

# The WPC Kids Play Book



A volunteer handbook with everything you need to know about serving with  
Westminster Kids.

## Table of Contents

Mission Statement & Welcome Letter	3
Who's on the team	4
Top 10 volunteer expectations	6
How to join the team	6
Volunteer of the month	6
How to find a sub	6
Crew Cards	7
Ministry Milestones	7
Safety and Discipline	
General Policies	8
General Safety	9
Keeping Children Safe	10
The 5 I Cans of WPC Kids (SLLRP)	11
Discipline: 3 Strikes and You're Out	11
Important Forms	12
Confidentiality	12
Westminster Church Safety Policies and Procedures Manual	(see addendum)

Westminster Volunteer,

We are absolutely thrilled that you've chosen to join the Westminster Kids team this year as we invest in the next generation. We believe that we are serving the most important ministry in the church, and when we are successful, it not only affects singular lives, but generations. With over 70% of decisions about Christ happening between the ages of 4 and 14 years old, we as Kids Ministry servants have a large mission field.

What you do at Westminster Kids is more than just babysitting or childcare. With your actions and words, you are showing our children that they are loved by God, created to serve God, and fully part of the community of God at Westminster Church. We can't begin to thank you enough for the time, energy, money, effort, and love you pour into our children each month at Westminster Kids.

We do our best to make volunteering at Westminster Kids an enjoyable experience for our volunteers and our children. We have an "open-door" policy in terms of suggestions, feedback, comments, or concerns. Please feel free to email or call us at any time with your comments about Westminster Kids, and we hope you'll utilize the clipboards available. Each clipboard located at classroom entrances or main gathering spaces is a place for you to write us a note about supplies running low or issues that should be addressed. So much happens during program times that we often forget about a suggestion told in passing, so writing these down will help me make sure the issue is addressed.

Thank you so much for all you do to make this the best possible ministry for our kids. As you serve, be confident that God is working in the lives of our children, and be assured that you can make a difference in the life of a child. Our prayer is that your life will be changed, your mind renewed, and your heart filled through this calling as we serve together.

We are honored that you're on our team, and we look forward to serving with you,

Jennifer Kizziah,  
*Kids Director*

Chloe Frank,  
*Early Childhood Coordinator*

## **Who's on the Team?**

### **Early Childhood Volunteers**

Serve once a month in the infant or preschool room. Responsibilities with the infant room include engaging our babies and toddlers in faith activities, assisting with snack time, and helping our babies learn that church is a fun safe place. Responsibilities in our preschooler classroom include teaching a lesson through curriculum, assisting with snack, and engaging with kids as they discover more about God. Preparation includes previewing the craft and activities, and letting leaders know what materials are needed. Must be 16 years or older.

Time Frames: Spring (January through May from 10-11am), Summer (May through August from 10-11am), Fall (August through December from 10-11am). Teachers have off for all big holidays (when we will remain as a large group), and any time that Sunday School is canceled as a whole for the church.

### **Elementary Small Group Leaders & Worship Leader**

Serve weekly on Wednesday nights with an elementary age group (younger girls, older girls, younger boys, older boys). Responsibilities include crowd control, encouraging participation during worship and Bible lesson, and leading a specific small group discussion. Preparation includes previewing the overview and discussion questions prior to leading. The worship leader shares the same responsibilities, except instead of preparing for leading a small group they prepare to lead all kids in a time of praise and worship. Must be 18 years or older.

Time Frame: Spring (January through May from 5:45-8:30pm), Fall (August through December from 5:45-8:30pm). Teachers have off for all big holidays (when we will remain as a large group or we will skip that week).

### **Greeters**

Responsibilities include welcoming families, supervision of Kids areas for safety (gate keeper), ensuring kids are in their appropriate places and following our "I Can" statements. Must be 18 years or older.

Time Frame: Spring (January through May from 5:45-8:30pm), Fall (August through December from 5:45-8:30pm).

### **Meal Donations**

Responsibilities include preparing or supplying a meal or snack for our kids programs. Additional information can be found on the Sign Up Genius webpage. If purchasing and having the items simply delivered, the background checks and training do not apply; however, if any interaction will be had with children, all of our safety policies must be followed.

Time Frame: Spring (January through May from 5:45-8:30pm), Fall (August through December from 5:45-8:30pm).

