



## ADVENTURE KIDS

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### Parent Interaction Instructional Guide

The primary purpose of this instruction guide is to provide practical instructions for how to interact with parents during the drop off and pick-up of their children. It has been said by Kids Pastors that it doesn't matter how big the greeters smile is, it doesn't matter how friendly the church body is, it doesn't even matter how good worship and the sermon is. If the parent comes to pick the child up and the child has the same droopy diaper on they were dropped off with, the child wasn't fed their bottle, they were fed gluten when they are gluten free, or dyes when they are dye free, and the face of the child is red from crying the entire time during the sermon that mom will never come back to that church.

Many of these processes and procedures are very practical and simply to implement today. You are probably already doing many of these things just because you are called to kid-min. However, there may be a few things you pick-up along the way.

#### **Parent interaction during drop off**

- *It is important you are showing parents how much you care about their children. We know we care greatly about the kids in kid-min, we need parents to know how much we care as well.*
  - When the child is dropped off immediately acknowledge the child's presence with an age appropriate gesture. For example, if the child is 1 or under you would grab the child from Mom or Dad and hold the child while you are asking questions about the babies need (more about this later). If the child is 4 or older you could give the child a high/low five or hold their hand on the way to other kids.
  - If the child is new to Life Church first or second time to class. Take that opportunity to confirm with parents the child's needs with allergy, food, or social behavior if the child is older. In addition, express our joy to see them again making sure they know they matter to us!
  - More good questions you could ask If the child is at the diaper / bottle stage still please make sure to ask assuring questions to mom if she hasn't already offered

up everything about the child. Questions that are care related are what you are wanting to inquire about. Questions like: when was the last time diaper was changed? Will they be hungry during service? Do you have a preference on where to put dirty clothes for blow-outs? Do you have change of clothes in the diaper bag? Do they take a pacifier well? Do they bite? How often should we be asking about using the potty (for potty training kids)

- Put a label on the babies jacket / diaper / anything child brings in so it leaves with the correct parent.
- Please also make sure to tell moms of children 2 and under that we will contact them via txt message if help is needed with their child. Tell them to ENJOY SERVICE!

### **Parent interaction during pick-up**

- *When child is picked up after service we want to show the parent they were right to entrust us with their child. If the pick-up line is longer because you are thorough with your debrief of how service went for their child that is okay. We would rather be thorough and have parents talk about how well their child is taken care in the car ride home than getting in the car quickly and discussing how poor their child was cared for because they don't know how much care you actually provided.*
  - Debrief parents for ages 0-2 on whether the child ate the snack or bottle provided. Debrief parents on diaper changes, outfit changes and old outfit placement, debrief parents on all the items they brought and where they are (pacifiers, shoes/socks, special blankets or other special toys). If child is being potty trained, debrief parent on when potty break was taken.
  - Debrief parents on the child's behavior during service, good, bad, or ugly (we talk more on this later).
  - Debrief what the lesson was about so they can re-enforce the lesson throughout the week. This would be a good time to talk about the craft they did or didn't want to participate in and how the craft connects with God.
  - If it is appropriate remind parents of announcements of kid-min events coming up.

### **Parent interaction guide for conflict resolution with unruly child**

- The reality is when interacting with children there will be character issues that arise in some of the children from time to time. We do want to bring to surface the behavior issues with their child if its re-occurring on a weekly basis. There is an exception to this which is if the child displays very naughty behavior that needs to be addressed right away. For instance, if a child is biting or physically attacking other children that will need to immediately be addressed. If a child refuses to listen to the room authority in all ways

shapes or forms you will need to get the parent involved. Here is some tips on how to bring parents up to speed with the child's behavior:

- When parent/s walk up to be debriefed about their child have a nice greeting ready for them "Hello, I'm grateful for your support with little Jimmy". Be ready with an approachable body language. This means do not have your arms crossed or use louder than normal dialogue when speaking with parents.
  - When dialoging with the parent we have found the use of the "sandwich method". This method is one of the most effective methods for addressing their child's behavior because it disarms their defenses, and helps them see we are wanting to address these issues because we love them too.
  - The sandwich method goes like this. You say something good about the child, then you address the behavior issues directly and precisely, then you end with something good (this could be a re-iteration of the first item used).
  - Be ready to give specific examples of the behavior issues and how you attempted to address them in the room. (we cover room discipline in a different training doc). The more detail you can provide with the behavior issues the more you are equipping the parent for how they need to address the issue on their end.
  - You are not in control of how the parent received this information nor are you in control of how their discipline or address the issue with their child. You are responsible for how you relay this information. Do not attack the child verbally to the parent nor is it good to have alterations in your tone of voice. Just be calm and direct with facts not emotions when relaying the middle of the sandwich.
  - If the parent doesn't receive the information, by making a comment that he/she has never done this before, or that is not like them, or maybe they blame you or other kids in the class. At that point you NEVER ARGUE with the parent. This is not your role. You just simply report what took place and if the parent would like to speak with the Kid-Min pastor they are welcome to schedule a time and date to do so for further resolution to the issue.
    - Always do your best to leave parents with the understanding in what our purpose is with them. We are partnering with them to lead these kids into an encounter with God to bring about developing the destiny and purpose for their life with maturity and love.
- **Leave Parents with a positive**
    - Whatever you do as the pick-up is ending. Make sure to leave the parents with a reminder that regardless of the circumstance that took place this week we are looking forward to having them back next week! If they do not leave with this impression they may be left thinking they are not wanted back. If the child does not come back we sever the ability to help them develop in their destiny and

purpose for the Kingdom. We want the children back to lead them into the growth they are needing and wanting to have manifest in their life. This is ministry and ministry can be less than fluffy and roses at times. These difficult moments should always lead toward development and growth. Often times stretching and flexing where we haven't for a while can be a bit uncomfortable but totally necessary for what lays ahead.