



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
VOLUNTEER APPLICATION PACKET

What we are looking for – The application questions attached to this packet are designed to give us information to assist us in determining your suitability for placement as a Children's Ministry Volunteer. We are not looking for professionals or even the experienced; we are looking for those with hearts committed to our Lord Jesus Christ.

The rules - Volunteer will only be scheduled in the ministry upon completion of the three-part process below. This checklist and application will be kept in the volunteer applicant's file, all of which is kept confidential.

PART I: Before beginning Volunteer Application section of this package please read & keep:

- All Saints Participation Covenant.....p. 5
- All Saints Child Protection Guidelines.....p. 6 –8

PART II: Please complete and return along with this checklist:

- Children's Ministry Data p. 2
- Membership (or attendance) Data p. 2
- Personal Reference Data p. 2
- Personal Datap. 3
- Affirmation and Release.....p. 4

PART III: After completion & return of Part I & Part II, please complete:

- Attend Training then Read & Sign Children's Ministry Policies and Procedures Manual
 Provided to Applicant on: _____(Date)
 Signature Page Returned: _____(Date)
- Membership or Interview establishing relationship with Children's Ministry
 Interview Scheduled On: _____ @ _____am/pm
 Interviewer: _____ @ _____(location)

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DATA:

I am interested in (please check all that apply):

- Sunday School Teacher Children's Church Teacher
 Nursery/Infants Toddlers Pre - K & Kinder 1st & 2nd Grade 3rd & 4th Grade 5th Grade
 Greeter Administrative help during week Other: _____

Why do you desire to serve in the Children's ministry? _____

Do you have experience in ministering to children at another church Yes No If so, where? _____

Other experience ministering to children? _____

Do you have any special talents or abilities that you would like to share with God's children? _____

First-Aid Training? Yes No Date Completed: _____ CPR Training? Yes No Date Completed: _____

MEMBERSHIP DATA

Are you a member of All Saints PCA Austin? Yes No If yes, member since: _____

Member or not, how long have you been attending All Saints? Attending since: _____

Where did you attend before All Saints? _____

Have you ever applied to, worked for, or volunteered at All Saints before? Yes No
If yes, please give position(s) and date(s): _____

Are you currently attending any Sunday School classes, bible studies, community groups, etc.? Yes No
If so, which one(s)? _____

REFERENCES

Is there a pastor or elder at All Saints who knows you? _____

Please give us two other personal references (not related to you) whom we may contact:

- 1) Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____
Address _____
- 2) Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____
Address _____

PERSONAL DATA

Name: _____ Male Female
(First) (Middle Initial) (Last)

Do you have a maiden name or any other name you have formerly been known by? Yes No
If so, what was it? _____

Current Address Since: _____
(Mo/Yr) (Street) (City) (State/Zip)

Age: ___ DOB: ___/___/___ Social Security #: ___-___-___ Driver's License: _____

E-mail Address _____ Mobile: _____

Employer: _____ Occupation: _____

Marital Status: _____ Spouse's Name: _____

Names & ages of children: _____

Have you ever been convicted of, or pled guilty or no contest to, a criminal offense (felony or misdemeanor, except for minor traffic violations) Yes No

If yes, please explain, including the nature of the offense, date, court location, and all other information that would be helpful to us in considering your application.

Has a verdict or judgment ever been rendered against you in any civil action arising out of any personal act or conducts related to abuse or sexual abuse of a child or an adult with special needs? Yes No

If yes, please explain, including the nature of the conduct that formed the basis of the suit, the date, court location, and all other information that would be helpful to us in considering your application.

Has there been alcohol, drug, physical or sexual abuse in your family background? Yes No
If yes, what steps have you taken to minimize the impact of those issues for you?

AFFIRMATION AND RELEASE

By initialing each bullet point and signing below, I affirm that:

- _____ • The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references listed in this application to give All Saints PCA any information that they may have regarding my character and fitness for Children's Ministry. I waive any right that I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me in this application.

- _____ • I understand the responsibilities and all guidelines that pertain to the All Saints Participant Covenant (which includes expectations of a Children's Ministry Volunteer) and agree to uphold them.

- _____ • I have read and understand the All Saints Child Abuse Prevention and Safety Policies and Procedures and agree to abide by all requirements and policies therein.

