



kids & families

PARENT HANDBOOK



WELCOME.

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to Vintage Church. We're so glad you're here!

Vintage Church puts a very high priority on loving our children. We believe children are among the greatest of blessings and that it's our responsibility alongside parents to help shepherd the youngest members of our church. We do this in the hope that every child at Vintage grows up loving Jesus and learning how to know, live, and advance the gospel.

We know that parents desire the best environment for their children. Vintage Kids provides a safe, welcoming, and fun place for children, a place where parents can trust that their children will be cared for well. Vintage Kids is a strong ministry with dedicated leadership, established structure, and well-trained volunteers. As our ministry continues to thrive it's our greatest desire that your child will find a place in Vintage Kids to thrive as well.

Kayla Pleasants

Family Director, Vintage Church Downtown

VALUES

Vintage Kids exists to lead families in knowing, living, and advancing the gospel. We accomplish this mission by:

- POINTING FAMILIES TO JESUS CHRIST
- POINTING FAMILY MEMBERS TO ONE ANOTHER
- POINTING FAMILIES TO THE LOCAL CHURCH



We believe that only the gospel can change children, families, neighborhoods, and cities. As we minister the gospel to families, we are participating in Vintage Church's larger vision of city transformation.

How Does Vintage Kids Assist You As A Parent?

Every Christian parent wants to raise children who will grow up to love and trust Jesus. Parents deliberately search for the church that provides the most opportunities for their kids to grow up in the Lord. We want Vintage to be that church! Yet, as we continue to build our children's ministry, we must not neglect our homes—where children see our faith on display every day.

According to the Bible, parents have the primary responsibility for teaching our children about God. His word is meant to be prominent in our conversation and daily life with our kids. Training our children in godliness is not something that we can put off until they're older. In Deuteronomy 6:4-9, we read:

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

The call to train our children in godliness is comprehensive. According to Deuteronomy 6, we have responsibility to teach our children during the course of our daily routine, even in things like mealtime and bedtime.

Vintage Church recognizes that we have a responsibility as a church to walk alongside parents as they train their children in godliness. We want to equip parents to pray and plan for the spiritual development of their kids. We put great effort into providing many resources and ongoing training. Similarly we hope that our public ministry to children serves to reinforce the teaching of their parents.

STRUCTURE AND PROCEDURES

We desire to foster a loving and grace-filled atmosphere that is centered on the truth of God's Word in order to nurture children in the gospel. It is our belief that maintaining an environment that is safe, clean, and orderly removes potential obstacles for the gospel message. Therefore, we have structured our kids ministry in a way that commends the gospel to parents and their children.

Check-In/Check Out Procedures

When you enter the Vintage Kids area your first stop will be at one of the check-in stations outside of the Sanctuary. All children in the kids area must be checked in. If it is your first visit, a Kids volunteer will help you register your children with our check-in system. This process takes a few minutes, but once your information is on file future stops at the check-in station will be quicker.

Upon check-in, you will receive:

1. A nametag for your child
2. A security tag for you to keep and use to pick up your child that also acts as your pass back into the Vintage Kids area

Before dropping your child off in his/her classroom, we ask that you take your child to the restroom. Classrooms will open 15 minutes prior to regularly scheduled church activities and will close 15 minutes after the completion of our worship services. Please pick up your child promptly after the worship service.

If for any reason you are needed during the worship service, a volunteer will text you at the phone number you provided during the registration process. Parents will be notified after 15 minutes if their child remains inconsolable. While young children typically struggle with being dropped off for the first time, regular attendance and positive experiences will alleviate most separation issues over time.

Your security tag will match the alphanumeric code on your child's nametag. Only parents, legal guardians, or designated individuals may retrieve a child from the children's ministry area, and must present the appropriate claim



tag before their child will be released. During checkout, classroom volunteers will match the unique ID number on your child's nametag with the one on your security tag. Upon a successful match, you and your child may leave the Vintage Kids area. In the event you lose your security tag, you will be asked to show your driver's license. Your child's safety is always our first priority.

Age-Appropriate Instruction

From their earliest years, our nursery age children (newborn to walking) are taught basic Bible doctrines and stories as they are spoken in blessings and prayers. Our nursery is more than a babysitting service. It is the launching pad for nurturing the faith of the next generation. We seek to welcome children with nurture and prayer. In this way, our nursery forms an integral beginning for our children's ministry.

Our toddlers (walking through age 2) and preschoolers (ages 3 through 5) are also taught basic Bible truths. All kids at Vintage will be taught using an age-appropriate curriculum created by Vintage staff that corresponds with what families are learning in the sermon series on Sunday mornings. This curriculum includes key memory verses and catechism questions that guide and support learning, pointing to Jesus in every story. Moreover, children at this age level are challenged to participate in God's story by living out their faith in community. Our goal is to prepare them to fully participate in the life of Vintage Church.

