



# Family Ministry

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH – MINNEAPOLIS



## VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

# **FBC Family Ministry Volunteer Handbook**

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What's in this guide?

**The Big Picture**

- What is Family Ministry at FBC?

**Family Ministry Basics**

- Policies and procedures

**The Sunday Stuff**

What to do if...

- You can't make it on a Sunday
- A student needs a Bible
- A student asks which Bible translation is best
- A student or family needs a quiet time/devotional resource

**Engaging With Your Group**

What to do if...

- You want to plan a small group party
- You need ideas for a small group party
- You want to connect with students "on their turf"
- You need help implementing the four faith skills
- You just need some help

**For Emergencies**

What to do if...

- There is an emergency at FBC
- You suspect abuse, self-harm, suicidal tendencies

**Special Situations**

This section deals with a variety of issues you may encounter as a small group leader, such as...

- what to do if you have a "high maintenance" kid in your group
- how to respond if your group just won't talk
- how to help a student who is hurting, and much more.

# THE BIG PICTURE

## WHAT IS FAMILY MINISTRY AT FBC?

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We have an easy 4-Point Approach that we would love to introduce you to. Let's discover it together—looking through the lens of family and church, using tools that last a lifetime, and taking an approach we can understand as well as our kids do.

### 1. ONE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

*We've got 40 hours to change your child's life. That's gonna take a miracle.*

It may be hard to believe, but the average church (including ours!) has just 40 hours a year to influence a child. Parents have over 3,000. That's why we're *very* strategic with our time.

At FBC, we use our 40 hours to focus on:

- Connecting each child and student with a leader who sees in them their great potential
- Sharing the story of God's redemption through Jesus Christ
- Seeing kids and students come alive as they discover their unique role in the God's Kingdom

More importantly, we want to engage families and equip parents like you to be spiritual leaders in their homes and neighborhoods. That way you can maximize the 3,000 hours *you* get with your kids.

The power of ORANGE.

To do these things, we utilize ORANGE, a strategy that draws on the essential elements of scripture to empower parents to build their kids' view of God, the world, and themselves. ORANGE connects the church and family by providing a comprehensive plan to help kids and students:

1. See Jesus for who He is
2. See themselves the way God does
3. See that they can love others the way He does

### 2. TWO COMBINED INFLUENCES

*You can influence who your children become or you can leave it up to Facebook.*

With ORANGE, you combine the two primary influences in a child's life: family and church. Without ORANGE, those primary influences are more easily influenced by a number of other factors—from the media to friends.

### **Influence #1 – The Family**

Even in its imperfection, the family exists to display the heart of God to every generation, and every family member has a unique role to play in portraying God's love. As part of ORANGE, the family—the heart of the home—is represented by the color RED.

### **Influence #2 – The Church**

The church has been empowered by God to be the light of the world. The truth of redemption and the love of God come through His people, who *are* the church. Church, the light of the world, is represented by the color YELLOW.

When you combine RED and YELLOW, you get ORANGE. And combined, these influences have more impact. We're bringing together the light of the church and the heart of the family, ensuring that we share the same strategy and goals.

## **3. THREE BASIC TRUTHS**

*If God can do anything, can He make a rock so big He can't lift it?*

Kids always ask the toughest questions. That's because their sense of wonder, discovery and passion is still completely intact. At First Baptist, we simply tap into it. Each age group within the Family Ministry program focuses on the area that best helps kids and students see God for who He is and see themselves the way God does.

In early childhood, we want to *Incite WONDER* and help preschoolers embrace a God who is bigger than their imagination. We will show them and their families how to explore the wonder of a loving creator who pursues the restoration of a broken world.

In elementary-aged kids, we want to *Provoke DISCOVERY* and invite them to a new understanding of how to grow in relationship with God. We will show them and their families how to discover a living Savior who gives His life so those who trust in Him can be rescued.

In older students, we want to *Fuel PASSION* and give them opportunities to *be* the church and make a difference by influencing their generation. We will show them and their families how to live out the passion of believers, empowered by God's spirit to continue His message and mission.

Our goal is to see families living out wonder, discovery, and passion as we connect with God through worship, create authentic communities of believers, and reach out to those who don't yet know the truth of God's redemption.

#### 4. FOUR FAITH SKILLS

*God, if that's you, why do you sound like my cousin Larry?*

Sometimes it's hard to tell if it's The Almighty you're hearing or just another voice in your head. Knowing God takes faith, and faith takes time and effort. You don't just wake up one morning and—BAM!—you have all the answers and none of the doubts.

We use these four faith skills to help families flourish as they grow in their relationship with God.

*HEAR: Listen to God's Words*

When we read the Bible and listen to what God has to tell us through His word, we learn we can trust God no matter what.

*PRAY: Dialogue with God*

Through prayer we connect with God. We show gratitude for who He is and what He's done. We can be honest in our apologies and open with how we feel about what's happening in our lives.

*TALK: Articulate Your Faith*

When we talk about faith with other people who also have a relationship with God, we see God. We can also share our faith with those who don't yet have a relationship with Jesus.

*LIVE: Worship with Your Life*

Worshipping God is more than just singing songs. It's about living your life in a way that honors God—through your relationships, your work, your school, and your every action.

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD (LITTLE KIDS) / BIRTH THROUGH 5 YEARS OLD**

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First Look will **INCITE WONDER**, helping preschoolers embrace a God who is bigger than their imagination.

### **NURSERY/TODDLER (BIRTH—35 MONTHS) - 9:15 AM – 12:15 PM**

Our smallest FBCers will be cared for by a staff who are passionate about showing and sharing God's love to infants and toddlers. Music, scripture, and snack will be part of every tiny FBCers morning!

### **THREE TO FIVE YEAR OLDS (PRE-K) - 9:15 AM – 12:15 PM**

#### **COMMUNITY GROUP AND WORSHIP**

Each week kids engage in community-building small groups and a large-group story and worship experience. During community group time, they will participate in age-appropriate activities that reinforce the Bible lesson, memorize scripture, and engage in a fun worship time. A healthy snack is also provided.