- _____ • I also hereby authorize All Saints PCA Austin and/or its agents to make an independent investigation of my background, references, character, past employment, education, credit history, criminal, or police records, including those maintained by both public and private organizations and all public records for the purpose of confirming the information contained on my Application and/or obtaining other information, which may be material to my qualifications for employment (or voluntary participation) now, and if applicable, during the tenure of my employment (or voluntary participation) with All Saints to be rechecked every two years.

- _____ • I release All Saints PCA Austin and/or its agents, and any person or entity that provides information pursuant to this authorization, from any and all liabilities, claims, or law suits in regards to the information obtained from any and all of the above referenced sources used.

All Saints and its designated agents and representatives shall maintain all information received from this application in a confidential manner in order to protect the applicant's personal information.

The following is my true and complete legal name:

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Legal Name _____

Office use only:

Date Interviewed _____ Interviewer _____

National Child Abuse Registry verified? _____ Confirmation number _____

Name of Operator _____ Date _____

ALL SAINTS PARTICIPATION COVENANT

Taken from All Saints Children's Ministry Policies & Procedures Manual, Ch. 4, Volunteer Requirements

All Saints is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, volunteers, and paid caregivers who participate in Children's Ministry programs. The following policy statements reflect our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

- No one who has been convicted of, or pled guilty or no contest to, child abuse shall volunteer to work with children or youth in any church activity.
- All volunteers involved with children or youth of our church must complete the application, screening, training, and background check before beginning a volunteer assignment. All nonmembers interested in serving with the Children's Ministry must undergo an additional interview process and must regularly attend All Saints PCA for at least one year prior to beginning the application process.
- Adult volunteers shall observe the "Two-Adult Rule" while serving in the Children's Ministry. In the event of an unavoidable circumstance not permitting observance of the Two-Adult Rule, volunteers must follow the open-door policy so that no adult is ever alone with children or youth.
- All volunteers in Children's Ministry shall attend mandatory training by the church to keep volunteers informed of church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.
- All volunteers shall immediately report to their supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate (please see Child Protection Guidelines Reporting Procedures p. 3-5).
- All volunteers shall read and sign acceptance of the policies in the Volunteer Policies and Procedures Manual prior to commencing service.

In addition to the above policy statements and requirements for Children's Ministry volunteers, the following are the expectations of an All Saints PCA Children's Ministry volunteer, which reflect our commitment to serving the All Saints children:

- Regular church attendance.
- Being an example to the children in Christian conduct and service.
- Praying weekly for the children and the lesson.
- Lesson preparation (ahead of time).
- Punctuality: Showing up early to prepare and/or to relieve Sunday School Teachers
- Notifying the Children's Ministry Assistance of absences in advance.
- Keeping the classroom clean, returning materials to cabinets, leaving the classroom as it was found.
- Taking attendance and turning in Roster to Children's Supervisor.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Taken from All Saints Children's Ministry Policies & Procedures Manual, Ch. 8, Child Abuse Prevention

When Jesus' disciples tried to keep children away from him, he was quick to respond, "Let the children come to me." Jesus taught that children were to be included and provided for within the community of faith. Today, the church (of which All Saints PCA seeks to be a faithful representative) may be the only place where some children find the unconditional love and care they so desperately need to grow and thrive. As Christians, we must take our responsibilities to our children very seriously. We fail in our responsibilities if we neglect to take adequate precautions against abuse in our churches. It is unlikely that we can completely prevent child abuse in every situation, but it is possible for us to greatly reduce the risk by following a thorough practical policy of prevention. These Policies and Procedures are designed to safeguard, to the greatest extent practicable, the physical safety, emotional well-being and spiritual development of the children and youth of All Saints PCA. This is based on our knowledge of the widespread problem of abuse throughout our country, and the understanding that children are among the most vulnerable members of our community of faith.

These Policies and Procedures were prepared by the All Saints' PCA Children's Ministry, and a reviewed, revised document approved August 8, 2011.