Behavior Management

The effective spiritual formation of all our children requires a stable environment. The role of Vintage Kids is to support and supplement parental training by upholding high standards for behavior, respect, and discipline. Some of the expectations we have for your child include:

- Participation with a willing heart, being eager to learn and obey. His/her attitude should be respectful to authority.
- Avoiding being disruptive or distracting to the mission and purpose of the children's ministry.
- Disrespect, whether verbally, by gesture, in attitude, or by action, is unacceptable.
- Misbehavior, including (but not limited to) persistent talking, distracting others, not following instructions, ignoring instructions or directions, or interacting inappropriately with others in the class, is unacceptable.

If your child is being disruptive or unruly, volunteers are trained to follow a "three-strike" process for discipline:

1ST INSTANCE Immediate verbal correction

2ND INSTANCE The class volunteer has a one-on-one discussion with your child while remaining in a public setting

3RD INSTANCE The class volunteer will notify you, explain your child's behavior, and ask you to remove your child from the classroom for the remainder of the worship service.

With the goal of assisting you in the effective training and instruction of your child, teachers and Kids Ministry leaders will talk with you about any consistent behavioral problems we are experiencing with your child. Sometimes kids will be kids, and we understand! But Scripture does teach that proper training and expectations are crucial to raising godly children. (Proverbs 22:6)

No child at Vintage Church will be subject to: corporal punishment (e.g. rough handling, ear pulling, shaking, slapping, hitting, spanking, etc.); emotional abuse (e.g. name calling, shaming, threatening, humiliation, yelling, etc.); or the use of physical restraint (unless necessary to protect others from harm).

Appropriate Touch

We believe that touch is a powerful and important component of working with children. It can communicate warmth and care, and can enhance trust and safety when used with common sense and concern. When misused, touch can become destructive. We think that this is a critical issue, and we want you to know that we are sensitive to and respect the boundaries of your child.

FOR ALL KIDS VOLUNTEERS, WE DEFINE APPROPRIATE TOUCH AS:

→ **For infants: holding, patting, hugging, and rocking**

→ **For toddlers: hugging and holding**

→ **For preschoolers and school-aged children: handshaking, patting arms/shoulders, side-to-side hugging**

For the safety of your child and our volunteers, we believe that it is never appropriate for a volunteer to be alone with one or more children at any time. At least two adults are present in each classroom at all times.

Incident Reports

Although infrequent, occasions may arise in which your child is involved in a minor incident, such as an accident that causes injury. Our incident reports allow us to communicate the details of such an event so that you know what happened and how the situation was handled.

Food/Medicine

Parents should label all items (such as bottles, cups, diaper bags, wipe containers, clothing, pacifiers, etc.) with their child's first and last name. Parents should notify teachers of any allergy or special circumstances their child may have.

Feeding young children is a serious responsibility. Children should be fed before coming to church. Infants in the nursery will be given formula, milk, juice, or water when parents provide these items with written instructions. Time and circumstances do not allow for spoon-feeding. Please note that volunteers are not permitted to dispense medication to your child.

A nursing room is available in the Kids area so that you may comfortably and discretely feed your child. Live audio is available in this room and allows you to continue listening to the sermon.



SAFETY POLICIES

Ensuring a safe environment is crucial to our mission. We observe the following policies for the safety and security of all children and volunteers.

Our Safety and Care team keep a watchful eye over the Kids area to ensure that only authorized persons have access to hallways, restrooms, and classrooms.

All of our volunteers participate in an extensive application process, including undergoing a nation-wide background check that screens for criminal and sexual offenses. Formal training is offered throughout the year, covering our philosophy of ministry, policies and procedures, curriculum, and guidelines for effective and age-appropriate classroom activities and instruction.

A team of two or more volunteers staffs all classrooms. Under no circumstances is a child to be left in a classroom or anywhere unattended. A parent must stay with a child until a teacher arrives.

Vintage Kids has an open policy so that all parents/guardians have access to their children at all times. However, we request that if you need to check on your child, please have your security tag ready and ask the volunteer at the check-in desk to assist you. Please keep in mind that going into a classroom may upset your child (he or she may think that it is time to go), and it may upset the other children.

Sanitation and Hygiene Policy

The very nature of childhood behavior can create an environment that has the potential to spread infection. Therefore, it is our commitment to try and maintain the safest and cleanest atmosphere possible to ensure the health and welfare of all children.

Strict hand washing with soap and water is of utmost importance in preventing the spread of infection. All personnel at Vintage Kids are instructed on proper hand washing techniques and appropriate times to wash their hands.

All linens will be laundered after each individual use. They are not shared among different children during one session.

