

THE
TREEHOUSE KIDS

Play
Book

**THE VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK WITH EVERYTHING
YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SERVING WITH TREE HOUSE KIDS**

Tree House Volunteer,

We are absolutely thrilled that you've chosen to join the Tree House 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 children's ministry servants have a large mission field.

What you do at Tree House 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 Faith Arlington 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 Tree House Kids.

We do our best to make volunteering at Tree House 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 Tree House Kids, and we hope you'll utilize the volunteer hub. This is a place for you to write us a note about supplies running low, issues that should be addressed or even volunteer shout outs.

Thank you so much for all you do to make Tree House Kids the best possible ministry for our children. 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,

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Top Ten Volunteer Expectations

- 1) **Be prepared and on time!** You will have access to the weekly lessons in advance so you have plenty of time to review the lesson before Sunday morning. Head to the volunteer hub to grab a quick goodie, pick up your lanyard and head back to your classroom 15 minutes before the service starts so you are ready to greet children as they arrive.
- 2) Plan on **staying after service until the next volunteer arrives** or for the 11:00 service until the last child is picked up and you have reset the classroom. Volunteers are responsible for helping us clean up each classroom and re-set the rooms before leaving.
- 3) If you cannot serve on your regular week, please **find a substitute to serve in your place**. Let us know ahead of time, and use Planning Center Online or text or email Robin or Cameron to let us know that you will not be there and who you have found to fill in your spot.
- 4) **Be engaged!** 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 couple of hours a month, so please give them your full attention when you serve.
- 5) **Stay in touch!** Be sure to join our the Tree House Kids Volunteer Facebook Group (page 6) and Planning Center Online so we can all stay in touch! Let us know when something isn't working so we can solve the problem.
- 6) **Always stay in groups of 3.** You should never be alone with a child. Always have 2 leaders per child or at least 2 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.
- 8) **Pray** for the children you serve! You never know what the kids you are ministering to are going through or what their family dynamics are. You have an amazing opportunity to pray over them when there may not be many people in their lives doing that.
- 9) **Get fed yourself!** Good teaching comes from an overflow of your heart, and we ask that all volunteers attend a Sunday service when not serving with Tree House Kids.
- 10) **Have fun!** Let the kids see your excitement and your passion for God.

Who's on the Team?

Nursery - 1st Grade

Nursery Adult Volunteers

Serve once or twice a month in the nursery room. Responsibilities include changing diapers, engaging our babies and toddlers in faith activities, assisting with snack time, and helping our babies learn that church is a fun and safe place. Must be 18 years or older.

Toddler Adult Volunteers

Serve once or twice a month in the ones, twos or threes classrooms. Responsibilities include changing diapers, leading children and other volunteers through the morning schedule, and acting as overall leader. Preparation includes previewing the lesson activities via the Hyfi website prior to Sunday morning. Must be 18 years or older.

Large Group Leader

Serve once or twice a month in the nest, leading the combined group of Preschool-1st grade in their worship and bible lesson. Preparation includes previewing the large group bible lesson via the Hyfi website prior to Sunday morning. Must be 18 years or older.

Preschool - 1st Grade Adult Volunteers

Serve once or twice a month in the 4's/5's, Kindergarten or 1st grade classrooms. Responsibilities include starting in the nest and assisting with large group crowd control, encouraging participation during worship and the Bible lesson, and breaking out into specific age classrooms to lead kids through snack, crafts, games and reinforcement of bible lesson. Preparation includes previewing the craft and activities via Hyfi website prior to Sunday morning. Must be 18 years or older.

Student Volunteers (Preschool - 1st Grade)

Serve once or twice a month in the ones, twos or threes, 4's/5's, Kindergarten or 1st Grade classrooms. Responsibilities include starting in the nest and assisting with large group crowd control, encouraging participation during worship and the Bible lesson, and breaking out into specific age classrooms to assist with craft, snack, and bathroom breaks, and engaging with our preschoolers as they discover more about God. Must be 6th grade or older.

Nursery - 1st Grade Greeter

Serve once or twice a month at our elementary check in station. Responsibilities include being the first friendly face families see! You will assist in helping families use the iPads for check in, high fiving and greeting kiddos, answering questions families and helping the kids feel seen, loved and valued as they walk in. Must be high school or older.

