



# Bridgeway Kids

Children's Ministry  
Policies and Procedures  
Training Manual

## Mission Statement:

We exist to train and equip children to exalt Christ through **WORSHIPPING** together, being **DISCIPLED** in their walk and growth in Christ, building **COMMUNITY** with each other, and being **MISSIONAL** as they share the gospel with the world.

**Bridgeway Kids**  
**General Contact Information**  
ctc@bridgewaychurch.com

**Children's Director:**  
Krista Meyer: 749-8044 / 361-1082  
k.meyer@bridgewaychurch.com

**Area Leaders:**

**Nursery**

(birth-2yrs)

Cristie Nelson

818-0690

c.nelson@bridgewaychurch.com

**Signs & Wonderland**

(3yrs-Kindergarten)

Ashley Owen

863-3652

a.owen@bridgewaychurch.com

**Sons & Daughters**

(1st-3rd grade)

Tarresa Richards

740-5845

t.richards@bridgewaychurch.com

**S.O.C.K.**

(4th-5th grade)

Lindy Hughes

728-4337

l.hughes@bridgewaychurch.com

**Wonderfully Made**

(Special Needs Ministry)

Angie Dowdell

476-4514

angie.dowdell@bridgewaychurch.com

**Kid Connect Counter/**

**Asst. Signs & Wonderland**

Donna Castleberry

264-6190

d.castleberry@bridgewaychurch.com

**Kid Worship**

Suzanne Thomas

590-6601

s.thomas@bridgewaychurch.com

Dear Bridgeway Kids team member,

Welcome to the Bridgeway Church Children's Ministry! Your service in the ministry to the children of Bridgeway is very appreciated. May the Lord bless you for your obedience to the call to raise up the next generation of believers.

At Bridgeway we take our responsibility to care for children very seriously. The guidelines set forth in this manual are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which children can grow in relationship with Jesus Christ.

The pages of this Training Manual provide a general overview of policies and procedures for our church volunteers and staff members. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for children, protecting them, you, and the mission of Bridgeway Church. The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced.

After you have carefully read this Policies and Procedures Training Manual please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page of this manual.

Thank you,  
Bridgeway Kids staff



# Volunteers

## What We Expect From YOU

- That you have regular times of PRAYER and DEVOTION
- That you are IN COMMUNITY with others and growing in the CORE values of Bridgeway church by pursuing a Community Group or Covenant Membership
- That you PRAY for Bridgeway Kids (specifically the area where you are serving)
- That you PRAY for the move of God among the children
- That you be ON TIME: 1st Service 8:20/2nd Service 10:30 for Bridgeway Kids Prayer meeting in the Backroom
- That you COME PREPARED for your class
- That you NOTIFY YOUR COORDINATOR in advance if you cannot find someone to switch with you or if you cannot make your scheduled time to serve

# What Parents Can Expect From Us....

## THE BASICS

Children are an important part of the kingdom of God and we recognize their function in the body. They are gifts from God and deserve a safe, positive and nurturing environment that is free of fear and prejudice. This is the type of environment in which they can grow spiritually.

While the church is a resource to support and encourage, parents are given the primary responsibility to disciple their children.

## FOUR CORE VALUES

We live out the Bridgeway Kids Mission Statement through commitment to the Four Core Values of Bridgeway:

**Upward** – Intimacy with God  
**Inward** – Community with family of believers  
**Outward** – Mission to those who need hope  
**Forward** – Character of Jesus

These core values are simply our understanding of how God wants us to express our love for Him and others (Matt. 22:37–39). These values shape our lifestyle and unite us at heart. While our methods will change with time and circumstances, our commitment to become people shaped and known for these values is unwavering. For more information on these values, see [www.bridgewaychurch.com](http://www.bridgewaychurch.com) under the “About” tab.

Our goal is that Jesus would be the center of everything we do. We want the children to experience and respond to the overwhelming beauty and love of Jesus. We trust the Holy Spirit to guide us each semester in choosing Gospel Centered curriculum.

