



Nursery & Toddler Ministry Handbook

Nursery Childcare ■ Toddler Childcare

Effective April 2, 2006

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A Publication of New Life Youth & Children's Ministries

New Life Church of God, Inc.

Benton, Illinois

The Mission

The Nursery/Toddler Ministries of New Life Church exists to provide numerous services to our church guests, members, staff and leadership. First of all, it provides a place to minister to the very specialized needs of the very young children in our congregation. We have a scriptural admonition to care for and instruct children in the ways of the Lord.

“From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise...”

— Psalm 8:2

“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”

— Proverbs 22:6

“Yet you brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you even at my mother’s breast. From birth I was cast upon you; from my mother’s womb you have been my God.”

— Psalm 22:9-10

“...Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”

— Matthew 19:14

The first two years of a child’s life are very crucial in the development of the child. Major developments take place physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. In addition to satisfying baby and toddlers physical needs, the Nursery and Toddler staff can respond to the great potential of “the most formative years of life” and satisfy some spiritual needs as well.

The nursery and toddler classes ministers to parents and the church body as a whole by helping to remove the distractions that a crying or active child can cause to worship or a devotional setting. Who knows how many parents of small children or other nearby worshippers may have accepted Christ or been encouraged in the Lord if it had not been for the untimely fussing, crying, or playing of a young child. God only knows the benefits derived by not forcing a mother to wrestle with a small child while trying to worship, or receive or provide ministry.

Finally, few things can provide a better impression of your church program to young families than a clean, attractive and well organized nursery/toddler ministry.

The Scope of the Ministry

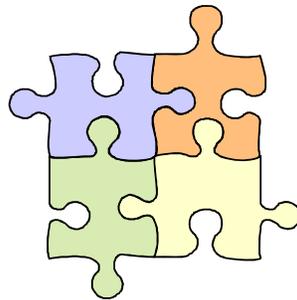
Initially, the Nursery/Toddler Ministries will be limited to providing staffed, in-house nursery care for baby's age 6 months to toddler's age 36 months.

As of the printing of this hand book, the nursery/toddler room is staffed only during Sunday Morning Worship Service (10:00 a.m. to 12:15p.m.)

The Nursery/Toddler room will receive children beginning thirty minutes prior to services for children of staff personnel, and fifteen minutes prior to services for the general church.

Nursery/Toddler Staff

- Nursery/Toddler Director
- Nursery/Toddler Associate Director
- Approved Volunteer Staff Members



Building God's Kingdom...
...One Little Piece at a Time

Nursery/Toddler Job Descriptions

Job Title: Nursery/Toddler Director

The Scope: Reports directly to the Women's Ministries and Pastor Pat Joplin. This position is to oversee the total Nursery/Toddler Ministries Department and to schedule and direct the activities of all other Nursery/Toddler Department staff members.

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Responsible for monitoring Nursery/Toddler services to ensure that policies and Procedures are being properly observed.
2. To communicate the needs, direction, changes, etc., of the Nursery/Toddler Ministry to the Church Ministries Board.
3. Responsible to communicate policies to the general church congregation and to new parents and guests in particular.
4. Assists in recruiting, training, and motivating all Nursery volunteers.
5. Handles all problems between parents, children, and workers. May involve Church Ministries Director or Pastor if situation warrants.

Nursery/Toddler Job Descriptions

Job Title: Nursery/Toddler Associate Director

The Scope: Reports directly to the Nursery/Toddler Director. This position is to oversee the routine operation of the Nursery/Toddler Ministries and to schedule Nursery/Toddler Department staff.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Responsible to create and post a monthly work schedule for all department workers one week prior to the start of each month.
2. Responsible for the proper maintenance of records for each child in the Nursery/Toddler Department.
3. Responsible for maintenance of supplies.
4. Assists in recruiting, training, and motivating all Nursery/Toddler volunteers.
5. Responsible for training of all paid nursery staff. This includes child care, first aid and CPR.

