



**PARTNERING WITH PARENTS
TO POINT KIDS TO JESUS**

Parent Handbook

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like **arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them!**
-- Psalm 127:3-5

Dear Parent,

Thank you for trusting us with your children. At Exchange, our goal is not to merely babysit your children on Sunday mornings. We are here to provide a safe and fun environment that will help your whole family thrive.

Our primary goal is: PARTNERING WITH PARENTS TO POINT KIDS TO JESUS.

We have designed our entire Kids Ministry around this picture found in Psalm 127. We believe that our children are like arrows in our hands and that God has given us our children as gifts for us to steward and direct somewhere. We will all point our kids toward something, whether we mean to or not. Put simply, Exchange wants to partner with you to help you point your kids to Jesus. This partnership must be very intentional and consistent. Parenting was designed to happen within a community because it is beyond our capacity. We need each other to help us intentionally point the arrow toward the target that matters most.

It helps us to picture it like this: if the home is colored yellow and the church is colored red, where they merge is **orange**. Each plays a significant role toward pointing kids to Jesus. There is a humbling reality of parenting that shows us our inadequacy and limitations. That realization helps parents do everything they can to point their kids to the One who can inspire them, excite them, equip them, and save them.

There will come a day when you take a different role in your child's life, and you are no longer as involved as you once were. There will come a day when all your child has is them and Jesus. Will it be enough? Will you have shown them a picture of Jesus that is worth our aim?

Thank you for allowing us to partner with you.

Sincerely,
Exchange Kids Leadership

This handbook is designed to help you have a smooth and simple experience with Exchange Kids. If you have any additional questions, please contact leadership at kids@exchangenc.org or speak with the Kids Coordinator at the check-in desk on Sunday morning.

Checking In Your Child

All first time and returning attendees will check-in their children in the Kids' lobby. Please take your child to the bathroom before checking them in. While each classroom has a restroom, it is much easier for you to take care of that before the service begins. Our check-in system is called Church Center. We simply ask for basic contact information which you will type into the computer. Every adult who checks in a child will receive a tag with a unique number. The child receives the other half of that tag, which will be stuck to their back. We will escort all visitors to the classroom and introduce you to your child's teacher. All other parents must escort their children to their classroom every week.

Drop-off

To keep the classroom as safe as possible, parents are asked not to enter the classroom at drop-off.

Each week, please inform the volunteers of any instructions for your child as well as any allergies that may be life-threatening. You should also inform Exchange Kids leadership at kids@exchangenc.org. Exchange Kids is an allergy friendly area, and no food or drink (other than water) is permitted in any classrooms. We do make an exception for our bottle-fed nursery babies.

The parent is asked to write the child's full name on all bottles and/or cups that are left with the child.

Please do not send your child with toys, handheld games, etc. Our volunteers have worked hard to prepare for your children, and there are plenty of things to do in each class. You may send "comfort or security" toys to help children feel safe and secure (blankets, teddy bears, etc.), but please mark them clearly with the child's name.

Picking Up Children

When picking up children, you will scan your tag at the check-out station first and show it to the Kids' Coordinator. You will then present it to the volunteer at the classroom to retrieve your child. Children will NOT be released to anyone other than an adult with the correct security sticker. The teacher will take the child's sticker and your portion of the sticker and stick them together, ensuring that we have a match.

Siblings are NOT allowed to pick up their younger brothers and sisters, even if they have the security tag. Adult relatives or caregivers will be permitted to pick up

children provided they have the appropriate security sticker. If there is any issue during pick up, please return to the check-in area and discuss it with the Kids' Coordinator. To ensure complete safety, volunteers have been informed to follow the established procedures. Any special circumstances must be brought to the attention of the Kids' Coordinator.

During the Service

Should any of the volunteers need to contact you during the service, we will contact you in one of two ways: 1. One of our volunteers will come and find you in the service, or 2. We will text you using the cell number we have in our system. The text message will ask you to return to the check-in area where we will address the concern.

Security

In order to keep Exchange Kids a safe and secure environment for parents and children, the following security measures are constantly in effect:

1. Volunteers at the doors of each classroom will match the number on the name tag of the child to the number on the parent/guardian's security tag. This happens every time an adult exits the environment with a child.
2. Only volunteers and parents/guardians with the security tags are allowed past the Kids' check-in area.
3. No adult is allowed to work in an environment without an extensive background check.
4. Guests to Exchange Kids must check in at the check-in area and receive a guest badge which must be always displayed.
5. Every classroom or environment will always have two adults present. No adult is to ever be alone with a child.
6. If a parent loses the tag, that parent will be required to show identification to the Kids' Coordinator as well as the classroom volunteer.