Kids also have the opportunity to participate in learning Biblically-based songs for 30 minutes each Sunday in Kid's Choir. Throughout the year they will have the opportunity to share these songs with the congregation during the Adult Worship Service.

Parent resources are provided so the conversation can continue at home.

**All activities are designed to help a child believe three key things (Basic Truths) by the time he is five years old:**

**God Made Me. / God Loves Me. / Jesus wants to be my Friend Forever.**

## **ELEMENTARY (BIG KIDS) / KINDERGARTEN THROUGH 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

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252 Basics **PROVOKES DISCOVERY**, inviting kids to a new understanding of how to grow in relationship with God.

### **Kids' Community Group and Choir – 9:15-10:15 am**

Kids participate in community-building discussions with their peers, scripture memorization, and activities that tie all they've been learning together. There is also a healthy snack. During this time, each child also has the opportunity to participate in Kids Choir or continue with community group activities.

### **Kids' Church - 10:45 am-12:15pm**

Each week kids will engage in a dynamic, challenging, and age specific worship experience. This time features relationship building activities, large group worship and message time, and small groups that allow kids to immediately put into practice and reinforce the biblical truths presented. Each month focuses on a different character quality of Jesus, and features four true stories from the Bible to reinforce that quality. Each week there is a "Bottom Line" presented – a short, easy to remember phrase that can be reinforced at home throughout the week.

Monthly, weekly, and online parent resources are provided, so the conversation can continue at home.

**All activities are designed to help a child believe three key things (Basic Truths) by the time he leaves elementary school:**

**I need to make the wise choice. / I can trust God no matter what.  
I should treat others the way I want to be treated.**

### **YOUTH / 6<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

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***XP3 FUELS PASSION** by giving students opportunities to be the church and make a difference by influencing their generation.*

#### **Youth Community Group – 9:15-10:45 am - SUNDAYS**

On Sunday morning, students will dive deep into God's word and community. Each week features a time of worship, teaching, and small groups. Students engage with topics from scripture that enable them to see how God is at work in the everyday reality of their lives and the lives of their friends. They will be challenged to live out their faith in a variety of ways and to hold each other accountable.

#### **Youth Gatherings – 6:15-8:00 pm – 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> WEDNESDAYS**

We gather twice a month to connect with one another about faith in Christ and how this is lived out. At times we share a meal, serve others, talk about the scriptures, or simply hang out. Throughout the year we also have ongoing special events on other days and times. Check out our website for more information on those events.

Parent resources are provided for each series, so the conversation can continue at home.

**All activities are designed to help a student believe three key things (Basic Truths) by the time he leaves high school:**

**I am created to pursue an authentic relationship with my creator.  
I belong to Jesus Christ and define who I am by what He says.  
I exist every day to demonstrate God's love to a broken world.**

## **FAMILIES**

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**We strive to continually partner with parents because we know that 2 combined influences make a greater impact than just 2 influences.**

### **Family Sundays – 11:00 am-12:15 pm**

Throughout the year, whenever there is a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday during the month, we gather as a church family and worship together at 11:00 am. Family Sundays feature upbeat music, communion, and messages that will engage even our youngest kiddos. These services are designed to provide a holistic family experience. Because of this, families will lead elements of the morning together and kids will actively play a role in worship. The morning will provide you a great opportunity to share with your kids what you learned during the service and dialogue with them about why God and the church are important to you and your family.

### **Family Events - Varies**

Throughout the year we will provide family discipleship, training, service, and community events designed to bring families and those in their sphere of influence together.

Plans include:

- Salvation/Communion/Baptism Seminars
- Family Fast Breaks (short, after-church connections)
- Family Events/Outings
- Family Service/Outreach Opportunities
- Parent/Child Dedication & Celebration Event

***Nursery provided for infants and toddlers during all Family Sundays and certain Family Events.***



# FAMILY MINISTRY BASICS

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Our goal is to provide an excellent experience for every family who enters our Family Ministry. Whatever a child's age, we want them to experience a clean, safe, fun and nurturing environment so their focus can be on encountering Jesus. To care for each child successfully, volunteers must be working together seamlessly, each concerned with the details of their position. The following is a framework of policies that are in place to care for every child. A more detailed explanation of many of these policies can be found on the following pages.

To provide a safe environment for every child, the security policy ***must be followed at all times!*** Every volunteer must have a completed background check on file and wear an identification badge when working in the Family Ministry areas.

- There must always be at least two (2) checked-in volunteers in a classroom before any child can be received.
- Babies who are able to pull up and stand should not be left unattended in a crib or pack-n-play unless sleeping.
- Our "Screening Procedure and Abuse Prevention" policies are in place to protect every child within our care. Every volunteer who serves in Family Ministry ***must*** follow these policies.
- A "Classroom Checklist" is on the classroom clipboard. Work as a team to complete this checklist at the end of your class time before leaving your classroom.
- Any spills, potty accidents, etc. must be cleaned up to the best of your ability, covered with paper towels and taped down with masking tape. Please note the spill on the "Notes" page on your clipboard. Note what type of spill and the date. If the spill is overwhelming please contact the Family Ministry Staff to contact the on-call janitor.
- Pay close attention to the overall safety and cleanliness of your classroom. Any concerns should be noted and dated on the "Notes" page on your clipboard.
- Please follow all "Diaper Changing and Restroom" procedures whenever caring for children.
- Children who show obvious signs of illness should not be allowed in the classroom. Contact the Family Ministry Staff for assistance, if needed.
- Specific curriculum is chosen and provided for you by the Family Ministry staff. Creativity is encouraged in the teaching process, but if you desire to use something outside the scope of the provided material, please seek prior approval from the Family Ministry Staff.
- Make sure that all diaper bags, cups, etc. are clearly labeled.
- Bottles brought by the parents should be given to the child according to the parent's instructions. When heating bottles always be very careful not to overheat. Always re-check the bottle before feeding the baby.