### **Summer Camp Team**

A group of cabin and facilitating counselors that spend a week with Kids Ministry at camp. Cabin counselors are responsible for ensuring kids safety and staying with them throughout our time at camp (but we will give you breaks, I promise!). Facilitating counselors are responsible for all the lesson and activity preparation, leading everything, and relieving pressure off cabin counselors. We also take a worship leader, medical professional, and guest speaker. Select youth positions might be available as auxiliary counselors; however, the cabin and facilitating counselors must be 18 years or older.

Time Frame: One week (Monday-Thursday) of summer, typically in July

### **Special Events Team**

Throughout the course of the year we will have individual events such as VBS, Parents Night Out, or other programs. These each require unique volunteer needs but often offer more flexibility. The Kids Director will promote any opportunities as they come available.

### **Nursery Employees**

Nursery employees are the paid staff in the infant and preschool classrooms. Responsibilities include ensuring the safety of children, checking them in and out of our care, serving snacks, monitoring restroom breaks, and helping to handle discipline. In the infant classrooms, employees will handle diaper changes. Must be 18 years or older.

## **Top Ten Volunteer Expectations**

1. **Be prepared and on time!** Arrive 15 minutes early for prayer, team meetings, and so you are ready to greet children as they arrive. Plan on staying a little after the formal end time of programs to help reset the area and supervise until all children are gone. **Many hands make light work!**
2. If you cannot serve on your regular week, please **find a substitute to serve in your place**. Let us know ahead of time if you need help to find a replacement, and use the Sign Up Genius group for scheduling.
3. **Be engaged and write postcards!** Please refrain from using your cell phone while you are serving, and be actively involved with the children. You only get to see them a few hours a month, so please give them your full attention when you serve. One great way to stay engaged is to write a postcard to a child if it is their first time visiting or there is something they are needing with your prayer. Grab a postcard from the folders located near the sign-in clipboards, write a message, then just leave it on the clipboard. We'll mail it for you that week! More details in the 'CREW Cards' section.
4. **Inform the Kids Director of any incidents that happen** (even a little scratch!) and complete an incident report. We want parents to know we tended to their child when an accident happened and the details of the incident.
5. **Stay in touch!** Be sure to join our Remind App and MailChimp email blasts. This is the best way to stay up to date on changes, holidays or special events.
6. **Be above reproach in all interactions; always stay in groups of 3.** You should never be alone with a child. Always have two leaders per child or two children per leader.
7. **Follow the script, but be flexible.** If something isn't working, try it a different way, but please keep the biblical theme/focus as a priority in your adjustments. **Have fun!** Let the kids see your excitement and your passion for God.
8. **Pray** for the children you serve!
9. **Get fed yourself!** Good teaching comes from an overflow of your heart, and we ask that all volunteers commit to attend a Sunday service when not serving with Westminster Kids, and be involved in a Westminster community (such as Gospel Communities).
10. **Respect the diversity and gifts of other volunteers, parents, and kids.** If a problem arises, please discuss it with the Kids Director to help find a solution. Remember we are modeling Christ in all of our interactions.

## **How to Join the Team**

Steps to joining the Westminster Kids Team:

1. Contact the Kids Ministry Director about serving.
2. Complete an interview and background check.
3. If no red flags show up on your background check, a staff member will set you up with serving in a position and equip you with any needed information and materials.
4. Complete Ministry Safe Training.
5. Familiarize yourself with materials and the way the program runs.
6. Read all informational emails and respond with any questions or concerns as needed.
7. Shadow another volunteer to learn the ropes.
8. Get started!

## **Volunteer of the Month**

We highlight a volunteer from every age group each month as our Volunteer of the Month. Awards will be given to a volunteer in the Early Childhood and the Elementary classes each month. Volunteers of the Month will receive a gift card and a special shout-out. Ways to earn Volunteer of the Month:

- Always be on time
- Attend volunteer trainings
- Be prepared for lesson/activities (read before you come!)
- Go the extra mile to make a child feel special (know their names, ask about their week, etc.)
- Respond to scheduling emails in a timely manner

## **How to find a sub**

If you ever have to miss your regularly scheduled shift, it is your responsibility to find a sub to fill in for you. Follow these steps, all subs you ask should serve regularly in Kids Ministry, have a current background check and Ministry Safe training (all subs on our list will have these qualifications).

