

## Fox Chapel Presbyterian Church Children's Ministry Behavioral Three-Step Policy

### Purpose

Our Children's Ministry is dedicated to creating a safe, respectful, and Christ-centered environment where children can grow in their faith. This behavioral policy, in conjunction with our Church's Child Protection Policy, is designed to lovingly guide children in making appropriate choices while maintaining a welcoming and structured atmosphere.

### Core Values

- Christ-like Character: Encouraging love, kindness, patience, and self-control.
- Respect: For teachers, peers, church property, and the worship environment.
- Responsibility: Each child is accountable for their behavior.

### Three-Step System Overview

This policy is used to address *repeated disruptive or inappropriate behavior* in a fair, loving, and consistent manner.

#### Step 1: Gentle Reminder & Redirection

- The child is reminded of the expected behavior in a calm, respectful tone.
- The teacher or volunteer will *redirect* the child's attention or activity to help refocus.
- The incident may be documented briefly and noted for potential patterns.
- Parent / Guardian will be informed after the session as a courtesy.

*Example: "We use kind words here, just like Jesus teaches us. Let's try again."*

#### Step 2: Clear Warning & Conversation

- If the behavior continues, the child receives a *clear and calm warning*.
- The child may be asked to step aside for a *brief one-on-one talk* with a leader.
- A parent / guardian will be asked to accompany the child to activities, *for a time at the discretion of the leader*
- Behavior is documented with context and date.

#### Step 3: Temporary Removal

- If inappropriate behavior persists, the child is temporarily removed from the activity or classroom.
- A staff member will contact the parent or guardian to discuss the behavior and possible next steps.
- A cooling-off period will be required before the child returns, *for a time at the discretion of the leader*
- A short behavioral plan may be developed collaboratively with the family.

*Goal: Restoration and growth, not punishment.*

### Serious Incidents

In cases of *aggressive, harmful, or unsafe behavior* (e.g., hitting, bullying, destruction of property), a child will ***immediately advance to Step 3*** for the safety of others.

## **Grace & Redemption**

We recognize that children are learning and growing. As a church community, we believe in second chances, forgiveness, and teaching through love. Any interventions are not permanent records - with improvement, a clean slate is encouraged.

## **Parental Partnership**

We ask that parents partner with us by:

- Reviewing behavior expectations with their children.
- Supporting any follow-up discussions at home.
- Communicating special needs, triggers, or concerns with ministry staff in advance.

## **Final Note**

All corrective measures will be carried out in a manner consistent with the love and grace of Christ, never through humiliation, fear, or physical punishment. Church leaders (Christian Nurture Committee representatives and/or relevant staff), will work together to help the child and family in a loving and Christ-like manner while also promoting transparency and accountability. Final authority for this policy is the Chair of the Christian Nurture committee and then Session.

If a child is hurt by another, the hurt child's family/caregivers are informed of the incident but names are withheld.

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