## **POLICY FOR WELL CHILDREN**

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Children who show any visible sign of illness should not be allowed into the classroom. When addressing this issue with parents, assure them that we want their child to return as soon as they are feeling better. If you continually have a problem with a sick child, please notify the Family Ministry Staff. If an illness is discovered after a child is in the classroom, remove the child from the other children and ask the Check-In desk staff to locate the parents.

We cannot accept children into the classroom who display any of the following symptoms:

- Fever (in the last 24 hours)
- Vomiting or diarrhea (in the last 48 hours)
- Pink eye or other eye infections. NOTE: All eye infections are contagious. Children must be on medication for 24 hours and free of symptoms before entering the preschool area.
- Sore Throat
- Sneezing or cough if persistent and/or productive
- Colored nasal discharge: white viral infection; yellow or green bacterial infection
- Any unexplained rash or skin infections
- Any communicable disease (chicken pox, etc)

## **HAND WASHING AND TOY CLEANING POLICY**

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One of the best ways to prevent the passing of germs is by washing hands. It is important to teach children and model for them frequent hand washing. Remind the children continuously and help them wash their hands.

Hands should be washed or hand sanitizer used:

- BEFORE and AFTER eating.
- BEFORE handling or serving food.
- BEFORE and AFTER changing diapers.
- AFTER helping a child in the bathroom.
- AFTER wiping and blowing noses.

Toy cleaning policy:

- Toys should be washed every week. Please make sure toys are returned to the appropriate bin and bins returned to the large group room at the end of each service.
- Throughout the class time, place dirty toys aside.
- When the final kids have left, bring toys to the sink. Spray the toys in the sink with the cleaning solution provided and let it sit for at least three (3) minutes while you clean the rest of the classroom.
- Rinse sprayed toys in sink with water.

- Let toys air dry on paper towels on the counter.
- Large toys and surfaces that cannot be submerged in liquid (tabletops, swings, battery-operated toys, etc.) should be sprayed with the cleaning solution provided or wiped with Clorox Wipes
- Items that are not completely dry should be left on paper towels and left on the counter.

## **DIAPER CHANGING AND RESTROOM POLICY**

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***Please make sure that every child goes home with a dry and clean diaper.*** This communicates to every parent our care for the welfare of his or her child. It is important to follow these procedures to eliminate the spread of infectious diseases. Each child's health and safety is our ultimate priority.

### **Diaper Procedures:**

***NOTE: Only adult (18+) female volunteers may change diapers.***

- Have all supplies assembled and ready before you start. This will include diaper, wipes, gloves, disposal bag, and cleaning spray.
- If diapers and wipes are not in the child's bag, use those provided by the church.
- Wash your hands.
- After changing, return child to the play area.
- Spray the area, let the cleaning solution sit on the mat for a minute and then wipe thoroughly with paper towels.
- Place soiled diapers in an individual plastic bag and dispose of in the proper receptacle.
- Wash your hands.
- There is one (1) designated area for changing diapers. Do not change diapers anywhere else in the room.

### **Restroom Policy:**

***NOTE: Only adult and youth (high school or older) leaders may escort children to the bathroom. Whenever possible, children should be escorted by an adult female leader. Youth leaders may only escort children of the same gender.***

For the protection of our children and our volunteers, it is important to follow these procedures when taking children to the restroom.

- A volunteer is **NEVER** allowed in a bathroom alone with a child.
- The door to the bathroom should be left open **at all times**.
- No child may leave a classroom or go to the restroom unattended.
- Assist preschool-aged children with their clothing in the open doorway before they go into the bathroom.

- Encourage children to do as much of this for themselves as possible.
- If you have an emergency situation where a child is sick or needs your assistance, call for another classroom leader to assist you or call/text Pastor Sharon or Pastor Jon.

If a parent notes that their child is potty training at drop off, please make sure the following are left in the classroom in a labeled bag:

- Pull up or diaper
- Full change of clothes (top, bottom, underwear, socks)

## **SECURITY POLICY**

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It is not possible for us to know each child or unique family situation. Check-In staff are posted at the entrance monitoring people as they enter the Family Ministry area, but we rely on your diligence to protect our children.

- When parents check in their child they will receive a nametag for their child. They will also receive a second numbered security tag that matches their child's tag, which they will need to keep for picking up their child.
- At pick up time, children should remain clear of the door to facilitate pick up procedures and eliminate leaving without being checked out.
- When picking up their child, the parent **MUST** present the security tag in order to receive their child.
- Even if you feel you know the child and/or parent well, please match up the security tag of the parent and child before releasing the child.
- Only one adult should stand at the door and check children out.
- Once children reach middle school ministry they are allowed to excuse themselves to go and meet their parents after programming for the morning is finished.

If the security tag has been misplaced or lost, please ask the parent to wait until you can contact the Family Ministry Staff to verify information before releasing the child.

## **VOLUNTEER SCREENING AND ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY**

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This policy is specifically intended to safeguard our children from all forms of abuse. This policy addresses three (3) areas: volunteer screening, reporting procedures, and additional safeguards.

## **COMPLETION OF SCREENING PROCESS:**

Screening is required for all staff and volunteers working with minors.

## **THE FOLLOWING IS REQUIRED OF ALL VOLUNTEERS SERVING WITH MINORS:**

- Completed Family Ministry Volunteer Application
- Signed Background Check Form authorizing a criminal records check

## **REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR VOLUNTEERS:**

Immediately report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect of which you have knowledge or observe within the scope of your duties to the Family Ministry Staff. *More information about suspecting abuse can be found under the "What to do if... section of this handbook.*

## **ADDITIONAL SAFEGUARDS:**

- There must be at least two (2) volunteers in a classroom before children are received. A husband and wife are considered one (1) volunteer for these purposes.
- No one may be alone in a classroom with a child.
- No one is to be alone in a bathroom at any time with a child.
- Classrooms must have a visible means of observation at all times (e.g., blinds open on security windows, open door, etc.).
- All staff and responsible leadership have frequent access to all classrooms where preschool children are being cared for.

