

# Security Policies

**Seeing the need for a safe and secure learning environment is a priority in preschool ministry.**

**All churches, regardless of size, need clear policies related to security.** The teachers who receive boys and girls are very often not the teachers who release them. Consequently, some teachers may be unfamiliar with the preschoolers' parents. Advantages of security measures include added protection for the preschoolers, some degree of legal protection for the individual and the church, and increased parent and leader confidence.

**Establishing security procedures will help ensure that preschoolers entrusted to us are cared for in a safe and secure manner.**

**Steps taken may include the following:**

- using a Sign-In/Out sheet when parents bring and pick up their preschooler
- identification system for releasing preschoolers to authorized adults only
- only preschoolers and teachers in the classroom
- requiring preschool room doors be closed at all times and that a window be in each door.
- providing a minimum of two teachers in each room at all times
- asking preschool teachers to wear name badges
- providing a name label for each child and their belongings
- telephone access
- limiting access to preschool area
- using security patrols or guards

**When adopting security procedures, a church must determine what will fit its needs.**

**Communicating the safety benefits of security procedures** helps enhance the understanding of the need. Churches entrusted with the care of preschoolers are held to a "higher standard of care." An intentional plan of carefully formulated and implemented policies provides dual protection. Preschoolers will be provided with a safe and secure environment while teachers will less likely be falsely accused.

**Using a Sign-In/Out sheet** is an important step in a church's security plan. Upon arrival preschoolers are registered at the door using a Sign-In sheet. Parents are to indicate where they can be located in case of an emergency. A Sign-In/Out sheet is instrumental in determining which preschoolers attend which sessions, what room they are in, who is teaching and where parents can be located. Teachers are also encouraged to sign in/out. Releasing preschoolers to the authorized adult requires that some type of identification system be in place. This is one of the most important steps in a security plan. When a preschooler is brought to their classroom, the parent or adult guardian is given some form of identification that they keep and then show when they come to pick up the preschooler at the end of the session. The identification system indicates that they are the only person who can take the child from the room and helps ensure that the preschooler is released only to the authorized adult. There are several types of identification systems: card, ticket, or tag. Each system works on the same basic premise. The identification name, number, symbol, etc. will match the child being picked up. The child can only be released to the person who has the matching identification system. Pagers are another form of identification that serves two purposes: parents can be reached in case of emergencies and they return the pager when picking up their child. The identification system should be followed at all times when there are preschoolers in the church's care.\*

**Involving the church body in implementing security procedures is a positive step.** Once procedures have been decided upon they should be put in writing and presented to the church for approval. Church approval will add credibility to the security plan and support for those who will be responsible to follow it. When appropriate procedures are consistently followed for all preschool programs, your church is in the best position to protect preschoolers and safeguard teachers.

**Training of all preschool leaders and parents of preschoolers is a must** in implementing any security procedure. The procedures must be well understood by everyone who uses the preschool facilities. With a security plan in place, the church and the teachers remain accountable to the parent and release preschoolers only when procedures are followed.

Yes, we are to trust God to care for us all. Yet, surely He expects us to be responsible in meeting the special security needs of preschoolers, who must depend upon adults for their safety. **May we seek God's guidance and trust Him to provide wisdom as we teach preschoolers in a safe and secure environment.**

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\* Commercial tags and security cards may be purchased from NLS Specialties, PO Box 1897, Kennesaw GA 30144, (770)422-7867.

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