We encourage the children to practice connecting with God through prayer and worship and the creative arts. We want the children to learn that they can have direct relationship and communion with God.

Our structure is set up so that the volunteer team members rotate through one class, one service, once or twice a month. There is a team of coordinators on staff that oversees each area of the children’s ministry.

Our screened and trained volunteers are committed to the spiritual development of the children. These men and women are given materials and resources to help offer the children an experience that is safe and meaningful.

## Overview of Bridgeway Safety System

Bridgeway requires all volunteers and staff members before ministry work or placement begins to:

1. Have never been convicted of sexual or physical abuse of a child.
2. Have completed a Volunteer Registration form.
3. Agree to uphold Bridgeway's guidelines, policies and procedures for the protection of children.
4. Have considered Bridgeway Church their church home for at least three months.
5. Be active in or pursuing a Community Group or Covenant Membership.
6. Have completed the **4 SAFETY STEPS** listed below.

**STEP 1: SCREENING PROCESS** – Staff members and volunteers are required to complete the Bridgeway Kids Volunteer Registration Form. This completed form will provide the information needed for a Bridgeway Kids staff member to begin the screening process.

The requested information includes:

- Employment reference
- Personal reference from within Bridgeway Church
- Previous ministry reference
- Bridgeway Community Group and/or Bridgeway Covenant Membership involvement
- In addition, we request a photocopy of a state issued photo I.D.

**STEP 2: BACKGROUND CHECK** – Bridgeway Church requires that all staff members and all volunteers serving in ministries, with access to children, undergo a criminal background check. The information required to complete a background check is collected on the Volunteer Registration form.

**STEP 3: POLICIES/PROCEDURES TRAINING** – In addition to reading this Training Manual each volunteer will watch a short training video reviewing the policies and procedures particular to the area (age) of service (i.e., nursery, preschool, elementary, special needs, etc.).

**STEP 4: SEXUAL ABUSE AWARENESS TRAINING** – Bridgeway Church policies and procedures require that staff members and volunteers avoid abusive behavior of any kind. Staff members and volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behavior in 'grooming' a child for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or 'gatekeeper'), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing abuse. All staff members and volunteers are required to complete MinistrySafe sexual abuse awareness training. This training must be renewed every 3 years.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Bridgeway Church strives to provide a safe, secure, loving environment for children. In an effort to accomplish this we have security measures in place to protect our children, their parents, and the church.

### **DEFINITION OF TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES**

**ADULT LEAD TEACHER (or Adult Assistant Teacher):** a volunteer or staff member that is at least 18 years old, and has been fully screened (including background check) and fully trained including Child Sexual Abuse Awareness, Prevention and Reporting.

**STUDENT LEAD TEACHER:** a volunteer or staff member that is at least 16 years old but younger than 18 year old and has been screened (excluding background check) and fully trained including Child Sexual Abuse Awareness, Prevention and Reporting. A Student Lead Teacher may take a leading role in the classroom, but must work along side one Adult Lead Teacher (or more, according to Bridgeway's adopted adult to child ratio guideline).

**STUDENT ASSISTANT TEACHER:** a volunteer that is at least 12 years old and has graduated from Bridgeway Kids Ministry into Bridgeway Student Ministry. A Student Assistant Teacher may only serve as an assistant/helper and only when there are 2 Adult Teachers (or more, according to Bridgeway's adopted adult to child ratio guideline).