## **GREETINGS, GOODBYES AND OTHER INTERACTIONS WITH PARENTS AND CHILDREN**

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- All children should be greeted warmly, preferably by name, at the door upon entering a classroom.
- All children should receive a warm goodbye each week and an encouragement to return the following week.
- Parents should be greeted warmly, preferably by name, and assured their children will have a safe and fun time while in your care.
- At pick up, parents should be handed materials (if applicable) and provided a brief explanation of what they are being handed.
- At pick up, parents should be told something encouraging about their child and what a joy it was to have them in the classroom.
- If children repeatedly misbehave or are disruptive to the classroom, please bring it to the attention of the Family Ministry Staff who will take action steps. Do not discuss this with the parents.

## **GENERAL SAFETY POLICIES**

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- All injuries, no matter how minor, should be brought to the attention of the Family Ministry Staff. This includes falls, scrapes, cuts, bites, and other injuries.
- Accident reports should be completed for all injuries. No exceptions.
- All head injuries must be reported to the Family Ministry Staff immediately.
- Never hesitate to call 9-1-1 when an injury occurs.
- Leaders in classrooms with children who have life threatening allergies must be properly trained in emergency procedures for the specific child. This may include how to contact the parents or use of emergency tools such as an EpiPen.
- Leaders in classrooms with children who have special needs should make every attempt to educate themselves on the child's particular condition/needs and dialogue with parents on how to best interact with and engage their child.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

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- Do not pick up children over the age of two. You should sit on the floor or squat to talk to them at their level.
- Remove distractions rather than expect them to stay away from distractions such as toys during lesson times.
- Redirect with words or a gentle hand on the back.
- Never grab a child by their clothing or a limb for any reason other than removing him/her from imminent danger.

The following steps should be taken for a child who continues to be a disruption to the entire group and continues to push the boundaries:

1. Please pull the child aside and speak to them individually. Ask the child to stop the behavior. If you have to remind the child a second time, explain to them that if they cannot stop the behavior, they will be asked to leave with their parent. This will be done by a leader or pastor and will not be public/in front of peers.
2. Parent(s) will be notified that their child was pulled out and spoken to.
3. Parent(s) will be asked to join their child for two (2) Sundays and assist them by modeling appropriate participation and respect.

If a child needs to be removed from a room because he/she is harming others or him/herself, follow these steps:

1. Contact the Children's or Family Ministry Pastor
2. If this is not possible, open the door and yell, "I NEED HELP!"
3. Clear other children from the room, if possible.

## **THE SUNDAY STUFF**

### **WHAT TO DO IF...**

#### **YOU CAN'T MAKE IT ON SUNDAY**

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Sometimes things come up. You go on vacation. You get sick. Whatever the reason there will probably come a day when you won't be able to make it on a Sunday morning. If you do find yourself in this situation, here are the steps you should take to make sure your ministry area is covered:

1. Let the Family Ministry Staff know that you will not be able to make it on a specific Sunday. The further in the advance the better. They may give you some people to contact to help find a sub for the class.
2. If you know those who also serve with your age group, feel free to contact them and find your own sub for the day. After you do this, please let the Family Ministry Staff know when you are going to be gone and who is covering for you.
3. Talk to the people that you serve with! Let them know you won't be able to make it and work together to figure out a plan to make sure your group is covered.

**Keep us posted:** Let us know if your availability becomes a consistent problem. We understand that employment, school, and other responsibilities can change throughout the school year. If a change in your schedule keeps you from volunteering on a regular basis, please let us know. We'll work with you to figure something out.

If you have concerns about the availability of someone that you serve with, or they fail to let you know in advance that they won't be there on a Sunday morning, let us know. It's our job to make sure your groups are running smoothly.

### **WHAT TO DO IF...**

#### **A STUDENT NEEDS A BIBLE**

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If a student comes to know Christ or tells you that they do not own a Bible, we have free Bibles in stock. If one of your student's needs a Bible, go grab one for them! They can be found in the Family Ministry Check-In or the Youth Room. Feel free to hand these out as needed.

Before you give it to them, take the time to write them a quick note on the inside cover with your phone number or email address for follow-up. It will be a special reminder of the person who gave them their first Bible or helped them come to know Christ.

## **WHAT TO DO IF...**

### **A STUDENT ASKS WHICH BIBLE TRANSLATION IS THE BEST**

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While we don't have an "official" translation of the Bible that we recommend, here are a few translations that we've found to be helpful for our growth in Christ:

#### **Our Youngest Kids -**

The Jesus Storybook Bible

This is a great Bible for our youngest kids to begin understanding the Big God Story that runs throughout all of Scripture.

#### **Elementary Kids -**

Adventure Bible – Early Reader Version

The NIV Adventure Bible is for kids 8-12 to discover the treasure of God's Word. It is designed to spark curiosity as kids learn from the Scriptures.

#### **Teens and Adults -**

NIV – New International Version

The NIV is easy to read and understand and is a fairly balanced combination of a word-for-word and thought-for-thought translation of Scripture. We typically reference the NIV in Family Ministry.

ESV – English Standard Version

The ESV is a word-for-word translation of the Bible. It is known for being very faithful to the original language in which the Bible was written, but it is still modern and readable. The ESV is used frequently in the adult Worship Service at FBC.

NLT – New Living Translation

The NLT is a thought-for-thought translation of the Bible rather than word-for-word and can be very easily read and understood.

The Message

While The Message is NOT the Word of God (it is a paraphrase of the Bible by author Eugene Peterson), it still is a helpful tool for understanding and applying Scripture. Students may find that it's a great supplement to the Bible since it is written in language that is fresh and understandable.

