

# Children's & Teen Ministry Policies

Resource & Reference for  
Parents, & Guardians

FORT RECOVERY CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Updated [August 2025]

# Welcome To Our Policy Book!

We are grateful for the opportunity to care for children/teens at our church. We want them to feel loved and have fun as they grow and learn more about our awesome God.

We take seriously the privilege and responsibility to teach biblical truths, create relationships, and provide quality care in a clean and safe learning environment. Our aim is to grow disciples for life who love Jesus and desire to be a light in the world.

This policy handbook outlines our standards to keep children/teens, and the church safe and forward-moving. These guidelines are not intended to be restrictive, but to uphold our promises as we serve wholeheartedly and with diligence.

We request that every parent/guardian read this handbook and sign the contract to uphold these policies.

As a parent/guardian, we ask for your partnership in supporting these policies too, as we strive to create a safe and joyful environment for everyone.

If you have questions and suggestions, please contact Wednesday Night Children's Coordinator or the Church Administrative Coordinator at 419-375-4680.

# **Our Mission**

As a children's ministry, we don't view ourselves as a separate entity, but as a part of the greater whole of our church. The mission of our church is: To make Christlike disciples in every nation. We wholeheartedly exist to support that mission.

## **Children's Ministry Vision Statement**

Our children's ministry is committed to providing a welcoming place for all children, including different personalities, races, energy levels, and abilities. Our aim is to love, teach, and grow children in a way that when they look back on their experience with us, they remember our church community as a place where they were accepted, loved, and valued.

## **Core Values**

The following beliefs drive everything we do.

### **We Believe In Biblical Truth**

We believe in the truth of the Bible and an Ever-Present, Ever-Powerful, Ever-Loving God. This is the foundation of what we do, what we teach, whom we recruit, and how we serve.

### **We Believe In Relational Ministry**

We believe lives are changed by relationships, not programs. Knowing this, we train volunteers in relational ministry, and we design programs to build and deepen positive relationships, both student-to-student, student-to-leader and student-to-God.

### **We Believe In A Safe, Affirming Environment**

Our standards foster a place where every student is loved, included, and protected. We prioritize physical, emotional, social, and spiritual safety. Students and volunteers are built up and never torn down.

### **We Believe In Congregational Involvement**

We recognize every person in our church as a significant influence on our kids. Our children's ministry is part of the whole ministry of the church, not an entity unto itself. We seek opportunities to partner with parents and other church ministries.

### **We Believe In A Cradle To College Ministry**

We build consistency between leaders and programs to keep students looking forward to the next age level. We believe a great children's and youth ministry leads to active adult

involvement in the local church and lifetime disciples of Jesus.

## **We Believe In Building Student Leaders Through Service**

We recognize that children need a place where they can make a difference and feel significant. We develop gifts, responsibility, and leadership through service to others and in our church body.

## **Structure & Accountability**

### **Who Supports Who**

In order to maintain a positive environment and have an effective ministry, our plan for structure looks like this:

The Pastor supports and oversees Wednesday Night Children's Coordinator.

The Wednesday Night Children's Coordinator is supported by a team.

The Wednesday Night Children's Coordinator supports and oversees all Volunteers.

### **Honest, Kind Communication**

Our desire is to be a team with you that loves each other, serves in unity, finds joy in serving, and has great relationships. We need your help for that to happen.

### **If You Have A Question**

To get the most accurate information and foster great working relationships, if you have a question, please ask the person who oversees and supports your child(ren). If they don't know the answer, they will find out for you.

### **If You Have A Conflict**

If there is a conflict, following the biblical model, we ask that you first talk to the person you are having a conflict with - if you can do so with kindness and respect. If the two of you cannot come to a resolution, please reach out to the Wednesday Night Children's Coordinator .

# Volunteer Qualifications

For the safety of our children, volunteers, staff, and church, everyone serving in our children's ministry follows the same procedures for qualifications. All volunteers must be 18 years of age or older unless working under the supervision of an approved adult. We look for volunteers who ...