### **SECURITY CLAIM CHECK**

- When a parent brings their child to the Kid's Connect Counter they will be checked in at the computer.
- After confirming the child's classroom assignment, the attendant or parent will print both a name tag to be worn by the child and a "security claim check" for the family member. Children wear this name tag on their clothes for security purposes.
- Children should be escorted to their classroom by a parent at the start of service. When they arrive their name will be recorded on the clip board by one of the classroom teachers.
- When the parent returns after service they must present the security tag as a "claim check" for their child. It is imperative that the child is only returned to the parent with the claim check. There may be custody situations between parents that we are unaware of. Therefore even though you may know the parent, do not return the child to anyone other than the person with the child's claim check. If a parent has lost their claim check or appears to be upset regarding the enforcement of this policy, please refer them to the Children's Director or a Bridgeway Kid's staff member. The staff member will then assist

the parent/guardian in reprinting a claim ticket or be responsible for the child's release.

## **NOTIFYING A PARENT**

If parents need to be reached while the child is in our care, one of the teachers in the classroom should follow the appropriate procedure in place for the respective area for paging a parent. We will display the child's security tag number on the screen during the service. We will attempt to reach a parent if a child becomes ill, cries excessively, is post-diaper and has wet his/her pants, has a severe behavioral problem, or sustains any injuries requiring the parent's attention.

## **GENERAL SECURITY**

A person that has not been fully screened **should never be left in sole charge of children or allowed sole access to children in an isolated place** (i.e. bathroom, separate room, etc.).

No adult without a security claim check and reason should be in the children's areas during service.

All Children must remain in their classroom until picked up by a parent with a security claim check.

During the worship service children are not allowed to wander throughout the church. If you see a child who is unattended by a parent/guardian, please direct them to the appropriate class or to a parent/guardian. You may also contact a Bridgeway Kids staff member.

**No children, under the age of 12, are permitted to assist in classrooms unless the parent is serving in that classroom.**

## **GENERAL EMERGENCIES**

- In case of serious accident with a child, notify the parents immediately.
- In case of an accident needing emergency care, call 911 immediately.
- In ALL emergency situations or safety risk, please notify the coordinator in charge/over the area as soon as reasonably possible.**

## **MEDICAL PROCEDURES**

**Minor Medical Injuries Procedures:** Typically, an injury can be treated with a little "tender loving care", a cool cloth, and a Band-Aid. A first aid kit will be available in each classroom. Please treat the child and talk with the parents on their arrival letting them know what happened and how it was handled. Keep in mind that we are not authorized to dispense any over-the-counter or prescription medications. In the event a child needs more medical attention than we can



provide, the parent will be notified. If the injury leaves the child crying excessively page a parent to comfort the child.

In the event of an injury where excessive blood is present; any moderate or severe head injuries; or injuries to a limb where bruising and swelling are immediately observed contact the Area Coordinator immediately. If needed, page parents. In these incidents, please provide as much detailed information about the injury and incident as possible. An incident report will be filled out and kept on file.

**Serious Medical Injuries Procedures:** These may involve broken bones, convulsions, fainting, unconsciousness, or other serious bodily injuries and should be treated as follows:

- Keep calm and keep children and injured child as calm as possible. Speak calmly to assure the child.
- Do not move the injured child and do not leave the child.
- Call/Text or send a fellow worker to get the Area Coordinator.
- If needed, contact 911.
- Contact the parents and advise them of the child's situation and procedures being followed.
- We will refer to the parents for details on doctor or hospital preferences.
- If the child is to be transported to a hospital and the parents cannot be located in time, a member of Bridgeway staff will accompany the child to the hospital.
- The Children's Director will follow up with the parents as needed.
- All volunteers or staff members involved in the emergency will be asked to write out a report detailing the incident immediately following the emergency.

**Evacuation of the building (in case of fire or other harmful circumstance):**

- Move children Birth-2 years out the front doors unless prohibited. In such case, use the door to the immediate left (east) of the entrance to the Backroom. Designate 2 or 3 adults to take cribs with you in order to place children in a confined area while outdoors.
- Children in room 30 should use the door to the immediate left (east) of the entrance to the Backroom.
- Children in the West Hall (3, 4, 5 years, Kindergarten and 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade) should use the exit by the west hall bathrooms.
- Children in the Backroom should use the Exit door in the Backroom.