## **WHAT TO DO IF...**

### **A STUDENT OR FAMILY NEEDS A DEVOTIONAL RESOURCE**

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There are so many devotional or "quiet time" resources and reading plans out there that it can be overwhelming. We've put together a few suggestions for students and families. There are a couple reasons why we have picked these resources to promote:

1. They are Scripture focused. We prefer resources that guide families straight to the Bible.



2. They provide opportunities for families to study the Bible together. With each of these guides, parents can read the same Bible passages as their children, which provides them with opportunities to engage in spiritual discussions with their kids.

### **First Look and 252 Parent Cues / XP3 Devo Pages**

Every week students and parents receive Devotional Pages that will guide the families and students through the week. These pages remind the students and parents about the Life App and Faith Skill we are spending time with for the month.

### **Right Now Media**

At times families wonder where to begin with family devotions. Right Now Media gives you the help of teachers, pastors, and talking puppets to get your family into a discussion of the scriptures. Our church covers the cost of this great service, so contact Pastor Jon or Pastor Sharon to get your access code to get started.

### **youversion.com**

Many people simply describe this as the Bible app, but it is so much more. There are different Bible reading plans; simply create an account and dive in.

### **Jesus Calling for Little Ones**

#### **Jesus Calling: 365 Devotions for Kids**

Based on the original *Jesus Calling*, by Sarah Young, these versions have been adapted in a language and fashion that kids and tweens can relate to their everyday lives.

### **Our Daily Bread for Kids**

Inside this devotional you'll find the life-changing wisdom of the Bible expressed in a kid-friendly format paired with fun illustrations. Engaging devotions, easy-to-remember Bible verses, and exciting facts that encourage children to spend time with God and apply the truths of His Word to their everyday lives.

### **The Adventure Bible Devotional**

Like a map that leads to great treasure, the *NIV Adventure Bible Book of Devotions* takes kids on a thrilling, enriching quest. Through this yearlong devotional, boys and girls will learn more about God and the Bible, and be inspired to live a life of faith—the greatest adventure of all. Companion to the *Adventure Bible*.

## **ENGAGING WITH YOUR GROUP**

### **WHAT TO DO IF...**

#### **YOU WANT TO PLAN A SMALL GROUP PARTY/OUTING**

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We love it when you do something special for your small group! We love it so much we will help you make it a success. If you want to have a party/outing for your group, here are the steps to make it happen:

1. Come up with a good idea. Think easy, fun, cheap, and as stress-free for you as possible.
2. Tell Pastor Jon or Pastor Sharon the details at least three weeks in advance. We want to know what you are doing for a few reasons.
  - a. Sometimes parents have questions. We want to make sure we know how to answer them.
  - b. We can give you feedback on your ideas and help you think through the event if you need help.
  - c. We will help you communicate all of the details to parents and students by making flyers, emails, and announcements.
3. Promote your party. Give flyers to your students in small group, mail them to their house, email their parents, whatever works! But you do need to make contact with the parents in some way.
4. Everyone in the small group must be invited.
5. Have fun!

### **WHAT TO DO IF...**

#### **YOU WANT TO CONNECT WITH STUDENTS "ON THEIR TURF"**

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First of all, that is awesome. Connecting with students "on their turf" is one of the most powerful things you can do to build influence in their lives. It's pretty easy too. Here's how you make it happen:

1. Find out what activities the students in your small group are involved with. Ask about sports, school plays, concerts, dance recitals, graduations, fundraisers, etc.
2. Ask for a schedule of their games and activities.
  - a. They may not think to invite you to their games and activities at first, so ask them.
  - b. Once you make it clear that you want to watch them play basketball, dance, cheer, play an instrument, or whatever it is they do, they will begin to invite you more and more.
3. Go!
  - a. Go on your own, go with a friend, or even bring your whole small group. It's a great opportunity to help students build community as they cheer each other on and support each other.
  - b. When you're there, be sure to connect with parents as much as possible. Let them know you're there, sit with them, hang with them. It will make a huge impact to know that you want to invest in their son or daughter by hanging out with them, supporting them, and cheering them on. That's exactly what parents want and need for their kids!

## **WHAT TO DO IF...**

### **YOU NEED HELP IMPLEMENTING THE FOUR FAITH SKILLS**

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We use these four faith skills (Hear, Pray, Talk, Live) to help families flourish as they grow in their relationship with God. We also use them as a barometer for success with the students because they are *the way* we gauge spiritual growth and formation in Family Ministry. We want to give you tools to help engage students with these faith skills. This may look daunting, but most weeks it is written directly into the lessons for you. So, here are some additional ideas on how to engage students with these faith skills.

#### *HEAR: Listen to God's Words*

- Your group doesn't know the books of the Bible? Make a CD of funny songs to help them memorize them in order.
- Have a contest to look up verses and find their way around the Bible fastest. We will gladly provide some prizes.
- Do a scavenger hunt with Bible verses as clues – students look up verses that lead them to a prize you have hidden.
- Ask every student to pick a verse that means something to them. Have them explain why it's important and memorize it throughout the month. Be creative when helping them memorize.
- Have students race to look up James 1:22-25. Read it and discuss it as a group.

#### *PRAY: Dialogue with God*

- Pray together! Model what prayer looks like regularly.
- Text prayer requests to students during the week and encourage them to do the same.
- Have students make a list of everything that they talk to their best friends about. Then challenge them to talk to God about each of those things that week – help them understand that God wants to talk to them like a best friend.
- Help them begin the habit of journaling their prayers.

#### *TALK: Articulate Your Faith*

- Have everyone share their story (how they came to know Christ), beginning with you. If someone in your group hasn't made that step yet, begin to look for opportunities to invite them to come to faith in Jesus.
- Challenge students to share their story, or to simply have a spiritual conversation with someone during the week, and to report back how it went.
- Have your group make a list of five people they want to share their faith story with. Encourage them to pray for five minutes each day (one minute per person) and then encourage them to look for the opportunities God will give them to share Christ with their five friends.

#### *LIVE: Worship with Your Life*

- Serve together! Talk with your group about charities or organizations that they are passionate about, and then take a trip to serve together at one of them.