1. Let the Kids Director or Early Childhood Coordinator know that you will be out but are looking for a sub.
2. Use the contact list to reach out to volunteers and arrange it on the Sign Up Genius.
3. If you are unable to find someone, please let a leader know as soon as possible so that we can make arrangements.

Helpful hints for finding a sub:

- If you can switch weeks with someone and fill in for them, they are often more willing to fill in for you!
- Personal asks are often more effective than general requests.
- A few of our brilliant volunteers found a buddy that can be your go-to switch buddy throughout the year!

## Crew Cards

As a way to encourage our children throughout the week, we're asking you take just a couple of minutes when serving to write a note to a child that is visiting for the first time, it's their birthday, is having an upcoming procedure or performance, or that we haven't seen in a while. Grab a postcard pen from the clipboards if it's their first time here. If it's a special occasion a leader will have one with a note, "It's Johnny's bday Wednesday." / "Susie is having surgery on Friday." Write a quick note, then stick it right back in the folder. We'll mail it for you this week, and our kids will be PUMPED to get a postcard from you! Not sure what to write? Think of CREW and choose one or more of the ideas below!

**C - Congratulate...** Let them know you're proud of them for something! Did you notice a child share with someone else? Did you hear them encourage someone else? Did they pray out loud for the first time? Did they ask questions that showed they're really thinking about what they're learning?

**R - Remind...** Remind kids what they learned today. Ask them if they've thought about the lesson since our meeting. Share your favorite part of the story or the visit.

**E - Encourage...** Did their smile and good attitude brighten your day? Did you notice they seemed sad about something, and you want to let them know you're praying for them? You were a great listener when... I loved that you showed a servant's attitude when... You are so good at....

**W - We missed you...** Write them a little note about how much you miss seeing them!

## Ministry Milestones

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
birth-preschool	Kinder-2nd Grade	3rd-5th Grade
• Know that God loves them deeply	• Understand Baptism	• To begin to expand a role in the church family: ushering, greeting
• Know that we're God's children	• Understand Communion	• Memorize key phrases from worship and biblical passages: The Apostles' Creed, 10 Commandments
• Experience church as a lively, secure place	• Begin to understand God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit	• What worship is and its importance
• Learn key phrases of liturgy: Amen. Thanks be to God.	• Understand God creates & loves our world, we are responsible for it	• The importance of community and the local church
• Know Bible stories that recount Christmas & Easter	• Familiar with Nicene & Apostles' Creed, The Lord's Prayer and the 10 Commandments	• How to study the Bible (SOAP - Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer)
	• How to use the Bible	4 points of Redemption (creation, fall, redemption, glorification)

## **General Policies**

As a volunteer with Westminster Kids and reaching those beyond the church, you agree to be “above reproach” so that the world will see, hear, and respond to the grace of Jesus Christ; and you agree to seek a careful, exemplary Christian lifestyle to encourage other believers and strengthen the church.

You desire and agree that the following statements describe your character as a Christian who desires to serve others:

1. I have accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior.
2. I am a member (or am actively pursuing membership within the next 6 months) at our church.
3. I will serve in harmony with the policies and statement of faith of our church.
4. I am known for a dedicated Christian life, according to the standards of God’s Word, and I work to put sin out of my life so that my influence to others might be helpful and not a hindrance (Romans 14; 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1).
5. I am committed to unity, church teamwork, and biblical respect for church leadership (Philippians 2:1-4; Hebrews 13:7, 17).
6. We hold to the historical understanding of the family, marriage between man and woman and their shared oversight of their family.
7. I am careful even in areas of Christian liberty or where the Bible is silent. (Romans 14)
8. I will be genuinely interested in everyone that I serve.
9. I will respect the privacy of the people I serve, and hold in confidence information obtained in the course of my service.
10. I will also respect the privacy of fellow workers, leaders of various ministries within the church, and the church itself.
11. I, upon completion of my service, will continue to respect the privacy of and maintain confidentiality about those I ministered to, fellow workers, and the church.
12. I will treat my fellow workers with fairness, courtesy, and good faith. I will not exploit the trust of those I serve, my fellow workers, or my supervisors.
13. I will not engage in or condone any form of harassment or discrimination.
14. If I know that a fellow worker has violated biblical standards, I will follow the biblical principle of bringing this directly to that person’s attention. If this fails to change his or her behavior, I will take the next step and ask one or two others to confront the person with me. If this also fails, I will discreetly bring the violation to the attention of church leaders.
15. I will seek assistance for any problem that impairs my ability to serve in this ministry. I have a total commitment to provide excellent service wherever God calls me to minister.



