, all volunteers and staff involved in the incident will prepare written documentation detailing the events of the incident and the follow up procedures that took place. One copy is given to the parents/guardian; another copy is kept on file with the church.

Fire Evacuations

In case of a fire, Gateway Kids volunteers will gather children and evacuate the building quickly and calmly. No one is allowed to re-enter the building until advised by the Fire Dept.

- Volunteers will lead their groups out of the building using the fire exit stairwell located through the multi-purpose room, on the North side of Central Campus.
- Kids may hold hands to stay together, following behind their teachers.
- All volunteers should help carry children who are unable to walk.
- Volunteers will count the children before leaving the building.
- Volunteers and children will walk across the driveway loop and line up along the fence. Volunteers will re-count children to ensure everyone made it out of the building safely.
- The Gateway Kids Director will be the last one out, after checking that all Kid's areas have been evacuated. The Director will be the sole person from whom parents may obtain their children when outside the building.
- We will treat every fire alarm as a real emergency.