

SAFETY & SECURITY

WHY IS SAFETY AND SECURITY SO CRUCIAL?

"Whenever a church invites the public on its property, a legal duty arises to protect all visitors from unreasonable harm." (doziermillerlaw.com)

PARENT CONCERNS

- ◆ Who's caring for my child?
- ◆ Who are the volunteers and how are they trained?
- ◆ What are transition protocols?
- ◆ What's the bathroom policy?
- ◆ What's the check-in and check-out procedure?
- ◆ How do you handle kids with allergies?
- ◆ What's the emergency plan?
- ◆ How is discipline handled?
- ◆ How are medical emergencies handled?

LEADER QUESTIONS FOR PREPARING FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY

- ◆ Do I have a comprehensive plan for safety and security?
- ◆ Is everyone registered and identifiable?
- ◆ Have all my leaders and volunteers been background checked, trained, equipped, partnered and protected?
- ◆ How is our church keeping our children safe from perverts, pedophiles, and poor characters?
- ◆ What emergency procedures and protocol do we have in place?
- ◆ Is our environment and facility safe and secure?
- ◆ Are food and supply/materials listed for those with allergies?
- ◆ How are we communicating with signs and volunteers?
- ◆ Are visitors returning because they feel safe and secure in our church?



REGISTRATION: EVERYONE MUST BE REGISTERED

- ◆ Collect accurate information for the week and future contacts
- ◆ Medical/health info/allergies, church & school, family & pick up
- ◆ Consent and release/participation/medical treatment/photograph forms (Don't ask for permission but state what is expected)

IDENTIFICATION: EVERYONE MUST BE IDENTIFIABLE

- ◆ Use Tshirts, badges, lanyards, wristbands, nametags
- ◆ Every person on site should be identified.
- ◆ Teachers, staff, volunteers, and helpers should have their roles on the identification tag
- ◆ NO exceptions !!!!

LEADER/VOLUNTEER SECURITY PROTOCOL

- ◆ Everyone working with children is required to have a background check and complete volunteer application form
- ◆ Consult your insurance company for necessary guidelines
- ◆ Background checks should include national criminal search
- ◆ Schedule time for training around safety and security guidelines
- ◆ Always follow the two-adult rule
- ◆ Have a bathroom protocol
- ◆ Follow appropriate Adult-to-Child ratio — overestimate the need. You can never have too many volunteers!

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOLS

- ◆ Fire drill evacuation routes / outside meeting place
- ◆ Emergency weather
- ◆ Emergency readiness/lockdown
- ◆ Poison control
- ◆ Know your first aid and medical volunteers
- ◆ Incident and accident reports
- ◆ Have adequate supplies, gloves, band aids, ice packs, etc
- ◆ Is someone equipped to administer CPR?
- ◆ Text *GETFIRST to 90999 or visit redcross.org/apps

Safety isn't expensive, it's priceless!



**KIDS MINISTRY
NEW ENGLAND**

Compiled by the Kid's Ministry New England Team — www.bcne.net/kids
Baptist Convention of New England, 87 Lincoln Street, Northborough, MA 01532 — www.bcne.net

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ENVIRONMENT and FACILITY

- ◆ Limited entrance access — As a team, decide which entrances will be used to allow access to your building and then make sure all the other entrances are secured and put signs up so that people will know where to go to enter. Make sure that your security team or VBS leaders are making sure that the entrances are kept locked during your VBS time.
- ◆ Inspect all areas for safety concerns and work to address those with the proper leaders in your church — sometimes we talk about them in small groups and at meetings and then fail to reach out the proper leaders to address.
- ◆ Chemicals, harmful or unnecessary items should be placed in a secure and locked area.
- ◆ Broken/inappropriate toys, chairs, tables, and other items that are not safe should be discarded before your event.
- ◆ Make sure that ant hills, beehives or other pests are sprayed so that this does not become a hazard at your event.
- ◆ Be sure to secure rooms where children are not allowed: boiler rooms, utility rooms, janitor's closet or other places where harmful items might be available.

FOOD ALLERGIES and SUPPLIES

- ◆ 8% of kids have food allergies and 40% of those are allergic to more than one food
- ◆ At registration, post the food that will be served at your event.
- ◆ Be sure that your registration form has a place for allergies.
- ◆ If a child has an allergy and you are not prepared for an alternative, let the parents know it is up to them to provide something acceptable that their child can eat.
- ◆ ALL CHILDREN who have an allergy should be identified. This might be a sticker on their nametag or even a special lanyard they wear around their neck with the exact allergy identified so that leaders and volunteers keep that in mind during the event.
- ◆ It is important that if you have a nurse or medical personnel on-site that you give them a list of allergies so they are prepared to address them if needed.
- ◆ Emergency numbers should be available and known to all your leaders and volunteers. Include this in your training.

COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

- ◆ SIGNAGE should be abundant especially as you anticipate many visitors to your site.
- ◆ POST important messages CLEARLY and PROMINENTLY so that visitors and your leaders and volunteers are informed.
- ◆ Have dedicated volunteers floating during your event to provide assistance and guidance for visitors as well as leaders/teacher/volunteers.
- ◆ You can never communicate too much. Err on the side of caution and make sure that you keep everyone informed and educated so that your event can be safe and secure at all times.
- ◆ VISITORS WILL RETURN IF THEY KNOW SAFETY/SECURITY IS A TOP CONCERN FOR YOUR CHURCH!



Safety first is Safety Always!

