

Westminster Presbyterian Church

Children & Youth Christian Education Committee

Safeguarding Our Children

Recruiting Policies for Children & Youth Volunteers

All Volunteers Working With Children and Youth:

- Anyone volunteering to work with children must be in **regular** attendance at Westminster PC for at least one year *or* be a member. Exceptions may be granted at the CYE Committee's discretion. Acceptable referrals will be required.
- The application process for all volunteers includes completion of the *Volunteer and Background Check Application*, communication with the appropriate ministry staff member, and completion of background check paperwork.
- The background check process includes a criminal record check and child abuse history clearance.
- FBI fingerprinting is required for those who have not lived in PA for the past ten consecutive years.
- Volunteers are first approved by the Youth Christian Education Committee and final approval is given by Session.
- Ministry service can begin when background check certificates are received and Session gives final approval.

Teachers and Ministry Leaders:

- Westminster Presbyterian Church requires anyone who teaches or leads children or youth to be approved by the Youth Christian Education Committee and Session to teach children/youth.
- Approved teachers must be members of Westminster Presbyterian Church, meet the personal qualifications for teachers or leaders, and complete the application and background check process.
- Ministry teaching/leading can begin when background check certificates are received and Session gives final approval.

Expectations and Code of Conduct for Volunteers

1. Volunteers must be seeking to glorify God in obedience to the Word of God.
2. Volunteers must attend worship services at Westminster PC **regularly**.
3. Volunteers must uphold the policies approved by Session and stated in this document.
4. Volunteers must follow the procedures stated in this document to the best of their ability.
5. Volunteers must exhibit appropriate behavior with children and youth by demonstrating a godly example and good attitude, and using language/tone of voice that is appropriate for interaction with children/youth.
6. Volunteers must respect the staff and volunteer leaders in authority over them.
7. Volunteers must arrive in classrooms 10-15 minutes before the scheduled start time.
8. Volunteers must notify the appropriate ministry leader if unable to serve or in case of tardiness.
9. Volunteers must dress modestly and appropriately for the ministry activity taking place.

Procedural Policies for Working with Children

Two-Deep Policy (Birth—6th Grade):

At least two adult volunteers approved by Session are to be in the classroom at all times. An adult is defined as someone who is at least 18 years old. If one adult must leave the room, the ministry leader in charge should be notified immediately and the classroom door kept open until two approved adults are present.

ONLY *scheduled* volunteers who have been ***approved*** by WPC's Session are allowed in nurseries, classrooms, (birth – 6th Grade). If a younger student needs a parent in the room with them and the parent is not an approved volunteer, the parent may sit with their child, but they are not considered a second approved adult and should only interact with their own child.

Missionaries and guest speakers must be approved by the ministry leader before being scheduled. In this case, two adults who have been approved by Session must be present at all times with the children while the guest is in the classroom (birth – 12th grade).

Volunteer Arrival Policy:

Volunteers should arrive 10-15 minutes early, as determined by the ministry leader, to their assigned room to ensure two adults are present at all times. If you are going to be late please contact the ministry leader right away so the rooms can be properly staffed.

Open Door Policy:

At no time shall any volunteer have a one-on-one meeting with a student behind closed doors; and for your protection, notify another approved adult volunteer or staff member prior to the meeting and keep the door partially open. When taking a child to the restroom, leave the restroom door partially open.

Church-Sponsored Events:

When childcare is required for a church-sponsored event not defined as children's ministry, (i.e. women's Bible study, missions conference, ESL, refugee ministry, weddings, funerals, etc.) that uses the church facilities, two approved adults age 18 or older must be present to enforce safeguard policies. Church-sponsored events held off-site that are not defined as children's ministry are not required to have two approved adults present for childcare.