Nursery/Toddler Job Descriptions

Job Title: Nursery/Toddler Worker

The Scope: Reports to the Nursery/Toddler Ministries Director. Oversees all the activities of the nursery and toddler services.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Arrive early (more than fifteen minutes prior to service/activity starting time), making sure that the room and all necessary supplies are organized and available for service.
2. Always begin with prayer with all Nursery/Toddler staff and workers.
3. Greet each child and parent with a confident smile.
4. Have new guests fill out a “New Life Church Nursery/Toddler Record Sheet”.
5. Have each parent/guardian sign-in their child and receive baby/toddler only after all necessary paperwork is completed and you have received specific instruction concerning the child and his/her care.
6. Must complete all required training (child care, first aid, CPR and background check).
7. Follow discipline procedures as outlined in this manual.
8. Follow health guidelines as outlined in this manual.
9. NEVER leave children unattended for any reason.
10. Follow step-by-step procedures as outlined in this manual.
11. Be the last to leave, making sure toys and supplies are put away and room is neat.
12. Always be neat, clean, and modest in your appearance.
13. Return child to a parent or adult guardian, never to other children.
14. Appointed workers and helpers will need to wear a smock to identify her as a *Helper/Worker*

Qualifications

1. Must be at least eighteen years of age.
2. Must have completed a Nursery/Toddler Worker’s Application.
3. Must have attended New Life Church for at least six months.
4. Must be willing to submit to a background check for insurance purposes.

Nursery/Toddler Job Descriptions

Job Title: Nursery/Toddler *Helper*

The Scope: Reports to the Nursery/Toddler *Worker* on duty. Serves as a *Helper* to the Nursery/Toddler *Worker* and shares designated tasks as assigned by the Nursery/Toddler *Worker*. The nursery helper may also temporarily relieve the nursery/toddler *Worker* while he or she fulfills another ministry obligation (such as choir).

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Arrive early (more than fifteen minutes prior to service/activity starting time), making sure that the room and all necessary supplies are organized and available for service.
2. NEVER leave children unattended for any reason.
3. Never release children from the nursery. This is the responsibility of the *Worker*.
4. Always be neat, clean, and modest in appearance.
5. Appointed workers will need to wear a smock to identify her as a *Helper/Worker*.
6. Only appointed *Helpers/Workers* are to be in the Nursery/Toddler room.
7. Always cheerfully accept and carry out activities and chores as assigned by the Nursery/Toddler *Worker* on duty.

Qualifications

1. Must be at least 16 years of age.
2. Must have completed a Nursery/Toddler helper's Application.
3. Must have attended New Life Church regularly for at least six months.
4. Must be willing to submit to a background check for insurance purposes.
5. Must attend a training class.

Step by Step Procedures for Nursery/Toddler Room

At the present time the nursery/toddler rooms will only be staffed on Sunday morning.

The following procedures take you through a nursery service, step by step. They include important details, suggestions and guidelines that are the result of YEARS of experience and prayer. You will always need to remain flexible and sensitive to the Holy Spirit, but we believe these basic ideas will prove tremendously fruitful and helpful to you. Read them over regularly, more than once!

Nursery Class: ages 6 months - 18 months

Toddler Class: ages 18 months - 36 months

Pray – Before you enter the room, make sure you and every person who enters with you has prayed and received instruction from the Nursery/Toddler Staff.

CD Players – Turn on soft worship or instrumental tapes. This has strong influence on the atmosphere of your room. Music affects babies and workers alike! .

Registration/Check in – Use your sign-in sheet! ONLY the Nursery Worker should receive and release child to guardian or parent. Fill in all spaces on the sheet BEFORE you take the child into the room. All conversations with the parent should be finished BEFORE taking the child. Nothing is worse than trying to get information from a parent whose child is already in the room and screaming for Mommy’s or Daddy’s attention while he/she is trying to give you information.

No sibling may sign in the child unless the sibling is 18 years or older.

While you take the information, talk to the child as well as the parent. This causes both of them to relax. When the child senses that the parent is comfortable, the child relaxes too.

Then you’ve already eliminated half the problems. Make sure bottles and pacifiers are identified with child’s name. Get all special instructions and make sure they are NOT in cloth diapers.