**Tornado/Thunderstorm Shelter:** All children in the nursery and east hall should be moved to the nursery rooms and/or to the restroom hall in the front cafe and/or the Bridgeway Kids Resource closet located in the front cafe. All children in the back of the building and in the west hall should gather in or near the kitchen area located in the Backroom.

**Intruder/Lock-down Procedures:** Secure all children, teachers/leaders, and staff in their assigned classroom and lock classroom doors. Prepare the children for a possible evacuation. Keep the children away from the windows and in an area least visible from outside the room. Encourage the children to be as silent as possible. Check the class roster and account for all children. Do not open the doors until directed to do so by the Point Person, a staff person, ushers, or Law Enforcement. Never open a door for any person if you suspect that they are being coerced to do so.

**In ALL cases of emergency or safety risk, please call the Children's Director as soon as is reasonably possible. Remember that these can be scary situations for children. Be as calm as possible, and if possible make a game of the situation.**

## **INFECTION CONTROL GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES**

In order to minimize the spread of any infectious diseases within the children's ministry and to insure the health and safety of all children and caregivers, we have adopted the following policies and procedures. By the very nature of preschoolers' activity, diapered infants and toddlers, and normal infant mouthing behavior, preschoolers are naturally exposed to a higher rate of infection than are other children.

- Infections such as diarrhea and Hepatitis A are primarily spread by a fecal/oral route meaning that there is a higher spread among children in diapers.
- Infections such as serious forms of meningitis, influenza, chicken pox, and most respiratory infections are spread by contact with respiratory secretions.
- Infections such as pink eye, impetigo, scabies, lice, and ringworm are spread by person-to-person contact.

There have been no known cases of Hepatitis B or AIDS spread in day care centers and no documented spread through daily living activities within families.

### **Specific Procedures to Reduce the Risk of Spreading Infectious Disease.**

- Diapers shall be changed at the changing table on a non-porous surface which is **sanitized after each use.**
- Strict hand washing is of utmost importance in the prevention of spread of infection. Therefore, volunteers and staff members are required to wash hands after changing wet diapers, after toileting, after contact with his/her own nasal secretions, after contact with blood (e.g. a cut or bloody nose), and before food preparation. Volunteers and staff members should make sure that a child's hands are washed after toileting, after wiping eyes and nose, and before eating. There is a waterless disinfectant soap provided in each room.
- Disposable gloves shall be worn by volunteers and staff members with the handling of blood (as in treating a cut or bloody nose), urine, and feces (in

- changing diapers) and should be changed after each use. Volunteers and staff members cleaning bathrooms and disposing of trash shall wear disposable gloves. In the event an emergency precludes the use of gloves in contact with blood, cleaning of skin with soap and water or disinfectant should be done as soon as possible. A disinfectant waterless soap is available in every classroom.
- When an infant or toddler is seen to put an object in his/her mouth, this object shall be **cleaned with a disinfecting solution** before returning to the "clean toy" container. A disinfecting solution shall be used for wiping up all spills, soiling of blood, urine, feces, cleaning of diaper changing tables, **cleaning of play equipment and toys, and cleaning of all equipment used by children in the nursery area.** All equipment in infant and toddler rooms (e.g. cribs, swings, walkers) shall be wiped thoroughly with the disinfecting solution after each use.
  - All diapers and trash contaminated with spills of blood, urine, and feces shall be placed in trashcans which are lined with disposable plastic liners and are covered.

### **Parental Responsibility in Reducing the Risk of Spreading Infectious Disease.**

- Parents will be requested to refrain from bringing their child to the nursery if the child has an oral temperature of 100 degrees, has a rash, or if vomiting or diarrhea is present.
- If any child exhibits persistent biting behavior his/her parents will be asked by a member of the children's training center to remove that child from nursery activities until such behavior ceases.