Mattresses, toys, and furniture will be washed with disinfectant solution after each use.

Sickness Policy

If your child is sick, please respect others by keeping him or her with you. If your child shows signs of sickness (e.g. high fever, vomiting, diarrhea, severe coughing, colored nasal drainage, pink eye, head lice, undiagnosed rash, open skin lesions, and any infectious disease), we reserve the right to ask you to remove him or her from the classroom.

An infectious disease is any disease that spreads from one person to another person. These include influenza, chicken pox, HIV, tuberculosis, hepatitis, etc. We believe that God has called us to minister to all people and will, therefore, strive to provide a safe environment that is safe and accepting of everyone.

Children who appear, or become, ill at church will be isolated from the other children, and the parent/guardian will be summoned immediately. Parents are asked to contact a member of the Vintage Kids leadership team if their child contracts a communicable disease (such as chicken pox, head lice, fifth disease, etc.) after attending a Vintage Kids gathering. Parents are encouraged to keep immunizations up-to-date.

The medical condition of any child or Vintage Kids volunteer will be disclosed only to the extent necessary to minimize the health risk to the person and others. Vintage's elders and the Vintage Kids leadership team will be provided with the appropriate information concerning any special precaution that may be necessary. Vintage Kids will not disclose the health status of any individual without the express written consent and permission of that individual, or in the case of a child, their parent or guardian. Parents of children involved in Vintage Kids activities will not be privy to any confidential medical information.

The Vintage Kids sickness policy exists for the protection of the children in our care. We regret that it sometimes means not admitting children that have been brought to our public gatherings.



Restroom and Diaper Policy

Parents are requested to use only disposable diapers while at church gatherings. Unfortunately we do not have the facilities to properly handle or clean cloth diapers. Please bring an adequate supply of disposable diapers and wipes as well as an extra change of clothes for all infants and toddlers.

Adult staff volunteers may accompany children to the restroom and stand outside while the child uses the restroom. If children need assistance or supervision while in the restroom, more than one adult must always be present. No adult will ever be alone with a child. It is the policy of Vintage Kids that all diaper changes and toilet assistance will be done in the presence of two adults.

If there are special instructions or your child has special needs regarding diaper changes or restroom visits, please discuss them with the volunteers in your child's classroom. The Kids area has restrooms that are reserved for you and your children.

Emergency Action Plan

FIRST AID Although we strive to maintain the safest environment possible, the nature of children's activities occasionally leads to accidents. A fully equipped first aid kit is accessible in the Kids area per the discretion of the Vintage Kids leadership team.

It is the policy of Vintage Kids to first notify the child's parents in the event of a medical incident. In the event that the parents are not immediately available, childcare workers will administer appropriate treatment measures such as applying pressure or a bandage to a bleeding wound. No pharmacological treatment, oral or topical, will be administered. Life-threatening situations will, of course, be handled as emergencies with appropriate treatment measures being immediately instituted. 911 and parents will be notified immediately. Vintage Church will not be responsible for any "Good Samaritan" assistance offered by any of its members.

FIRE In the event of a fire, personnel have been trained to remain calm, count all children in the room and lead the children out of the room in an organized, quick fashion, following the evacuation route posted in each classroom. Children will be lead through the Kids check-in area and out the back door. We will congregate in the Blount-Morgan Public Parking lot, on the other side of the IMAX Theatre from Vintage. You may meet your child in this area. Locate your child's class and follow checkout procedures as if you were in the classroom.

POWER OUTAGE Flashlights are readily available to all classrooms (in their storage closet). If a power outage were to occur, children will be entertained and kept secure until their parents arrive.

TORNADOES, STORMS, AND SEVERE WEATHER Children will be calmly escorted to an enclosed part of the building, such as an inside hallway or the lowest section of the building. They will be taught how to sit with their back against the wall, knees tucked under their chins, arms wrapped around the knees, and head bent down. All children will be accounted for, and efforts will be made to calm and entertain the children.

EARTHQUAKES Personnel have been taught to keep children away from heavy hanging objects, tall or heavy furniture, ruptured hot water heaters, gas lines, flammable liquids, and electrical wires. Children will be gathered under a supported doorway or sturdy table and kept calm and secure.

SUSPICION OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT In the case of suspected parental abuse, staff and servants will report concerns to the Vintage Church leadership. It is not the responsibility of the reporting person or the staff to substantiate any allegations or suspicions. Rather, we are responsible as a church to comply with the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and cooperate fully with Child Protection Services and law enforcement officials in our community. In such a process confidentiality will be upheld at all times.

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The basic format and much of the wording used in this document is taken from the "SojournKids Parent Handbook," a document prepared by Sojourn Community Church in Louisville, Kentucky (www.sojournchurch.com).



