

Double Springs Baptist Church

Children's Ministry Policies and Procedures – Parent Copy

Purpose and Objective

The children's program at DSBC seeks to reach our young people with the love of Jesus Christ and to help them grow in their knowledge of Jesus Christ. In addition, we want to nurture a desire in each child to share that love with others through Bible study, mission activities, Christian based recreation and spiritual retreats.

Age Participation

DSBC identifies the following ages as able to participate in the children's program, ages 2 years through 5th grade. The age range was developed based on the current age division of the children and youth departments. Younger or older siblings may attend activities only if a parent or responsible adult of the sibling will be going as a chaperone and assume payment for these siblings. Although the age for the children's program is 2 years -5th grade, occasionally there will be a situation where a child that has finished 5th grade is not ready to move to the youth department. A parent can choose for a child to remain in the children's program for one year providing the child does not participate in the youth activities during that year.

Payment / Funding for Events

Each outing will vary on financial responsibility of the family. The family will be made aware of all fees associated with any trips. If at any time a family is unable to afford the fee, please see the Children's Ministry Leader or a member of the Children's Council to discuss possible scholarships to help cover the cost. In the event of cancellations due to various issues, i.e. lack of chaperones or number of participants for a given event, parents should be notified by the Children's Ministry Leader no later than 2 weeks prior to the scheduled event. Refunds on money paid will depend on camp policies. No refunds will be given if a child is sent home for behavior issues.

Dress Code

Each outing is a representation of our church. Children and adults should wear appropriate clothing to ensure that we are representing our church in a positive manner within the community, at camps or other facilities and events the children are attending. Clothing "as deemed inappropriate" by the children's ministry leader and /or chaperones are not permitted. This includes "short shorts", spaghetti strap tops for girls, inappropriate messages or images on shirts, deep cut tank tops for males and females. Bathing suits for girls should be one piece or if a two piece is worn, the top and bottom must meet. Otherwise, a nonwhite t-shirt is to be worn over the bathing suit. If camps have specific dress codes, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to discuss this with their child to ensure adherence of the policy.

Behavior

Any and all behavior during outings shall bring glory to God! Children shall respect adults, chaperones and the other children at all times. Inappropriate language and behavior will not be tolerated. Behaviors prohibited include, bullying of other children, physical or verbal confrontations between children and any suggestive or inappropriate physical contact between children. The chaperones will use their discretion regarding behavior.

Chaperones will implement the following consequences as needed. First will be a verbal warning, second will be a phone call to the child's parent/responsible adult, and the third and final consequence will be the parent/responsible adult will be required to come and pick the child up from the outing. Serious offenses and misbehavior will not be tolerated and may require immediate intervention. The following are additional aspects regarding activities for children when participating in any DSBC activity:

- Respect other's property. This includes all items that belong to others. Only use items if permission is given.
- For older children: Cell phones are a privilege. Abuse of cell phone use will result in the phone being taken away and returned by chaperones when appropriate. See chaperones if there are questions.
- Children should always travel in groups of 3 or more at all times for safety. Younger children should always have an adult accompanying them.

Program Events

Adults involved in DSBC children's activities must assume full burden for setting and maintaining clear and appropriate boundaries (physical and emotional) in all children ministry relationships. There will be adequate supervision of children at all times. It is essential that adequate adult supervision be present at any DSBC activity and proportional supervision be adhered to. It is recommended that there be a minimum of 1 adult for every 6 children for ages 2-5. For older children ages 6-5th grade would have 1 adult for every 7 children. This ratio is in addition to the children's ministry leader. In addition, if the group is mixed gender, there will be male and female chaperones at the same ratio. Care is to be taken to ensure that overnight events provide a safe environment. Adults must always respect the privacy of children and each other. Likewise, children must respect the privacy of adults and each other. When the children's group includes both males and females, and involves overnight accommodations, both male and female adults must be present. No boys are to be in the girl's rooms and no girls in the boy's rooms at any time!

Sleeping areas and access to bathroom facilities should be segregated between males and females. If separate bathroom facilities are not available, times for male and female and children/adult use should be scheduled.

No children should be allowed to leave the premises without adult supervision. Curfews must be established and adhered to by all participants.

Transport

All children must ride in vehicles approved by the Children's Ministry leader and/or the Children's Advisory Council. When using the church van or bus, the driver must meet the qualifications of the church bus policy and follow the guidelines listed including following the posted speed limits at all times. Additional aspects of the children's transportation policy include:

- When using the church van or bus, seatbelts will be used by all participants and the driver will ensure that the vehicle is not filled beyond capacity. Car seats and booster seats will be used as required by NC state law for younger children. Parents are responsible for providing these seats.
- No standing on the bus or van.
- Children are to behave in an appropriate manner and not distract the driver. It is recommended that an additional adult be on the bus to assist the driver.
- The adult driving the van/bus must understand emergency contact procedures and maintain contact with the person in charge (i.e. cell phone) and have proper emergency contact documentation at all times.

Chaperones

All chaperones attending each outing will be approved by the Children's Council and actively involved with DSBC. Background checks may be required if deemed appropriate. All chaperones will be an active participant in each outing to ensure that the children are properly supervised at all times. The policies and procedures are for the protection and safety of the children and the adults that are involved with children's activities. All adults are to be familiar with the policies and procedures prior to participating in any event.

**Extenuating and/or special circumstances can be brought to the Children's Ministry Leader and/or Children's Council for consideration. This policy will be adjusted as needed by action of the Church and recommendation from the Children's Council.*

_____ (Children's Ministry Leader)

I have read and understand the DSBC Children's policy.

Parent / Guardian

Date