## **BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES AND DISCIPLINARY POLICIES**

The most loving thing we can do is set each class up to succeed by letting children know what is expected of them at the beginning of class. Setting boundaries for children helps to alleviate many behavioral problems. Each area uses age appropriate language to communicate "Respect" expectations. Children are reminded each week to respect 1) their teachers, 2) their friends, 3) and their surroundings.

**Disciplinary Guidelines:** Every child deserves a loving and safe environment in which they can learn free from excessive distraction. Behavior expectations should support this environment. Good behavior should be recognized and praised. Children should be reminded of the consequences for unacceptable behavior.

- First Warning: Child will be made aware of unacceptable behavior and directed to the appropriate behavior and activity.
- Second Warning: Child will spend time away from the current activity in a chair or on the floor for 1 minute per each year of the child's age.
- Third Warning: The child's parent/guardian will be paged to child's class. At this time the Area Coordinator will (at his/her discretion) decide the best course

of action by 1) asking the parent to discuss the behavior with the child and allow the child back into class; 2) asking the parent to join the child in class for the remainder of the service; or 3) asking the parent to remove the child from the class for the remainder of the service.

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children. **No form of physical discipline is acceptable.** This includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children.

## **CHILD SAFETY POLICY**

**Abuse Tolerance:** Bridgeway Church has a zero tolerance for abuse in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer at Bridgeway Church to act in the best interest of all children in every program.

In the event that a staff member or volunteer observes any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is the staff member or volunteer's responsibility to:

1. Immediately report their observations to the head of ministry under which they are working.
2. Not interview the child regarding the suspected abuse.
3. Not discuss the suspected abuse with other workers, parents, etc. All information regarding the child should be kept confidential with your ministry supervisor and proper authorities.

Bridgeway is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicion of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to the Senior Pastor, the Police Department, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in cases of abuse, but will NOT be discussed outside of the proper authorities.

An element of the safe environment referenced above includes the fostering of a culture of reporting relevant information to a ministry area leader. Because sexual abusers 'groom' children for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to 'groom' a child for sexual abuse, but is not necessarily abusive. Staff members and volunteers are asked to report 'grooming' behaviors, any policy violation, or any suspicious behaviors to a ministry area leader.

**Enforcement of Policies:** Staff Members and Volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all Bridgeway Kids policies. Violation of these policies are

grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, reassignment from Children's Ministry positions for both volunteers and staff members. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the Senior Pastor.

**Consequences of violation:** Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by the church to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participation in Children's Ministries. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective Agencies.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act should be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves children. Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person may result in a restriction from participating in any activities that involve children at Bridgeway.

**Children's Ministry Monitoring:** Monitoring of staff and volunteers will include regular (announced and unannounced) visits in each program to provide supervisors the opportunity to observe interactions with children. Supervisors may include Area Coordinators, Children's Ministry Director, Associate Pastors, and/or Senior Pastor.

**Building Safety:** The Children's Director will be responsible for ensuring that the children's areas are monitored during Sunday classes with the help of the security and safety team. No child will ever be left unattended in the children's areas or on the playground during service. Children's ministry staff members and volunteers are prohibited from being alone with an individual child in any room. In the event a staff member or volunteer finds themselves alone with a single child, that person should take the child immediately to a classroom or location occupied by others or to a location easily observed by others.

After every Sunday morning service or child related event, Children ministry staff must ensure every room and restroom is checked prior to leaving.

On the children's playground, staff members and volunteers are to circulate, watching children during play periods, giving particular attention to the areas which are not easily seen from all viewpoints. Any two children together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area of the playground.

**Worker to Child Ratio:** Bridgeway is committed to providing adequate supervision in all Children's ministry classes. Accordingly Bridgeway has adopted the 'Two Lead Teacher Rule' There should always be at least two lead teachers in each classroom. One must be an Adult Teacher.

In addition the following Adult to Child ratios have been adopted by Bridgeway for the safety of the children and to ensure that children receive the proper care, supervision and attention they need.