Volunteer Requirements

All volunteers are required to complete our volunteer workflow process and receive a clear background check authorization form. We run a background check on every adult volunteer who works with minors. Exchange Students (6th grade and above) are permitted to volunteer, but they are always under the supervision of an adult.

Room Openings

Classrooms open 15 minutes prior to each service. Rooms cannot and will not be opened until the necessary volunteers are in place. Parents will not be allowed to drop off kids unless there are two volunteers present in the classroom.

Parents in the Room

One of the primary values of Exchange Kids is to provide a safe environment for children each week. You may choose to stay with your child during the service to observe the environment or comfort your child, but you must follow the guidelines. Please check in as a guest and receive a guest name tag. You will not be allowed to be alone with, lead children in activities, or care for any other child except your own.

General Wellness Guidelines

It's our aim at Exchange Kids to provide a healthy environment for all children. Therefore, if a child has any of the following symptoms, he/she will not be permitted to participate in Exchange Kids activities:

- Fever (over 100.4 degrees)
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Symptoms from any communicable disease
- Common cold, including colored runny nose or sore throat
- Croup
- Any unexplained rash
- Any skin infection – boils, ringworm or impetigo
- Untreated pink eye or other eye infection
- Lice, including the presence of eggs or nits

If your child is displaying any of the symptoms above either now or in the past 24 hours, please keep your child with you, and have them sit out of children's ministries until they are well. In the event of a contagious disease (lice, chicken pox, etc.), parents will be notified as soon as possible.

Medication

Exchange Kids volunteers will not administer any medication except in life threatening situations when there is not enough time for a parent to come to the room and give it.

In a situation where a child has a potentially life-threatening condition and medication may need to be given, clear written directions should be completed and signed by the parent.

EACH time a parent drops off a child with his/her medication, clear directions must be written out BY THE PARENT outlining the symptoms present when medication is needed and how it is to be dispensed. Exchange Kids leadership, the Kids' Coordinator, and the classroom volunteer should all be made aware. The written directions must be given directly to the classroom volunteer by the parent so he/she can read the directions and ask for clarification, if necessary. Following check out, the signed directions should be turned in to the Kids' Coordinator for documentation purposes.

Accidents/ Health Conditions

Minor accidents (bumps, bites, bruises, scrapes, etc.) will be handled in the room, and parents/guardians will receive an "Incident Report" when picking up their child. If a teacher encounters a life-threatening situation (loss of consciousness, significant blood loss, difficulty breathing), they will immediately call 911 from a cell phone.

Special Needs

Special needs children are to be a part of the whole, not separated from the group. The child will be included in all activities offered, whenever possible. We will provide personal attention and one-on-one care as needed.

Disciplining Children

Exchange Kids volunteers are always prepared and will be sensitive to children's needs. Volunteers should never use harsh words, sarcasm, or corporal punishment. In the event that a child becomes disruptive, the parent will be notified. Children that bite or hit will be isolated from other children. The teacher will discuss the situation with parents, but will not reveal the identity of the other child. After three times of such an incident, the parents will be asked to keep the child with them until the behavior is no longer present.

Crying Children

Crying children obviously need care and compassion. We will reassure the child that their parents will come back for them, as necessary. We will contact you if your child has been crying consistently for 10 minutes.

Diapering

The person changing diapers must be a female. No men will be allowed to change diapers. Parents should send appropriate-sized diapers or pull-ups, and a change of clothes in a labeled diaper bag. A child is never punished for toileting accidents. Until a child is fully potty trained, parents should send them in a pull-up.

Feeding

Infants only will be given milk, formula, juice, or water when parents give specific written instructions. PLEASE PROVIDE WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS EACH WEEK a feeding is requested. Time and circumstances do not allow for spoon-feeding. We will do our best to adhere to all suggested times and directions. Due to allergies, we also ask that you only send water for all other children (non-babies). Make sure all bottles, diaper bags, and containers are labeled.

A snack of water and dry cereal will be served to our toddlers and preschool children. At drop off, it is your responsibility to tell the volunteers the details of your child's allergy. We ask that parents please tell the teacher if their child may not have the special snack.

Only adults are permitted to feed children. You are welcome to come to the classroom to feed your child and then return to the service as you wish.

Bathroom

Each kids' classroom has a bathroom. No child will be alone in the bathroom with an adult unless they need special assistance. If a young child (3 and younger) needs assistance or requires special assistance, female volunteers can provide it. We will help the child wash their hands and return to the class. Once a child is potty-trained, they are expected to "take care of their business" (including wiping) on their own. If there is a problem, we will text the parent.

Evacuation Procedure

In case of an emergency that requires evacuation, DO NOT go back to your child's classroom. Please evacuate the building, where you will find your child's class outside waiting for you. Please stay with your child and their teacher until all children are accounted for and you have been formally dismissed. We are fully equipped to evacuate your children.

Thank you for reading!