2nd - 5th Grade

Large Group Leader

Serve once or twice a month in the Vive Room, leading the combined group of 2nd - 5th grade in their worship and bible lesson. Preparation includes previewing the large group bible lesson via the Hyfi website prior to Sunday morning. Must be 18 years or older.

Team Time Adult Volunteers

Serve once or twice a month in the either the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, or 5th grade class. Responsibilities include large group crowd control, encouraging participation during worship and the Bible lesson, and leading your specific age group through their team time activities. Preparation includes previewing the team time lessons via the Hyfi website prior to Sunday morning. Must be 18th years old or older.

Student Volunteers (2nd-5th grade)

Serve once or twice a month in either the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, or 5th grade class. Responsibilities include assisting with large group crowd control, encouraging participation during worship and the Bible lesson, and breaking out into specific age groups to assist with craft, snack, and bathroom breaks, and engaging with our kids as they discover more about God. Must be in High School.

Elementary Greeter

Serve once or twice a month at our elementary check in station. Responsibilities include being the first friendly face families see! You will assist in helping families use the iPads for check in, high fiving and greeting kiddos, answering questions families and helping the kids feel seen, loved and valued as they walk in. Must be high school or older.

How to Join the Team

- 1) Contact the Children's Ministry Director/Preschool Coordinator about serving.
- 2) Complete background check request form and submit to Tree House Kids.
- 3) If no red flags show up on your background check, a staff member will set you up in Planning Center Online, the online scheduling system we use to communicate with our volunteers.
- 4) Familiarize yourself with Planning Center Online and confirm online profile information.
- 5) Read all informational emails and respond with any questions or concerns as needed.
- 6) Get assigned to a volunteer team.
- 7) Get started!

How to Find a Sub

If you ever have to miss your regularly scheduled Sunday, it is your responsibility to find a sub to fill in for you. Follow one or more of these steps to find a sub.

- 1) Let the Tree House Children's Director know that you will be out but that you are looking for a sub by certain day of the week. Reach out to Robin or Cameron via text or email.
- 2) Use the Sub contact list to reach out to volunteers in your age group who serve on other weeks.
- 3) Post on the Tree House Kids Volunteers Facebook Group (see page 9) requesting a sub. Be sure to include the date and age group you need a sub for, and if there are dates you're available to switch, share that too!
- 4) Once you find a sub, notify the Tree House Children's Director of the changes so we can make the appropriate scheduling changes in Planning Center Online.

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!
- Find another volunteer in your age group that serves on a different week, and ask them to be your go-to switch buddy throughout the year!

Tree House Kids Volunteers Facebook Group

The TreeHouse Kids Volunteers Facebook Group is a secret group, meaning you can request permission to join, but only the Tree House Children's Director can approve your request. All posts in this group are private and only seen by members of the group. Volunteers can request to join the Facebook Group after training. Find this group by searching "Tree House Kids Volunteers" in your Facebook search browser. If you do not see the group listed, please contact the Director immediately. We use this secret group to:

- Request subs/switching weeks
- Share news or funny stories from time with our kids
- Make announcements about upcoming events
- Have fun together!

Volunteer Hub!

We have added a space for our volunteers! When you arrive **15 minutes before your scheduled time** make sure you stop by the resource room down the hallway in the preschool area. Here you will find:

- A morning treat
- Forms and possible announcements
- Lanyards
- Quick connection time with other volunteers

Enjoy the space just for you but make sure you get back to your classroom **15 minutes before service time starts.**

Planning Center Online Training

Planning Center Online is the online system we use to schedule and communicate with our volunteers. Knowing how to use PCO is an important skill to have as a Tree House Volunteer! We ask that each volunteer download this app on your phone. This is how we will be communicating schedules and scheduling changes. You can watch a video for how to access and use the planning center here.



Safety & Discipline

The 5 “I Cans” of Tree House Kids

Our “I Can” Statements allow our kids to take ownership of their time at Tree House 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 Tree House 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 they are expected to listen to whomever is speaking, whether it is a leader up front or a friend in small group.