- Spend the month talking about worship. How can you help your group become passionate worshippers of God, in both song and life?
- Create a fun board, book, painting, etc. to keep track of all the things throughout the month that your group finds that represent worship and enables them to worship. At the end of the month, give them all a copy.

If you have any creative ideas let us know! We would love to add them to our list and share them with other Small Group Leaders throughout the year.

Read your weekly emails!

- Each week you'll get an email from us that is full of ideas to help you be more successful as a Small Group Leader – including how to implement that month's Life App/Faith Skill.

## **WHAT TO DO IF...**

### **YOU JUST NEED SOME HELP!**

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It's possible that at some point in your time serving in FBC Family Ministry you might hit a wall. It might get hard. You might get frustrated. Being a volunteer (and *especially* a small group leader) isn't always easy. Sometimes, it can be really hard. Sometimes, it doesn't feel rewarding. Sometimes, you're not sure if you're really making an impact. Sometimes, you want to give up. We get it. But here's what we want you to remember: what you are doing is unbelievably important. After all, you have said yes to the next generation. The most important things in life are always the most difficult. So if you need some help as a volunteer, here's what we'd love for you to do:

1. **Go to God. Get Filled Up.** As volunteers, and especially Small Group Leaders, you're doing a lot of giving, investing, and pouring out. But as you pour out, don't forget to fill back up. A regular and consistent time in God's Word is the only way to keep you from getting burned out. If you're not receiving a steady supply of truth and encouragement straight from God, you won't have much to draw from as you try to invest in students. Always fill up before you try to pour out.
2. **Evaluate Yourself.** If you're feeling frustrated or burnt out by serving, try to get to the bottom of those feelings. Are you really passionate about students, or is your heart somewhere else? Are you frustrated because you're running on empty? Why ARE you running on empty? Maybe you're frustrated because you don't feel like you're being successful or connecting well with your students? Do you just need some help figuring out how to be a better leader? It's important to know exactly what's going on and why you feel the way that you do. When you've got that figured out, you can start to put together a plan for fixing it.

- 3. Talk To US.** Jon and Sharon are here to help. We want to take care of our volunteers and see all of you being successful and having a great time. So if you need help, ask for it. If you're frustrated, confused, annoyed, or maybe just need a few suggestions, let us know so we can help!

## **FOR EMERGENCIES**

### **WHAT TO DO IF...**

#### **THERE IS AN EMERGENCY**

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Things can be fun and crazy when serving in ministry. So if something gets a little too crazy and something happens, or someone gets hurt, or there is any kind of emergency please contact Jon or Sharon immediately. If we are not immediately accessible, try our cell phones.

**Jon: 763-244-0217      Sharon: 952-412-9890**

If there are any injuries, you will need to fill out an Accident Report for insurance purposes and to follow up with the families. Please contact Jon or Sharon for help with that.

If in doubt, or for serious injury/emergency, do not hesitate to call 911!

### **WHAT TO DO IF...**

#### **YOU SUSPECT ABUSE, SELF-HARM, OR SUICIDAL TENDENCIES**

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Unfortunately, there may come a time when you encounter students who are in serious trouble. It is absolutely essential that you do not try to handle these situations on your own. If a child is in danger or you suspect that a child could possibly be in danger, let Jon or Sharon know IMMEDIATELY, and the student's parents when appropriate. Here are some guidelines to help you identify dangerous situations and determine your course of action.

#### **CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT (VERBAL, EMOTIONAL)**

##### **SYMPTOMS:**

- The child may...show sudden changes in behavior; struggle with learning or concentration; appear to be anxious or overly watchful; lack adult supervision; be overly compliant, passive or withdrawn; come to activities early, stay late, and not want to go home.
- The parent may... show little concern for the child; deny or blame the child for their problems at home or school; ask other adults to give harsh physical discipline; see the child as entirely bad, worthless, or a burden; demand an unreasonable level of performance; look primarily to the child for their care, attention, and meeting of emotional needs.
- The parent and child may... rarely look at or touch each other; consider their relationship to be entirely negative; say they don't like each other.

**RESPONSE:** Report any suspicions immediately to Jon or Sharon

## **DEPRESSION**

**SYMPTOMS:** Depressed or irritable; not interested or enjoying most activities; strange sleep or appetite patterns; negative thinking; may want to leave home; feel misunderstood; restless, anxious, agitated, or aggressive; use of alcohol or drugs; feel hopeless or worthless; recurring thoughts about death; withdrawn or isolated.

**RESPONSE:** Report any suspicions to the Family Ministry Staff and also to the student's parents, if directed. We want to help you and our families with this process. This is an opportunity for us to invest time with these students, to encourage them and their families as they battle depression. Here are some thoughts on how to best do this:

- Be concerned, but don't be judgmental. Try to assess the severity of the depression. A counselor or therapist may need to get involved, and we will encourage the families in this process.
- How many signs of depression are evident? How long have they felt this way? Is there an obvious cause?
- Ask if they have had thoughts of harming themselves. If they have, please contact the Family Ministry Staff immediately. We will connect with the parents and help them through the process of finding proper expert help.
- Keep the student's parents involved in any conversation that you have with their child.
- Assure the student that feelings of depression are very common. Depression is most likely only temporary and related to circumstances.

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE**

**SYMPTOMS:** Withdrawal; changing relationships; secretive; absences from church, school or events; resistance to authority, behavior problems; physical or health complaints; changes in eating habits; obvious signs of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

**RESPONSE:** Immediately contact Family Ministry Staff with your concerns. If needed, and you feel comfortable, make yourself available to talk with their child and help them through their recovery process. If the parents give you the OK, intervention would include:

- Let them know you care.
- Explain the problem with their behavior.
- Explain the severity of their problem and your concern.
- Suggest steps to recovery: counseling, recovery center, etc.

## **EATING DISORDERS**

**SYMPTOMS:** Dramatic change in weight; mood swings; bloated face; puffy eyes; change in appetite; frequent trips to the bathroom after eating; secretiveness and withdrawal.