Parents/guardian will be greeted by the Nursery/Toddler Receptionist. Every Sunday parents will be asked to sign in their child. A name tag will be placed on the child as well as their belongings. As the parent/guardian checks in their child, he/she will also fill out an information card to be put in the Nursery/Toddler card catalog. This information/registration card will list such information as to the parents/guardian of the child and will also give the names of three other people other than the parent who may pick up the child from the nursery/toddler room. A health check list must also be filled out by the parents/guardian.

Each child and parent/guardian will be assigned a laminated number upon registration/check in. This number will be flashed on the screen in the sanctuary for the

parent/guardian of that child to come to the nursery/toddler room. In order for that child to be released from the nursery/toddler room, he/she must be picked by the person who checked the child in or by someone whose name is listed on the registration card. That person **MUST** have the matching laminated number.

Receiving Child into Room - Explain to the parent that you are going to take the child **QUICKLY** and that she should hand baby over, turn and step back. The result – **FEAR!** The child senses the parent’s hesitation and then views the worker as the alien who its trying to separate them. He begins to cry, the parent gets more nervous, and the child and parents in line all start worrying too. A chain reaction beings and children already in the room join in the crying.

For new parents especially, explaining the above will help them cooperate with you and make taking the child into the room smooth and **PEACEFUL!** Also, explain that many children still cry for a short while upon entering the room anyway. Let the parent know that this a “crying” chance for several weeks before they learn that it doesn’t work. If the parent still leaves them, they give up and come happily into the room. They also learn that its fun and most regular attendees are excited and anxious to get in and enjoy the service!

If a parent is especially concerned about the little one crying too long, advise that they can check with one the supervisors in a little while. Be sure to tell them **NOT TO POP THEIR HEAD INTO THE ROOM.** If child sees that familiar face, regardless of the fun they are having, they are ready to leave and we are back to square one again. The supervisor can come in and check for the parents.

Only very rarely would we ever call a parent from the service for a crying child. Usually that is the goal the child hopes to accomplish by crying. We certainly do not want to teach them that crying is a successful means of getting their way. If, however, a child is crying constantly and in a manner that may cause them physical harm, we certainly would call the parent via the large screen in the sanctuary. Our preference would always be to not pull the parents from the service.

Once the Baby/Toddler is in the room – Hug the child, talk to the child, show him different pictures and point out children and workers in the room. Put him/her down near the toy box or some other object of distraction in the room. Don’t put the child immediately into the group of other children. This tends to frighten them. Putting the child near lets he/she choose to join in at his own discretion and pace. He/she does not feel threatened, but curiosity sets in and he will quickly mix with the others.

If the child desires to remain alone and play by alone, respect that and let him/her. The main object of this time period is for the child to completely overcome fear and feel peaceful and safe in the room.

Most regular attendees no longer need this special treatment and run over immediately to join the fun. However, new attendees sometime require more consoling and hugging.

Find another parent image among your workers and assign them to give this child undivided attention until he calms down. If they continue for any length of time, switch to another worker so that you don't wear them out.

Bibs – should be put on the baby by a worker to whom this task was assigned before service. They should be put on upon arrival and left on until pick up (in most cases). Often parents have dinner or Grandma visiting plans after service. They appreciate picking up the same clean and fresh smiling baby they left!

Diapers – should be changed once all babies have been received into the room. Assign one worker to assist you and then begin at the top of the sign-in sheet. Those who were signed in first have been there the longest are probably the wettest as well. Be sure to check the correct column on the sign-up sheet as you change each baby. Baby powder, wipes, Kleenex, and gloves are provided at the changing table. Hands of the worker and child's hands must be washed after each changing and the changing area is also to be sanitized after each child.

In the Toddler classroom, if a diaper needs to be changed, the parent/guardian of the child will be responsible for the changing. The parent/guardian will be notified by their laminated number flashing on the screen in the sanctuary. The Toddler classroom teacher will meet you at the door with your child. You may change your child in the feeding/nursing room number 151. Please do not leave a messy diaper. Dispose of it in a plastic bag (provided at changing table area) and discard in wastebasket. No diaper changing in toddler classroom is permitted. Please disinfect and sanitize area after changing diaper.

Feeding Times - The toddler room will have a specific feeding/snack time. NO sippy cups in the toddler class. The nursery will have specific information on each child's feeding times.