- Love Jesus
- Are growing as disciples
- Are actively involved in our church
- Complete and pass a background check
- Commit to participate in ongoing training

## Volunteer Training

We are committed to our volunteers' success and their joy in serving! Because of this and our commitment to quality care, our volunteers participate in:

**Initial training and overview of this handbook** - Understanding procedures and policies help our team be consistent, keep everyone safe, and be successful.

**Support & training** - Building unity and celebrating our ministry are foundational parts of our training. We offer ongoing training and support for staff and volunteers.

**Background Check** - Every volunteer must complete and pass a background check to work with our children.

# Classroom Behavior & Management

Creating a positive environment for children and volunteers is a high priority for our ministry. The highest praise we can receive is from children, parents, & guardians saying they feel loved and valued. In addition to this, we want our volunteers to stay forever, knowing they not only feel respected but also successful.

In order to help make this happen, we have ongoing training and strategies to maintain a positive environment with groups of children.

Here's a quick reference of our disciplinary guidelines.

## 1. Conflict De-escalation steps

- A. Step 1 - The teacher talks one-on-one with the student who is creating disruptions. He/she is given one warning and told he/she will next be sent to the person in charge.
- B. Step 2 - If the student continues to be disrupting, he/she will be escorted to the Wednesday Night Children's Coordinator. The teacher should fill in the Wednesday Night Children's Coordinator away from the student. Then the person in charge will speak one-on-one with the student.
- C. Step 3 - The student will return to class with the understanding that another disruption and the student will face the appropriate step in the disciplinary guideline.

## 2. Disciplinary Step Guidelines

- A. Notify the student's parent or guardian of the infraction.
  - B. The student will be in a 2 week cool down/suspension.
  - C. The student will be in a 4 week cool down/suspension. If a student reaches this step he/she will no longer be eligible to attend district camp/trips.
  - D. The student will be suspended indefinitely.
- Disruptive students will be separated from their friends. Our workers are to move the disruptive students to another seat, away from their friends.
  - After being separated on any given week, if the student continues with the negative behavior, the student will be asked to leave the meeting with an adult worker; the student will face the appropriate disciplinary step in the guidelines below.

## Cell Phone Policy -

4yrs - 5th grade: All cellphone, head phone and ear buds should be put away during designated lesson times, small group discussion and prayer.

Teen/Youth see attached form.

# Child Registration

In order to care best for children, we have two processes for keeping information and permissions current, as well as keeping kids safe.

A registration form for each child is kept on file and is updated annually.

There is a check-in and check-out process for each event.

## REGISTRATION FORM

In order for any child to be left in our care, we require a completed registration form to be on file and updated annually by parents/guardians.

The form collects the following general information: name/nickname of the child, birthdate, allergy information, special needs information, and emergency contact numbers for parents/guardians.

The form also requires three permissions: permission to participate, medical release, and photo permission.

*\* Children visiting as guests without their guardian (ie: a child brings a friend), must have a completed registration form signed by their legal guardian before being left in our care. (ie: a parent/guardian may not drop off a child who is not in their custody without a parental consent form signed by the legal guardian.)*

## Drop-off/Pick-up PROCESS

Children may be dropped off no sooner than 15 minutes before the start of a service or event. 4yrs-5th grade will be dropped off at the Family Center and picked up at the church. Teens will be dropped off at the church and picked up at the Family Center. Wednesday's program is 6:00P.M.-7:30 P.M. Exterior doors will be locked during all children's services. No child will be left unsupervised at any time.

All children must remain with an adult until picked up by a parent or guardian. Only adults (18 years or older) are allowed to check out and pick up children from an event unless specific permission is communicated and approved. Once a child(ren) is in our care they can not leave unless a parent/guardian picks them up.

# Safety Policies

We value safety - emotional, physical, social, and spiritual. The following policies are not meant to be restrictive but rather to enhance and improve our ministry, keeping both our kids and volunteers safe.