**RESPONSE:** Immediately the Family Ministry Staff with your concerns. If directed, and you feel comfortable, make yourself available to help talk with their child and help them through their recovery process. If the parents give you the OK, intervention would include:

- Be willing to initiate help – they probably won't ask for it.
- If the student admits to having a problem suggest professional help.
- If the student denies a problem, talk with the parents to get feedback and support them moving forward.

### **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

**SYMPTOMS:** Bruises, scratches or cuts; suspicious explanations of "accidents"; untreated medical problems; running away from home; fear of parents; arrives early, leaves late, does not want to go home; difficulty relating to adults.

**RESPONSE:** Report any abuse or suspicions of abuse to the Family Ministry Staff IMMEDIATELY. Any concerns will need to be reported. Let law enforcement and professional counselors handle the crisis intervention with the abuser; do NOT attempt to confront the abuser about the issue.

A child who is the victim of abuse will need:

- A caring relationship with an adult.
- Positive friendship from peers.
- Reinforcement of self-worth.
- Communication of God's unconditional love.

### **SEXUAL ABUSE**

**SYMPTOMS:** Physical disturbances including sleep patterns; emotional disturbances including guilt, withdrawal, inability to trust; delinquent activities; involvement with drugs and alcohol; inappropriate clothing and actions, viewing themselves as sexual objects.

**RESPONSE:** Report any abuse or suspicions of abuse to the Family Ministry Staff immediately. Any concerns will need to be reported. Let professionals handle the crisis intervention with the abuser; do NOT attempt to confront the abuser about the issue.

- Recognize the presence of both guilt and fear – the student will need reassurance that they are safe and did not do anything to deserve or encourage the abuse.
- Stay in appropriate contact with the victim.
- Become informed and educated about sexual abuse and the recovery process.



## **SUICIDE**

**SYMPTOMS:** Low self-esteem; depression and withdrawal; alcohol or drug abuse; feelings of guilt and worthlessness; recurrent thoughts of death and dying; life crisis including the death of a loved one, divorce, break-up, or other trauma; self-destructive behavior; plans and preparations to die.

**RESPONSE:** Report any suspicions of suicide IMMEDIATELY to one of the Family Ministry Staff.

- Determine if the person is dangerous. Have they planned their suicide? Have they tried it before? Will their plan actually cause death? Is the method readily available? What are the chances of them getting help?
- Develop a contract for life. Agree that if they have suicidal thoughts they will contact you or a trusted loved one.

This section has dealt with very difficult issues that constitute an immediate emergency. Again if you suspect any of these issues please contact the Family Ministry Staff immediately and the parents when directed and appropriate.

## SPECIAL SITUATIONS

### WHAT TO DO IF...

#### **YOU HAVE A "HIGH MAINTENANCE" KID**

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So, you have a high maintenance kid. These are the ones who are energy zappers. The high maintenance kid in your small group could be missing a few crucial social skills, or have a special need (obvious or hidden), or be ridden by deep insecurity and fear. No matter what is prompting the behavior, God has allowed them to be in your path and now you get to choose how you'll respond and care for them. Here are some options worth considering...

**RUN FOR YOUR DEAR LIFE.** We're kidding! But let's be honest, sometimes you do feel like running away from a high maintenance kid. It's okay to admit that it's difficult – actually it's healthy to begin with this admission. Once you've admitted it, then stop and also admit the reality that most adults within striking distance of a high maintenance kid also want to bail. This kind of continual isolation leads to a deeper loneliness, and as the church we must address this with compassion.

**ENGAGE WITH WISDOM.** After you've found enough compassion to do something, make sure you're doing the right thing. What does this unique student specifically need from you? As a Small Group Leader and caring adult, how can you help him or her take their next faith step? Everyone needs attention and encouragement and wise nudges in the right direction...this student should be no different.

**UNDERSTAND THAT ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.** Engaging the high maintenance kid also requires discernment. It's not only possible to give too little; it's also possible to give too much and drain yourself and have nothing left to give anyone. Jesus never said, "Pick up your cross until you get tired of that one high maintenance kid." However, as a leader you have multiple priorities that you need to attend to. Prayerfully consider what boundaries you ought to have in your relationship with the high maintenance kid. If this feeling is your reality, please schedule a meeting with Jon or Sharon so this can be addressed. We are here to help.

### WHAT TO DO IF...

#### **YOUR GROUP WON'T TALK**

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We've all been there at some point. You sit down with your small group and ask a question. No answer. You rephrase it. No answer. You ask another one. Still nothing. It gets frustrating fast. If you seem to find yourself in this situation a lot, here are a few thoughts:

1. **WORK ON RELATIONSHIPS.** If your entire group refuses to engage in quality conversations, that's usually an indication that they are uncomfortable – uncomfortable with talking with each other, or maybe uncomfortable talking with you. Possibly even both. So if your small group isn't talking, maybe give up on the questions for a while and work on developing quality relationships. As they open up and have fun together, see if you can ease them back into the more serious questions gradually. Always remember: developing relationships and influence is FAR more important than doing the discussion questions.

When you feel comfortable directing the conversation back to purposeful questions, take a look at HOW you ask questions.

2. **TO ASK GREAT QUESTIONS, BE A GREAT LISTENER.** Listen to God. When you're listening to God, you're better able to communicate care through body language, facial expressions, eye contact, etc. Students respond to the messages that we send non-verbally. Do you want to be there? Can they see it in your eyes? Do you show care? Listen to students. It's the best way to communicate care. Listen for their needs – read their non-verbal communication. What does their body language tell you? Are they dejected? Excited? Forced to be there? Begin the process of identifying needs even before you start to ask questions.
3. **ASK QUESTIONS WITHOUT A QUESTION MARK.** For example; instead of asking, "Did you have a good day today?" Say, "Tell me what you did today." Leave it open-ended to foster conversation and avoid asking questions with yes/no answers.
4. **DON'T GIVE UP. USE FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS.** The second question is often the most difficult one to ask. Hang in there – keep asking questions.
5. **USE YOUR QUESTIONS AS A WAY TO TEACH.** You will see more results from asking questions and listening to the answer, than you will by being a "teacher." Telling someone exactly what they need to know is often ineffective because the learner is passive and the learner isn't convinced they need the truth. This is why we try to equip you with multiple teaching methods for each lesson. A good question puts the ball in the court of the learner. Aside from generating verbal interaction, everyone can answer the question in their own thoughts.

