
"Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

1 Peter 2:10



YOUR
CHILD'S
SAFETY AT
MERCY PCA

QUESTIONS?

For more information,
including a full copy of child
protection policies, contact
office@mercypres.org.

mercypres.org
(434) 237-1370

Mercy
Presbyterian Church



As a body of believers committed to reflecting the mercy we've received from God to others, we consider child/minor protection and safety in our place of worship and throughout our ministries to be of great importance.

We have consulted with GRACE (**G**odly **R**esponse to **A**buse in the **C**hristian **E**nvironment; www.netgrace.org) to establish policies regarding all of our ministries to minors, ensuring best practices for compassionate care and advocacy for the vulnerable individuals that gather with us.

ALL MINISTRIES TO MINORS

- All staff and volunteers background checked.
- Training provided to all volunteers on policies and best practices.
- Two unrelated adults present at all times. Volunteers never alone with a minor.
- Childcare adult/child ratios in accordance with legal standards set by the State of Virginia.

NURSERY & PRESCHOOL (AGES 0-5)

- Child registration system in use, including labels with parent contact information.
- Child pickup by approved caretakers only.
- Allergy-related limitations taken into account during snack time.
- **No diapering/changing (parents contacted to change children).**
- Bathroom use: Parents encouraged to take children beforehand. No volunteer will enter bathroom stall with child (including to assist with wiping or clothing). **Parents contacted to assist if needed.**
- All discipline conducted with a shepherd's heart, with verbal correction as needed. Parents contacted for assistance with continued misbehavior.
- Children may not remain in childcare if they have had any contagious symptoms within 24 hours, including diarrhea, vomiting, runny nose, discharge around the eyes, and coughing/sneezing.
- **Incident and Child Safety Reports completed in the case of injury, child-on-child issues, disciplinary measures requiring parent communication, and any policy violation by volunteers.**

GRADE SCHOOL (1ST-5TH GRADES)

- **Pick-up:**
 - Children in 3rd-5th grade are able to be dismissed on their own from onsite services, gatherings, and activities.
 - Children in 2nd grade and younger may only be dismissed to a parent, guardian, or approved person 12 years of age or older.
 - For offsite events all children will be dismissed to a parent or approved adult.
- **Bathroom use:**
 - Children 3rd grade and older are permitted to use the bathroom on their own with permission from staff, ministry leader, or volunteer.
 - Children 2nd grade and younger may be escorted to the bathroom by an adult if it is a public space. The adult will remain outside the bathroom, within hearing of the child.
- **Behavioral issues:**
 - Will be addressed verbally, making parents aware of the issue.
 - Bullying, name-calling, and any kind of physical violence or harassment is not tolerated. If any of these things happen, parents are informed immediately and an incident report is completed.