Infants (A)	1:4 (maximum of 10 children)
Crawlers (B)	1:4 (maximum of 12 children)
Toddlers (C)	1:8 (maximum of 21 children)
2 yrs/3 yrs (D)	1:12 (maximum of 28 children)
3 yrs preschool	1:12 (maximum of 30 children)
4 yrs	1:15 (maximum of 30 children)
5 yrs/Kindergarten	1:15 (maximum of 30 children)
6 yrs – 12 yrs	1:20 (maximum of 40 children)

If a classroom is “out-of-ratio” it is the staff member or volunteer’s responsibility to notify the Area Coordinator or Children’s Director. Every effort to bring in more helpers will be made. As a last resort, classrooms may be closed to receiving additional children.

## **BATHROOM SUPERVISION AND ASSISTANCE GUIDELINE**

**NURSERY:** Because nursery children may require complete assistance with their bathroom activities, all staff members and volunteers will observe the following policies:

### **Diapering**

- Only female nursery workers or the child’s parent or legal guardian will undertake the diapering of children of either gender.
- Changing of diapers should be done in plain sight of other nursery workers.
- Children should never be left unattended on changing tables.
- Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in the nursery should be recorded on the “child sign in sheets” at each nursery room.
- Children should be re-diapered and re-clothed immediately upon the completion of changing their soiled diaper.
- Children should be changed on changing stations only.

### **Toilet Training**

- Children that are toilet training and still in diapers or pull-ups should remain in the Nursery until they can go 2 or more hours without an accident in underwear. When they have accomplished this and are 3 years or older they are welcomed to move to the preschool area.
- Children that are toilet training should have an orange “Potty Training” sticker placed on their shirt.
- Any special instructions should be recorded on the “child sign in sheets” located in each nursery classroom.

- No child will be forced to toilet train.
- Only female nursery workers or the child's parent or legal guardian will participate in toilet training efforts with children of either gender.
- When children are taken into the restroom the door is to be left partially open.
- Young children should never be left unattended in the restroom.
- Children should be assisted in straightening their clothes before returning to the room with other children.
- "Accidents" should be handled by reassuring the child and paging the parent to assist in the changing of underwear and clothing.

**PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN AND ELEMENTARY:** Children should use the restrooms located in the back hall. Children may be accompanied to the restroom for supervision and assistance when needed. (However, children should receive the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities). Staff members and volunteers should never take one child alone to the restroom.

If a staff member or volunteer must go into the restroom to check on an individual child, he or she should seek out another worker to accompany him/her. If another worker is not available to accompany, he/she should knock on the exterior door and ask if the child needs assistance. If the child does require assistance, the worker should leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child in completing their activities. Staff members and volunteers should not enter the stall with a child. If the child needs assistance beyond verbal directions, the parent or legal guardian should be called to assist the child.

Any assistance with straightening or fastening of clothing should be done in the doorway of the restroom within viewable area of others.

Please assist preschool children with the washing of hands.

**WONDERFULLY MADE:** Parents should leave directions on the toileting/diapering needs of all children in the special needs classroom. Parents will be responsible for changing the diapers of any child over the age of 4.

## **INTOXICANTS**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while at Bridgeway Church, while traveling with children, or while working with or supervising children.

## **MEDICATION**

Medication will NOT be administered to any child whether prescription or over the counter, with the exception of an Epipen for life threatening allergic reactions. Any other medication should be administered by the parent or legal guardian. Diaper creams and ointment may be used only as requested and provided by parents.

## **NUDITY**

Staff members and volunteers in Bridgeway Kids should never be nude in the presence of children in their care. Staff members and volunteers should not change clothes, shower or use the restroom (i.e., overnight retreats or camps) in the presence of children in their care.