## **General Safety**

Westminster Kids strives to ensure an environment where members and visitors of all ages feel safe and secure. Just as employees in a place of business are on the front lines to ensure safety of customers, the volunteers and staff of the Kids ministry serve on the front lines of ensuring the safety of those we minister to.

**\*All emergencies will follow the Westminster Emergency Action Plans. Every individual serving with kids is required to read the EAP to ensure that every person has a working knowledge of what to do in an emergency. These plans are a flipbook located near each classroom door.**

### General Guidelines

In general, when serving with kids you should strive to:

- Serve using good and common-sense safety practices
- Refrain from unsafe acts that might endanger yourself, the people you serve, or those who minister to you.
- Report any unsafe situations or acts immediately to your supervisor.

### Fire Prevention

- Candles are not allowed in the building, wax warmers may be used.
- Turn off any electrical equipment when not in use.
- Notify your supervisor of any equipment that has cracked or exposed wiring, is causing a shock or emitting sparks, or appears to be a potential fire hazard.

### First Aid

- First-aid supplies are located in many areas of the church building. There are small first aid kits in classrooms and greeter stands.
- AED's are located on the main floor across from the main church office and in the FMC lobby area near the northern stairwell (across from restrooms).
- In the event an injury occurs, please notify the Kids Director, and you will be directed to fill out an Incident Report Form.

### Bathroom/Water Fountain

- Our preference is that we teach children to use the restroom before/after class and not interrupt the lesson to leave the area.
- In the event a child MUST leave the room for the restroom, please make sure an adult escorts them to the bathroom, or is present in the area (such as hallway or lobby area) supervising.
- The same rules apply for the water fountain area.

## Keeping Children Safe

Our desire at Westminster Kids is to draw people to Jesus. That includes even the youngest children who attend our church. We take our responsibility to care for children very seriously. These guidelines are intended to provide a safe and nurturing environment where children can come to a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

It is important for those who work with children to see themselves as partners with parents, seeking to provide quality care and instruction in the ministries and programs of our church. Our guidelines are designed to protect and promote faith formation for each child (and each adult) involved in Westminster Kids.

Everyone who teaches, helps, or cares for children must agree to follow these guidelines. They represent minimum requirements; leaders of individual programs may develop additional guidelines as appropriate to the ministry setting. If a student or parent makes a complaint regarding a teacher or a worker, the Kids Director and a Pastor will review the incident and discuss it with the volunteer or staff involved. Parents will be notified of any actions (such as additional training, leave of absence, or termination) that results from the complaint.

### Architectural precautions (all of Kids Ministry)

- Doors will be open or windows left uncovered so that the view into a classroom remains unobstructed.
- Children will use the bathrooms and water fountains located in their area and a teacher escorts them, but does not enter the bathroom with them. For preschool age children, if they need restroom assistance (such as buttoning pants) this needs to be done outside the restroom area, if this is not possible the adult must have a second unrelated adult with them.

### Digital precautions (for all of Kids Ministry)

- At times phone calls or zoom calls may need to be made with children to maintain relational care. Please notify the Kids Director of any digital communications.
- All calls should take place at the church when able following the same policies as we have for classrooms (i.e. Doors will be open or windows left uncovered so that the view into the room remains unobstructed.).
- When calls must take place off campus (due to scheduling conflicts) two adults need to be present on the call. For example, two leaders or leader and parent.

### Child Security Policies

Drop-off Policy - Children should never be dropped off in a classroom without the teachers present. This is the responsibility of the parents. Volunteers and/or staff need to be in classes a minimum of **15 minutes** before the program begins. Make sure all children who arrive in our care are checked in on the clipboard attendance.

#### Infants - 2nd Graders

The adult who is picking up their child must be a listed guardian on the child's information card, and they need to sign/initial their child out of our care. An older sibling is not permitted to check their younger sibling(s) out of our care.