I Can Learn – We want kids to know that Tree House 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 “I Can” 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 our “I Can Respect” 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, participation 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 “I Can” 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 policy

If a child is having trouble maintaining the expectations of SLLRP at any Tree House Kids or Faith Arlington Church event, use the following “3 strikes policy. No physical discipline is allowed.



- 1st offense – 1 to 2 verbal warnings; remind children of our 5 I Cans
- 2nd offense – If they keep being disobedient, they will have to sit out of an activity
- 3rd offense – Send the child to the director where they may be sent to parent or will sit out of the rest of the service or event.
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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 and in that event, the Director of Children’s Ministry should be notified immediately and actions will be taken in line with Faith Arlington Church’s procedures.

Incident/Accident Forms

If a serious injury, physical altercation, or other disciplinary issue occurs, a Child Incident Form will be filled out by Tree House Staff or Volunteer and the parent will be notified and followed-up with. Follow the directions on the form for specific instructions and be sure to complete the form in its entirety. These forms are located in volunteer hub and should be turned in to a Tree House staff member.

	Child Incident Report		
Child’s Name: _____		Date/Time: _____	
Staff/Volunteer Name: _____			
It happened:	<input type="radio"/> Inside	<input type="radio"/> Outside	
Type of Incident:	<input type="radio"/> Injury	<input type="radio"/> Illness	<input type="radio"/> Behavior
Description of Incident: _____ _____ _____			
Actions taken: _____			
Additional Comments: _____ _____			
Printed Name of Staff/Volunteer _____		Signature of Staff/Volunteer _____	

Faith Arlington Church

SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

“FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE VOLUNTEERS, CHILDREN & YOUTH AT FAITH ARLINGTON CHURCH”

Why do we need a Safety Policy?

- We want to provide our children and youth in our care a safe and secure environment.
- We have a biblical command to keep our children and youth safe. (Matthew 18:5-6)
- We need to protect volunteers against false allegations of abuse.

Church Policy Statement of Covenant

- Faith Arlington Church will screen all paid and volunteer workers
- Faith Arlington Church will establish operating procedures
- Faith Arlington Church will train all workers (see training details below)
- Faith Arlington Church will have a reporting system (see reporting details below)

Volunteer Requirements

- Consent to run background check
- Complete background check authorization
- Pass the background check with no red flags
- Attend Training on church policy and procedures

Church Staff Responsibilities

- Provide background check authorization form to all volunteers
- Make sure resulting information is kept confidential
- Conduct training, instructing volunteers on policy and procedures
- Spot check / supervise volunteers to see procedures are being followed
- Review policy and procedures annually at the beginning of each school year with all past and current volunteers
- Collect and maintain updated medical and media release forms for students and children on an annual basis

Background Check Overview

- All Staff and Volunteers will be required to submit to a periodic background with a frequency as required by Faith Arlington Church Leadership.
- Any individual with a molestation inquiry or charge will be deemed unable to volunteer with Children or Youth at Faith Arlington Church.
- Any individual with an alcohol or drug related charges on their criminal history check in the previous 3 years will be deemed unable to volunteer
- Any Individual with more than three incidents on their Motor Vehicle Report in previous 3 years will not be allowed to drive children and students

- Any individual with an alcohol or drug related Motor Vehicle Report violations in the previous 3 years will be deemed unable to drive our children / students

Staff and Volunteer Training Components

- Child Abuse – It does happen.
 1. 1 in 16 children suffer from sexual abuse.
 2. Over 25% of abused children are under the age of three while over 45% of abused children are under the age of five.
 3. 3 million reports of child abuse are made each year in the U.S.
 4. 90% of child sexual abuse victims know the perpetrator in some way. 68% are abused by a family member.
- Types of Abuse
 5. Physical - the use of physical force that may result in bodily injury, physical pain, or impairment
 6. Sexual - any sexual act with a child performed by an adult or an older child
 7. Emotional - any act including confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, infantilization, or any other treatment which may diminish the sense of a child's identity, dignity, and self-worth
 8. Neglect - a type of maltreatment that refers to the failure by the caregiver to provide needed, age-appropriate care although financially able to do so or offered financial or other means to do so
 9. Ritual – abuse of children as part of rituals associated with occult or religious practices
- Profile of a Child Molester
- Known by child 80% of the time
- Takes place in ongoing relationship
- Between 20 – 30 years old
- 20% abuse sexually before age 18
- Child abusers are often married with children of their own
- Reporting System
 1. Accidents – when an unintentional act occurs and a child is hurt; a copy of this form is given to parents
 2. Incidents – When an action is observed that does not require reporting to DFCS, but does require attention; a copy of this form may or may not go to parents
 3. Suspected Abuse – When one sees, has been told of, or suspects child has been abused in some way
 4. Fill out the appropriate form above and turn into Director of Children's Ministry
 5. A copy of these forms should be present for all children's events
- How a Report is made when questionable behavior occurs:
 1. Accident – Witness gives written report to Staff member, who takes appropriate action, giving the parents a copy of the form