Nursery Classroom Schedule - Nursery classroom will use blocks, rings baby gyms, pillows to lean on or sit up on. They will need 15 minutes of floor time activities. During floor time the worker and helper will talk, sing, and play with the child.

Toddler Classroom Schedule -

10:00 - 10:45 AM	Free Play (Children will pick up the toys)
10:45 - 11: 00	Wash Hands
11:00 - 11:15	Snack Time
11:15 - 11:30	Lesson
11:30 - 11:45	Craft, Game, Songs
11:45 - 12:00 PM	Free Play/Video, game (Children will pick up the toys)

Pick up Time - Please Pick up your child immediately following the service and no later than 12:15 p.m.

As of the printing of this handbook, the nursery is staffed only during Sunday Morning Worship Service (10:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.)

Again, only the Worker should return the babies to their parents. Have any handouts or notes ready at the door to explain to the parent as they pick up their child. Be sure they know what their baby/toddler was taught and have a GOOD REPORT for them. Say something special about their child.

Take note during the classroom time of something unique or special their child said or did and share it with the parent. Even if it's something as little as a remark to compliment their child's outfit, be sure to say something POSITIVE about baby/toddler.

Often parents will share prayer requests or ask you to work on certain behaviors they have been noticing at home. Be encouraging and concerned. We encourage this type of relationship with the parents. It makes you a team and brings unity. Do not be hurried by a line at the door. As long as each parent gets the same undivided attention, they won't mind the wait!

While pick up takes place, the other workers should be playing with the children and keeping them away from the door! Assign one to blow bubbles. If children are peaceful, you can assign another worker/helper to pick up and do general cleaning.

Final Room Check – after all babies/toddlers are gone, make sure the room is clean and in order:

1. Trash bagged and set outside the door. If you leave diapers in the room until the next service, soiled diapers will leave a tremendous odor that is not easily eliminated!
2. Dirty toys (especially any that were in a child's mouth) should be sanitized and disinfected.
3. Make sure all toys, puzzles, etc. are put away.
4. Disinfect all tables, chairs, and bouncy seats after each service.
5. Turn out the lights.

Helpful hints for Infants

Most of the preceding information has been geared toward toddlers. We have gained some insight into some helpful hints for the tiny infants as well.

1. Turn off ceiling lights and use lamps. This sometimes helps them sleep, especially during evening services.
2. When an infant cries a lot, wrapping them tightly in a receiving blanket and holding them close gives them a sense of security and calms them.
3. Label cribs with baby's name on masking tape. You should never put another infant on a sheet already used by a baby. Labeling the cribs will keep you from doing so. Remove tape after each service.

Health Guidelines

We believe that God heals our physical bodies of all sickness and disease. However, we realize the necessity to use wisdom in this area in order to protect ALL the children in our care. If a baby/toddler shows any of the following symptoms, we will not accept them into the nursery:

1. Fever
2. Contagious infections (throat, bronchitis, eye, strep, etc.)
3. Coughs
4. Drainage from nose which is thick mucous, yellow or greenish in color.
5. Drainage from eyes.
6. Diarrhea or vomiting.
7. Unusual rash or spots.
8. Unusual or unexplained loss of appetite.

Teething may cause a low grade fever or clear discharge from the nose. Children who are teething with these symptoms may be accepted. If a child is brought into an area and not accepted for any of the above symptoms, workers will pray with the parent and child after explaining policy reasons. Most parents understand and accept this policy, realizing it means when their child is healthy, they will not be exposed to sickness either.

Discipline Policies for New Life Church Nursery

These rules must be strictly adhered to, not only for the safety and security of the children and their parents, but also for the protection of you, the worker, and the church.

The first thing to consider when dealing with young children is whether behavior is willful disobedience (that they understand) or if they are simply behaving as a child their age. Keep in mind that what is unacceptable to you with your own children may be acceptable to another parent and be allowed in their home.

If a child's misbehavior is of a minor nature – like refusing to sit in a chair or listen during story time, or refusing to give up a toy during snack time, etc – do your best to work with the situation. Keep peace in the room, do not call parents for these minor offenses!