## **ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTION WITH CHILDREN**

Staff members and volunteers should never conduct one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interactions with children while participating in Bridgeway Kids programs. Another adult who has completed the Bridgeway registration, screening and training process should always be present.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY**

Displaying photographs or videos of children in the care of Bridgeway Kids volunteers or staff members is prohibited without written consent of child's parent or guardian. This includes posting pictures or videos on social networking sites, the church's website, in brochures, flyers, or in any other way allowing them to be viewed publicly.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Staff members and volunteers may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for children. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of children.

- Children should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one child in transport.
- Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.
- No cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving vehicles owned or rented by Bridgeway Church, unless in an emergency.
- No driver under the age of 25 may drive vehicles owned or rented by Bridgeway Church.



## **OVERNIGHT EVENTS**

In the event of an overnight activity, no volunteer or staff member should be alone with one child. When staying in a hotel, there must always be at least 2 adult volunteers or staff members in a set of rooms. Men should never be responsible for the supervision of girls. If a multiple room suite is not available, adjoining rooms must be arranged. The door adjoining the rooms must stay open, but adults should not share a room with children if possible. Staff members or volunteers shall not share a bed with a child. Girls and boys should not share suites or rooms. Children should not be forced to share a bed, Sleeping bags can be used on the floor to accommodate each child's personal preference.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Parents are encouraged to visit any and all services and programs in which their child is involved at Bridgeway. Parents have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in which their child is involved, but are not permitted to interact physically with any child not their own (i.e., holding, diapering). Parents that desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with the children's programs at Bridgeway will be required to complete a Bridgeway Kids volunteer registration and screening process. Parents will be asked to wear a "Visitor" tag when accompanying their child.

## **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

Bridgeway is committed to protecting children in its care. To this end, Bridgeway has implemented a "physical contact policy" which promotes a positive nurturing environment for our Children's Ministries while protecting children. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in the children's ministries programs:

- Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members/volunteers and children are important for children's development, and are generally suitable in the church setting.
- Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to Bridgeway Kids supervisor, the Children Director or Pastor.
- Physical contact should be for the benefit of the child, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.
- Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other children or children's staff members or volunteers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation.
- Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of staff members or volunteers in children

ministries must foster trust at all times. Personal conduct must be above reproach.

- Do not force physical contact, touch or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.
- Children's staff members and volunteers are responsible for protecting children under their supervision from inappropriate and unwanted touch by others.
- Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by a staff member or volunteer must be reported immediately to the Children's Director or a Pastor.

### **SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversation with children, and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any child in the children's ministry.

### **SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIAL**

Staff members and volunteers involved in Bridgeway Kids are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) on church property or in the presence of children.

### **VERBAL INTERACTIONS**

Verbal interactions between staff members/volunteers and children should be uplifting and positive. Staff members/volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children.

To this end, staff members/volunteers should not talk to children in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition staff members and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT**

I have received and read a copy of Bridgeway Kids Policies and Procedures and understand the importance of the material in the manual. I agree to abide by these guidelines while serving or working at Bridgeway.

I understand the manual may be modified, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated by Bridgeway.

I have reviewed the duties listed in my ministry position description, and I agree to fulfill these duties. I understand I may choose to end my voluntary service in Bridgeway Kids at any time (if possible, I will provide a two weeks' notice to my area coordinator).

I acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this handbook in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between me and Bridgeway Church.

I understand it is my responsibility to review new guidelines which may be created and distributed.

I understand that violation of the expectations listed in the Policies and Procedure Manual will result in my immediate removal from my current leadership or volunteer position and my actions may be reported to OKDHS when necessary.

I understand that in the case of abuse or assault, confidentiality cannot be promised to the victims.

Once made aware of suspected child abuse, I understand that I am under legal obligation to report the suspicion to the head of the ministry under which I am volunteering.

I agree not to interview a child in regards to suspected abuse. I further agree not to discuss the abuse with other volunteers, workers, parents etc.

I understand that all information regarding a child of suspected abuse should be kept confidential among myself, my ministry supervisor, and the proper authorities.

---

Staff Member or Volunteer's PRINTED Name

---

Staff Member or Volunteer's Signature

---

Date