## Ratios

Two adults should remain together in a classroom at all times if children are present. We strive for the following adult/child ratios:

Preschool (3-4 yrs) - 1:4

Elementary (kindergarten-5th grade) - 1:10

Jr High/Sr High 1:15

## Restroom

When we accompany any child to the restroom, we bring at least one other child along.

When we accompany elementary children to the restroom, we wait outside in the hall.

When helping a preschooler in the restroom, we always leave the door open far enough that other workers can see in. We never shut the restroom door.

We do not change diapers unless requested otherwise by parents or guardians.

When changing diapers, we have two volunteers in the room.

## Physical Touch

Our volunteers follow and adhere to the following . . . all physical affection must be in the presence of other approved adult volunteers. Physical touch or affection will be brief in nature, and never on a child's "private" areas. Shoulder pats, head pats, side hugs, short hugs, and high fives are considered appropriate displays of physical touch with a child.



# Hygiene

Our hand-washing policy exists for the safety of our children and our volunteers. All volunteers follow hand-washing policies posted near sinks.

Volunteers and children must wash their hands:

- Before preparing, serving, or eating food
- After using or helping children use the toilet
- After contact with body fluids (such as spit-up, nasal discharge, tears, saliva, urine, stool, blood, or vomit)
- After handling soiled items

# Gymnasium

Adult supervision is required for children using the gym at any time. The “Two Adult Rule” applies for use during all church activities.

For the safety of preschoolers, broad age-range groups of children may not use the gym at the same time during scheduled church activities.

No rough play or misuse of equipment is permitted.

# Suspected Abuse

To maintain a safe environment for all children, all volunteers are aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, admission, or situation, which endangers or threatens children and will be reported to the Wednesday Night Children's Coordinator in private.

# Weather

If Fort Recovery School is canceled for snow day we will not have a Wednesday night program.

Our pastor will make the determination otherwise. Weather cancelation will be made the following ways:

- Facebook Ft. *Recovery Church of the Nazarene*
- Radio Station WPGW 100.9 out of Portland IN
- Remind app

# If A Child Is Sick or Hurt

## If A Child Is Sick

For the health and safety of all our children and volunteers, we have a well-child policy. If your child is sick, we cannot accept the child in our care until they are well. If they get sick or are discovered to be sick during the program, our volunteers will contact the parent immediately. After the service/event the children's coordinator will be notified.

Any child with any of the following symptoms needs to stay with their parents or guardians.

- Fever – currently or within the previous 24 hours (without medication).

- Vomiting or diarrhea

- Any symptom of a childhood disease such as scarlet fever, German measles, mumps, chicken pox, or whooping cough

- Sore throat

- Croup

- Unexplained rash

- Skin infection – boils, ringworm, impetigo

- Pink eye or other eye infection

- Head lice or scabies

- Strep throat) - until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated

- Was sent home from school with any of these symptoms

## If A Child Gets Hurt

First aid kits are available in each classroom for minor injuries.

Accident/Injure Report (found in every classroom) help ensure an environment of accountability and build trust with families.

In the event of any injury or accident, no matter how small, supervising volunteers complete an Accident/Injury Report form and turn it into the Wednesday Night Children's Coordinator. The coordinator should make a copy to keep at the church and give a copy to the parents of the affected child.

In case of injuries such as broken bones, severe cuts or bleeding, convulsions, fainting, unconsciousness, or other serious injuries, volunteers will follow the **Medical Emergencies Procedures** found in this policy book.

# Emergency Procedures

## Fire, Tornado and Lockdown

### Fire & Tornado

Evacuation maps are located in each classroom.

Maps use **RED** dashes for fire routes to show the closest exits to the room being used.

Volunteers will take child(ren) to the church foyer if Family Center needs evacuated and to the Family Center if the church needs evacuated. Maps also use a **BLUE** line for the tornado/shelter routes to be used. Leaders will count all children, make a note of the number, take the attendance sheet with them and exit with the children.

Parents may not pick up children until a count of children has been made once children arrive at the safe location. Regular pick-up procedures will be followed.