## **WHAT TO DO IF... A STUDENT IS HURTING**

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As you do life with your small group, situations will arise in their lives that cause them pain. Maybe it's a death, a divorce, a broken friendship, or the consequences of their bad choices. Whatever the cause, there will be a day when you'll need to know what to do with a student who is hurting. Here are some guidelines to help you navigate through it.

1. **READ GOOD BOOKS.** We have some great resources for you. Just ask and we will get you a copy.
  
2. **BIND UP THEIR WOUNDS WITH HEALING WORDS.** Every hurting student needs to hear these words...
  - I believe in you.
  - I am here for you.
  - You are going to get through this.
  - You can make good choices.
  - You matter.
  - Life hurts, but God heals.
  
3. **REMEMBER THESE VALUABLE LESSONS.**
  - Always always always **GET FILLED UP** first. Remember, you can't pour out until you've been filled up. Stay in the Word, stay close to Jesus, and continue your own spiritual growth and development.
  - For a time of quality encouragement, the best place is often outside the church building. Getting together outside of church will be much more effective than trying to talk on a Sunday morning.
  - Stay in communication with God. He is the Source of all wisdom, discernment, and comfort. Trust Him to show up and guide your words and your steps as you minister to a hurting student.
  - Remember that students need tangible, practical, and ongoing care. Check in with them often. While you don't necessarily need to be the primary person helping them through, you can certainly play an integral part in their healing. You may be the best person for the job. If you aren't able to provide it, help them and their family find someone who can.

# PRESCHOOL VOLUNTEER ROLES

Volunteers work together in their unique roles to create a loving environment for preschoolers.

## **SMALL GROUP ROLES**

***Small Group/Classroom Leaders*** care for and lead an assigned group of children through activities each week and consistently connect with their families.

***Small Group/Classroom Assistants*** assist the leader in caring for and leading an assigned group of children through activities each week.

## **LARGE GROUP ROLES**

***Host*** serves as the emcee; usually welcomes the children to large group; introduces the video and dismisses children and leaders to small group.

***Worship Leader*** leads the preschoolers in worship with fun music that is full of hand motions and movement.

***Tech*** works to provide audio/visual support.

## **OTHER ROLES**

***Lifeguard*** serves as a greeter for parents and children and monitors halls and classrooms during the service. Assists with transition times and provides an extra set of eyes and hands.

***Prep Team*** puts small group supplies together on a monthly or every other month basis.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOM CHECKLIST (Infant, Toddler, Twos, 3-5 Year Olds)

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Check each item as completed. If not applicable to your classroom, write "n/a" on the line. Sign and date when completed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Remove used FBC sheet(s) and replace daycare sheet(s).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Place dirty sheet(s) outside classroom door.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Store toys and other items in the correct bins.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Place all supplies and curriculum papers in the curriculum bin (3-5 YO).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clean the floors of major messes, such as snack spillage or paper scraps.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mark the spot of any serious spills or accidents with a paper towel. Seal with masking tape. Note on bottom of this sheet type of spill.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mark any broken toys, furniture or fixtures with masking tape and note on bottom of this sheet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spray mouthed toys with cleaning solution, let sit for three (3) minutes, rinse with hot water, and leave them to dry in dish rack on the countertop. If clean and dry, return to bin. If not dry, leave in the dish rack.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spray all surfaces (tabletops, swing trays, walkers, etc.) with cleaning solution, let sit for three (3) minutes and wipe down with paper towels. (Wipe tables with Clorox wipes in 3-5 YO room.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Wash used sippy cups and leave in dish rack.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Place hand soap and cleaning spray in dish rack.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Note any items that need to be replenished below in notes section.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Turn off the lights, heat and/or air in the classroom.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ROOM:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTES:**

**WE ARE OUT OF/RUNNING LOW ON:**

# ELEMENTARY VOLUNTEER ROLES

Volunteers work together in their unique roles to create a fun and engaging environment for elementary aged kids.

## SMALL GROUP ROLES

***Small Group/Classroom Leaders*** are the primary model or teacher for a group of up to 10 children and encourages spiritual growth through relationships, discussion, and other small group activities. Consistently and intentionally connects with the families of the children they lead.

***Small Group/Classroom Assistants*** assist the leader in caring for and leading an assigned group of children through activities each week.

## LARGE GROUP ROLES

***Host*** serves as the emcee. Welcomes the children to large group, introduces the video and worship time, leads prayer, and dismisses children and leaders to small group.

***Worship Leader*** leads and engages kids and Small Group Leaders in a meaningful time of worship. Develop hand motions or dance moves, as appropriate.

***Tech Leader*** provides audio/visual and computer graphics support.

## OTHER ROLES

***Greeter*** welcomes parents and children as they enter the elementary area. Monitors halls and classrooms during the service. Assists with transition times and provides an extra set of eyes and hands.

***Prep Team*** puts small group supplies together on a monthly or every other month basis.

## ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM CHECKLIST

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Check each item as completed. If not applicable to your room, write "n/a" on the line. Complete bottom of form, sign, and date.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Place all curriculum supplies and papers in the curriculum bin.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Place all general and leader supplies in the appropriate bins.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clean floor of major messes, such as food spillage or paper scraps.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mark the spot of any serious spills with a paper towel. Seal with blue tape from leader bin. Note type and date of spill on bottom of this sheet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mark any broken furniture or fixtures with blue tape. Note which item and general location in room on bottom of this sheet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Note any supplies that are running low or are depleted on the bottom of this sheet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Turn off the lights and heat or air in room.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ROOM #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTES:**

**WE ARE OUT OF/RUNNING LOW ON:**