Definitions

- **What is Child Abuse?** *Child Abuse* includes a wide range of acts and omissions, including acts causing mental, emotional, and physical injury and threatened physical injury to a minor. Child Abuse can even include failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent such harmful actions by another person.
- **What is Child Sexual Abuse?** *Child Sexual Abuse* is any sexual activity with a child by a person known or unknown to the child. The Texas Family Code defines Child Sexual Abuse as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct harmful to a child. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse, and it is against the law to make or possess child pornography or to display such material to a child. The abuser may be an adult, adolescent, or another child. Child Sexual Abuse may be violent or non-violent, involving touching and non-touching aspects. It is an exploitation of a child's vulnerability and powerlessness. The relationship between the abuser and the child, or consent by the child are irrelevant to a determination of whether Child Sexual Abuse has occurred. It is extremely difficult for a child to report Child Sexual Abuse, in part because very young children may not understand that a particular activity is not normal or accepted. Child Sexual Abuse is criminal behavior.

All Saints PCA Statement of Policy on Child Abuse and Child Sexual Abuse

A PRIMARY GOAL OF THE CHILDREN'S MINISTRY IS TO GUARD THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN IN ITS CARE. TO THIS END, IT IS THE POLICY TO REPORT ANY AND ALL CHILD ABUSE AND CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE TO STAFF AND APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES IN AN EXPEDIENT MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THESE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AND OTHERWISE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ALL APPLICABLE LAWS. ALL SAINTS PCA SHALL PROSECUTE OFFENDERS TO THE FULLEST EXTENT POSSIBLE.

Child Abuse Prevention: Requirements for Volunteers and Paid Caregivers

1. Application for Volunteers

Prior to any interaction with the minors of All Saints PCA, all volunteers will complete a Children's Ministry application. The Children's Ministry application, which will include these Child Abuse Prevention and Safety Policies and Procedures and a consent form for background checks through appropriate governmental agencies, must be signed by the Children's Ministry Applicant.

- Children's Ministry volunteers must be members of All Saints PCA prior to serving.
- OR, any nonmembers who have been in regular attendance of All Saints PCA for at least one year may begin the application, training, and background-check process prior to becoming members. Upon completing an additional screening procedure, including a mandatory interview with an All Saints PCA officer or staff person, the nonmember may be approved to serve with the Children's Ministry in a direct-contact child-care provider position prior to becoming a member to serve the Children's Ministry in a direct contact child care provider position.
- AND an interview is also required for Applicants who are minors regardless of their membership status.

2. Approval of Volunteers

Following submission of a Children's Ministry Application, the Children's Ministry Coordinator will review the application and perform a background check. No volunteer will be approved for Children's Ministry service without approval of the application and background check, which is subject to discretion of the All Saints PCA staff, taking into account the following nonexclusive criteria:

- No one shall serve the Children's Ministry who, in the belief of a Children's Ministry Committee Member, the Children's Ministry Coordinator, or Staff Member, may represent a potential threat of committing abuse or violating this policy.
- No one shall serve if she/he is known to have been previously convicted of, or pled guilty or no contest to, any crime arising out of any act or conduct involving sexual abuse, or any act or guilty conduct which is of a sexual, molesting, seductive, or criminally deviant nature, whether or not such conduct involved a child. This includes, but is not limited to, crimes involving pedophilic behavior (molestation of a pre-adolescent child), incest, rape, assaults on or the physical abuse of adults with special needs, murder, kidnapping, and pornography.
- No one shall serve as a care provider who has had a verdict or judgment rendered against him or her in any civil action arising out of any personal act or conducts related to abuse or sexual abuse of a child or an adult with special needs. This qualifying rule shall apply no matter how long ago the civil verdict occurred and judgment was rendered.

3. Initial training of volunteers

Following approval of completed application and background check volunteers will be trained by the Children's Ministry Coordinator (or another responsible person in charge). This training will include a review of these Policies and Procedures which applicant signed in the application.

4. Initial training of paid caregiver

Every paid caregiver (whether on behalf of an agency or hired directly by All Saints) in our ministry is required to complete an application process, which includes a background check.

- When a new paid caregiver is assigned to All Saints from an agency, they must complete and sign a W-9 for our records as well as review and sign acknowledgement of reading and agreeing to adhere to All Saints Child Abuse Prevention and Safety Policies and Procedures before they will be assigned to a room for the day or accepted back in to All Saints on an assignment.
- Before a paid caregiver is hired directly by All Saints and becomes an employee of All Saints, they must also complete the same requirements of all volunteers including an application, background check, interview, and signed Affirmation and Release of having read and agreeing to adhere to all Children's Ministries Policies and Procedures including All Saints Child Abuse Prevention and Safety Policies and Procedures before working in direct contact child care provider position.