### Lockdown

When a lockdown procedure is necessary, leaders will gather children in a group to a corner of the room away from the door or window.

Leaders should not leave the room, or allow children to leave until notified by the leadership staff and/or police.

Parents will be directed via Remind to pick up children at designated pick-up areas.

## Medical Emergencies

In case of a serious emergency involving broken bones, severe cuts or bleeding, convulsions, fainting, unconsciousness, or other serious injuries, follow these procedures:

CPR/First Aid trained personnel will be contacted (lists are found in every GO BAG).

CPR/First aid trained personnel will access the situation, stay with the student and begin any necessary CPR/First aid.

The person in charge will call 911 after assessing the situation and give the information and directions as needed.

The person in charge will locate the parents and advise them of the condition of the child and the procedure suggested by medical personnel. An incident/accident report form should be written as soon as possible with specifics of medical personnel recommendations and the name of the hospital where the child was taken. 2 Copies of incident/accident report will be made. 1 will go to the parent/guardian the other copy will go to the office.

# Parent Contract

I acknowledge that I read, understand, and fully support the Children's Ministry Policies of The Fort Recovery Church of the Nazarene.

I and my child(ren) agree to abide by the written policies, as stated in the Children's Ministry Policies handbook, to the best of my knowledge and ability.

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Child/Children's Name (Printed)

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Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date

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Wednesday Night Children's Director Signature/Date

# Emergency Contact Information Form

This information will be extremely important in the event of an accident or medical emergency.

Please be sure to sign and date this form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First MI

Phone:

Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip Code

Primary Emergency Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone:

Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Emergency Contact Name:

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First

Phone:

Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Local Hospital:

\_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Information:

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Policy #: \_\_\_\_\_

*Comments (include any special medical or personal information you would want an emergency care provider to know – or special contact information)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

Do not fill out below out this line it is for use at a further date.

This document has been reviewed by \_\_\_\_\_  
on date:

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## Medical Treatment Authorization Form

This form grants temporary authority to Fort Recovery Church of the Nazarene to provide and arrange for medical care for my child in the event of an emergency, where the minor is not accompanied by either parents or legal guardians, and it may not be feasible or practical to contact them.

Full Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: Female \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home or Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home or Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: (if parent/guardian is not available) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent e-mail address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

### Information for Medical Treatment

Physician's Name and Location of Practice: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies to Medications: \_\_\_\_\_

Medications\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Please note all conditions for which the child is currently receiving treatment: \_\_\_\_\_

Note any other significant medical information or allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

*Do not fill out below this line it is for use at a further date.*

*This document has been reviewed by \_\_\_\_\_*  
*on*

*Date:*

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# Promotional Release

I consent to the use of any videotapes, photographs, slides, audiotapes, or any other visual or audio reproduction in which my son/daughter may appear by the Ft. Recovery Church of the Nazarene. These videotapes, photographs, slides, audiotapes, or any other visual or audio reproduction may be used as promotional material on brochures, the church website, Facebook etc. I waive my right to inspect or approve any editorial text or copy that is used in connection with the images and release and discharge Ft. Recovery Church of the Nazarene from any and all claims arising out of use of the images for the purposes described above.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

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

*This authorization and release must be completed before your child/teen can participate in any activities.*

*Do not fill out below this line it is for use at a further date.*

*This document has been reviewed by \_\_\_\_\_  
on*

*Date:*

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# AUTHORIZATION AND CONSENT OF PARENT(S) OR LEGAL GUARDIAN(S) AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

I do hereby state that I have legal custody of the aforementioned minor. I grant my authorization and consent for Ft. Recovery of the Nazarene to administer general first aid for any minor injuries or illnesses experienced by the minor. If the injury or illness is life threatening or in need of emergency treatment, I authorize the Ft. Recovery Church of the Nazarene to summon any and all professional emergency personnel to attend, transport, and to treat the minor and to issue consent for any Xray, anesthetic, blood transfusion, medication, or other medical diagnosis, treatment, or hospital care deemed advisable by, and to be rendered under the general supervision of any licensed physician, surgeon, hospital, or other medical professional or institution duly licensed to practice in the state in which such treatment is to occur. I agree to assume financial responsibility for all expenses of such care. It is understood that this authorization is given in advance of any such medical treatment but is given to provide authority and power on the part of the Ft. Recovery Church of the Nazarene in the exercise of his/her best judgment upon the advice of any such medical or emergency personnel.