#### 3rd-5th Graders

These children may be released AFTER the program has officially ended (if lesson finishes early, do not release the child until it is the planned ending time) WITH written permission from the parent. This may be on the child's information card or via text message. They may leave with an older sibling, as long as we have that written from the parent.

This system WILL NOT work if you don't help enforce the rules for pick-up. If the adult is not listed on the child's information card, have written permission from the parent (text is fine) before releasing the child.

## **Safety and Discipline**

We believe that discipline should be primarily positive. We encourage parents and those who work with children to be quick to encourage and affirm positive behavior. We also encourage immediate and consistent response to negative behavior before it escalates into a serious problem. If the parents are present, we will expect them to correct their children when they misbehave. We will also encourage other adults not to ignore a behavior problem when they see it. If someone else speaks to your child, please do not be offended or insulted. If parents are not present, the “Three Strikes, You’re Out” policy will be followed.

Our “I Can” Statements allow our kids to take ownership of their time at Westminster Kids each week and empower them to CHOOSE to do the right thing. Rather than describe all that the kids CAN’T do, these statements describe everything the kids CAN do, and they clearly set out the behavior expectations we have at Westminster Kids. The acronym to help us remember our 5 I Cans is SLLRP (pronounced ‘slurp’).

I Can Stay Safe - This statement covers everything from “keep your hands to yourself” to “don’t climb on that table” and allows kids to take responsibility for their choices and actions.

I Can Listen - With our “I Can Listen” statement, kids know why they are expected to listen to whomever is speaking, whether it is a leader up front or a friend in a small group.

I Can Learn - We want kids to know Westminster Kids is a place where they can learn more about Jesus, His story in the Bible, and how it applies to their lives today. This statement goes closely with listening and reminds kids that they will see, hear, experience, and sometimes even smell new things. Knowing this expectation of learning from the beginning helps kids prepare their hearts and minds for what God has to teach them each week.

I Can Respect - We all know kids need reminders about what respect looks like. Respect is not talking when the teacher is talking. Respect is not talking to your friend during the lesson because then they can’t hear. Respect is not making fun of someone. With this statement, kids are given a friendly reminder to be respectful in a positive way.

I Can Participate - Participation looks different based on the different activities we are doing, but it basically means going with the flow and doing whatever we are doing at the time. If we are worshipping, participating looks like standing and singing praises to God. If we are playing a game, participation looks like joining in and supporting your team. If we are having a lesson, participation looks like sitting quietly and listening to what the teacher has to say. The most important aspect of this statement is having FUN! When kids participate, they have more opportunities to have fun. Yes, it is a place of learning, but it is also a place of joy and excitement!

### **Discipline: 3 Strikes and You’re Out**

If a child is having trouble maintaining the expectations of SLLRP during any program or event, use the following “3 strikes and you’re out” procedure. No physical discipline is allowed.

- 1st Offense: 1 to 2 verbal warnings; remind kids of our 5 “I Cans”
- 2nd Offense: If they keep being disobedient, they will have to sit out of an activity (at this point let the director know this action had to be taken).
- 3rd Offense: Send the child to the director where they may be sent home or will sit out the rest of the time. A conversation will be had with us and their parents, describing their offense, why it was wrong, and how they can make better decisions next time.

## **Important Forms**

If a serious injury occurs, an incident/accident form will be filled out by the witnessing volunteer and a Westminster staff member, and the parent will be notified and followed up. Follow the directions on the form for specific instructions and be sure to complete the form in its entirety. These forms are located near the check-in/out clipboards, and when filled out, should be left on the clipboard for parent signature and filing.

All parents who leave a child in our care MUST have a Westminster Kids medical and media release form or New Kid information form on file in the Kids Ministry Office. All new/visiting children must complete a New Kid Information Form BEFORE leaving their child in our care. These forms are located near the check-in/out clipboards and when filled out should be left on the clipboard for parent signature and filing.

## **Confidentiality**

All information about the children in our program and their families shall remain confidential unless it is determined that harm may come to the child. In that event, the Director of Kids Ministry should be notified immediately, and actions will be taken in line with Church Policy. Further details on the safety and protection of our children can be found in the Safety Policy Manual continued in the rest of this book.