5. Two-Adult Rule and Open-Door Policy

All Volunteers and paid caregivers are required to observe the Two-Adult Rule and the Open-Door Policy.

- The Two-Adult Rule requires that volunteers and paid caregivers make every reasonable effort to avoid situations in which they are alone with one or more minors without another adult present.
- The Open-Door Policy requires that in the event that the Two-Adult Rule cannot be observed under the circumstances for a period of time, the door is to be left open during the entirety of that time. All Saints PCA will employ a Children's Supervisor in the Children's Ministry area to allow for observation of classrooms throughout the sessions.
- Everyone is required to follow the classroom's bathroom-break procedures, which are crafted to be age-appropriate for each classroom and will prevent most deviations from the Two-Adult Rule.

6. Signs of Abuse

All staff, volunteers, and paid caregivers working with minor children will receive training in regarding the signs of child abuse, including child sexual abuse, and the steps to report any and all suspected child abuse.

Physical signs of molestation may include:

- Lacerations and bruises
- Torn or bloody underclothing
- Irritation, pain or injury to the genital area
- Difficulty with urination
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Venereal disease

Behavioral signs of molestation may include:

- Nightmares
- Anxiety when approaching the drop-off building/area (beyond normal separation anxiety)
- Nervous or hostile behavior toward adults
- Advanced sexual knowledge/behavior for age (promiscuous behavior)
- Withdrawal from church activities and friends

Verbal signs of molestation may include statements such as:

- "I don't like _____."
- "_____ does things to me when we're alone."
- "I don't like to be alone with _____."
- "_____ fooled around with me."

Mandatory Reporting of Abuse

The law requires a person to immediately report suspected and reported child abuse to the authorities and, in organizations such as All Saints PCA, to the appropriate individual in charge. If the Children's Ministry Director is unavailable, the volunteers/paid caregivers may contact the Children's Ministry Coordinator or other Staff Member of All Saints PCA. The individual reporting the alleged abuse is required to maintain strict confidentiality of all information about the alleged abuse, and shall not disclose any information to any person other than the persons named above and governmental authorities as required by law. **There is no need to interview the child; this will be conducted by a trained professional.**

Anyone who fails to report suspected abuse can be prosecuted for a Class B misdemeanor or, in extreme circumstances, may be subject to civil liability for money damages. Therefore, all employees and volunteers at All Saints PCA must adhere to the following procedures:

- In the event of suspected, reported, or discovered child abuse or violation of the Child Protection Guidelines of All Saints PCA, the employee or volunteer shall immediately notify the Children's Ministry Director, who will then report it to a pastor and the Session
- The Children's Ministry Director, will also immediately make a report to the local child protection service or law enforcement agency, within 48 hours of the alleged abuse.
 - For life threatening/emergency situations, call 911 immediately.
 - **1-800-252-5400** - Abuse Hotline toll-free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, nationwide.
 - **www.txabusehotline.org** - Report through secure site and receive a response within 24 hours
- Reports shall be documented in writing with the date of the report, the time of the report, the telephone number to which the report was made, the name of the recipient of the report, and a brief synopsis of the report. If at all possible, all oral reporting will be done in the presence of a recorded witness.
- Children's Ministry Director will also meet with the family involved to inform them of the incident or report.
- Confidentiality will be maintained. Therefore, only necessary individuals should be informed of alleged incident

Internal Response Procedures

- The official spokesperson for All Saints PCA shall be designated by the Session. All inquiries or requests for information from the media, attorneys or any other parties shall be referred to the official spokesperson. No person other than the official spokesperson is to release any information regarding any alleged incident of child abuse without the express approval of the official spokesperson. All communication by the official spokesperson to the media, congregation, and public will protect the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.
- We will take any allegation of child abuse seriously and will reach out in Christian love and support to the victim and the victim's family, extending whatever pastoral care resources are needed.
- We will treat the accused with dignity and respect. The accused person shall be temporarily relieved of his or her duties until the investigation is finished and the person cleared by the authorities. If the accused is a paid employee of our church, his or her income will be maintained, until allegations are cleared by authorities or until criminal charges are filed. If the accused is a member of our congregation we will reach out in Christian love and support to the accused and their family, extending whatever pastoral care resources are needed.
- We will fully cooperate with any authorities investigating an allegation of child abuse.