HOWEVER, IF THE CHILD'S BEHAVIOR COULD CAUSE HARM TO ANOTHER CHILD – biting, hitting, throwing things, etc. – OR WHEN A CHILD IS SO DISRUPTIVE THAT IT UPSETS THE ENTIRE ROOM, then follow these steps:

1st Offense – Talk to the child in LOVE, explain that his behavior is not acceptable and must stop.

NOTE: DO NOT THREATEN TO CALL THE PARENT – YOUNG CHILDREN DESIRE TO HAVE THEIR PARENTS – IF THEY THINK MISBEHAVIOR WILL BRING MOM, THEN THEY'LL MISBEHAVE!

2nd Offense – Talk to the child in LOVE again, explaining that their behavior is not acceptable and must stop. Separate the child from the other children for a short time.

3rd Offense – SUPERVISOR OR WORKER IN CHARGE OF THE SERVICE should get the parent from their service (if possible). *Explain to the parent the problem that you are having and ask them to discipline their child. After they have done so, the child may remain in the room, but explain to the parent that if the misbehavior occurs again, they'll have to keep the child with them for the remainder of their meeting.

4th Offense – If the behavior occurs again, after the parent has disciplined their child, the parent should be called upon to come and remove their child from the room. *The Director should explain to the parent that the child will not be allowed in the ministry for a specified time (2 weeks to a month) and then be re-admitted on a trial basis. If the same behavior recurs, reinstate another suspension period.

Procedures for Speaking with a Parent

Situations involving misbehavior require the utmost love, compassion and understanding. Nothing is more important to a parent than their child. The correct choice of words is essential!

Whenever you have misbehavior problems that are persistent and have reached the “2nd Offense” category, they should be reported to the parent at pick up time. Even though you did not need to call the parent out of their service or meeting to discipline the child as you would on the 3rd offense, the parent should still be notified of the problem you are having. Utmost care in speaking to the parent is required. The following procedures should be used at this time. Perhaps this will eliminate the 3rd offense from ever occurring.

1. THE Nursery/Toddler DIRECTOR (witnessed by another staff member) should be the one to speak with the parent. Explain to the parent the exact nature of the problems you are having. Be loving and compassionate in manner and attitude. These situations can be easily interpreted as a criticism of their child, when in fact they are meant to help. Choose words carefully and express understanding! Cushion it with positive comments about their child in other areas.
2. The director should ASK THE PARENT how they would advise handling the misbehavior should it re-occur at the child’s next visit. Do not offer suggestions at this point. Simple request the parent’s desire.
3. AT NO POINT ARE WE TO ADMINISTER SPANKINGS TO THE CHILDREN IN OUR CARE!

New Life Church Nursery/Toddler Registration

Today's Date _____

Child's Name _____ Birth date ____/____/____

Mother's Name _____ Attends New Life: Yes__ No__

Father's Name _____ Attends New Life: Yes__ No__

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Is this your youngest child? Yes__ No__

Information on other children in your family

Name _____ Birth date ____/____/____

If your child needs special attention for any medical, legal or other reason, please inform us so that we can take appropriate measures and join in agreement with your prayers and wishes.

COMMENTS: _____

If attending New Life Church, one parent is required to be available to work in the nursery/toddler Ministry one time per month if needed.

Please indicate by circling the day and week you prefer.

Day: Sunday AM Worship Sunday Evening Sunday PM Worship Wednesday

Week: 1st 2nd 3rd 4th

If you involved in another area of ministry here that would conflict with your availability to work in the Cradle Roll Ministries, please indicate here: _____

New Life Church Nursery/Toddler Record

Child's Name _____ Birth date ___/___/___

Parent's Names: Mother _____ Father _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Phone _____

Is your child allergic to anything? _____ If yes, please specify _____

Is your child bottle fed? _____ If yes, what type of formula? _____

Does your child take a pacifier? _____ If yes, what type? _____

Does your child prefer to sleep on stomach or back? _____

How should we put your child to sleep when he/she is tired?

- ___ rock
- ___ in bed with bottle
- ___ in bed with pacifier
- ___ special blanket

Special needs/additional comments: _____

Parent's signature _____ Date: _____