I also understand and agree that my child's participation in athletic and other activities involves the risk of injury and even death from various causes, including but not limited to accidents, a fall, strenuous physical activity, dehydration, collision, weather, equipment defects, and negligence. On behalf of my child, I assume these risks. I hereby release, discharge, and hold harmless and indemnify, and covenant not to sue, Ft. Recovery Church of the Nazarene and/or its representative including staff, employees, trustees, and volunteers.

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

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

*This document has been reviewed by* \_\_\_\_\_  
*on*

*Date:*

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# Fort Recovery Naz. Cell Phone Policy and Agreement

The goal of this policy is to create a safe and distraction-free environment where our youth can connect with God and each other. Technology is a powerful tool, but it should not take the place of personal interactions or participation during group activities. We want to foster an atmosphere of connection and respect, which requires us to be fully present.

## I. General Policy for Meetings and Events

- **Phone-Free Time:** Unless otherwise instructed by a leader, all phones should be put away during designated lesson times, small group discussions, and prayer. Phones should be silenced or turned off during these periods.
- **Phone-Free Zones:** Cell phone use is strictly prohibited in restrooms to ensure the safety and privacy of all individuals.
- **Emergency Contact:** For emergencies, parents or guardians can contact the Wednesday Director using the Remind app/text. Leaders will have their phones available for communication with parents.
- **Headphone or Earbuds:** Unless otherwise instructed by leader, all headphone/earbuds should be put away during designated lesson times, small groups discussion and prayer.

## II. Appropriate Phone Use

- **Authorized Use:** At appropriate times, youth may use their phones for approved activities, including:
  - Taking photos or videos to document events (with permission from those in the picture).
  - Looking up Bible verses or other requested lesson material.
  - Communicating with parents/guardians during travel or at designated check-in times.
- **Social Media and Communication:**
  - Treat others with kindness and respect online. Any form of harassment, bullying, or gossip using digital communication will not be tolerated.
  - Do not post or share compromising, inappropriate, or demeaning photos or videos of yourself or others.
  - Be mindful of the group's reputation. What is posted online can reflect on the entire youth group.

## III. Expectations for Leaders and Volunteers

- **Model Appropriate Behavior:** Leaders and volunteers will model healthy technology habits by limiting their phone use during youth activities and engaging with students.
- **Maintain Professional Boundaries:** Adult leaders will not "friend" or directly message minors on personal social media accounts. All communication will be handled through an official group page or channel, with another leader copied for transparency.
- **No Confiscation:** Leaders will not confiscate a student's phone. If a student is repeatedly distracting others, a leader will address the behavior privately, in view of other adults, according to the group's disciplinary policy.

## IV. Consequences for Policy Violation

- **First Instance:** A verbal warning from a leader.
- **Second Instance:** The student may be asked to place their phone in a designated, secure box for the remainder of the event.
- **Repeated Instances:** A youth leader will contact the parent or guardian to discuss the issue. Continued misuse may result in the student being unable to bring their phone to future events.

## V. Agreement for Trips and Retreats

- Specific Guidelines: For overnight trips or camps, specific rules regarding phone use will be communicated to both youth and parents.
- Digital Detox: Some events may have a "no phones" policy to encourage stronger relational connections and focus.
- Emergency Plan: Parents will be provided with leader contact information and a communication plan in case of emergency.

## VI. Signatures

We have read and understand the Fort Recovery Naz. Cell Phone Policy and Agreement and agree to abide by these guidelines.

Youth Member:

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

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

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

Parent/Guardian:

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

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

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