2. Incident – Witness writes report. Staff speaks with involved parties, offering training or counseling if appropriate
3. Suspected Abuse –
 - Report is filed with Department of Family and Children's Services (DFACS), the agency responsible for investigation alleged incident.
 - Police are called if immediate danger is suspected
 - Pastors are informed
 - Leadership notifies Church Attorney and Insurance Company
 - Only pre-designated person speaks with the media
 - All information should be kept confidential to protect involved persons
 - Pastoral support should be offered to both the victim and the accused
 - Procedures to protect children and those who work with them (see below)
 - Each volunteer will read and sign a statement of agreement with the above information and signed document will be kept on file

General Operating Procedures

- Two Person Rule – no adult may be alone with a child at any time; two adults must accompany a child alone or one adult may accompany two or more children at a time
- Windowed Doors or Open Doors – doors to classrooms and restrooms must remain open at all times; if a door must be closed, there should be windows that allow visibility into the room
- No one under 18 in charge – even if a student is teaching, an adult must be present in each classroom at all times
- Four years older than supervised group – no volunteer may serve an age group less than 4 years their minor
- Volunteers and staff will wear name tags or identifying clothing – volunteers will wear easily-identifiable name tags or lanyards that denote their role as a volunteer with the children's ministry
- Appropriate touch policies
- Release child to appropriate adult only (or youth over 14 years old) –only a parent or legal guardian may pick up a sibling; youth under 14 will not be allowed to pick up or drop off a child

Diapering and Restroom Activity

- Diapering
 - Done by the designated Nursery Lead Volunteer
 - At no time is a child left on a table without an adult standing at the table.
 - Diaper will be changed, baby's area cleaned with a wipe and powder or lotion applied only if parents provided for it.
 - Old diaper will be folded and placed into a diaper pail kept in the changing room.
 - A fresh diaper will be applied and the child will be redressed.
 - Another adult (age 18 or older) present
 - Done in a visible area

- Toddler and Preschoolers
 - Adult supervises, but allows child independence
 - Potty “accidents” requiring helping with two adults witnessing
 - Open door/open stall
 - 2 adults at all times
 - Ensure proper handwashing
 - Inform parent

Restroom visits with “bigger kids” (Elementary)

- Tell another adult that you and child are leaving to go to the restroom.
- Do not assist child unless there is an emergency
- A group of 3 at all times (2 children & 1 adult or 2 adults & 1 child)
- Inform parents of accidents/assistance

Discipline Basics:

- Use positive words
- Establish rules and expectations
- Involve church staff when necessary
- 3 strikes policy
 - 1st offense – 1 to 2 verbal warnings
 - 2nd offense – If they keep being disobedient, they will have to sit out of an activity
 - 3rd offense – Send the child to the director where they may be sent to parent or will sit out of the rest of the morning.

Why is all this necessary?

- We **MUST** protect our children and youth from a lifetime of pain and injury causing loss of spirit, trust and faith.
- We **MUST** make sure our staff, volunteers and elders are supported in case of frivolous lawsuit.
- We **MUST** prevent loss of millions of dollars in legal fees and damages to victims.
- We **MUST** not cause one child or one adult to become a victim!

Policy for Protection of Children at Faith Arlington Volunteer Acknowledgement

I, (Print Name) _____, sign and affirm I read the above **Policy for Protection of Children at Faith Arlington** in its entirety, and that I will faithfully follow and abide by all policies, procedures and guidelines pertaining to ministry leadership of children, youth and/or special needs individuals and the ministry role I am assigned.

Signed:

Printed Name

Date:

Signature

Date: