

## VBS YOUTH TRAINING

### **Service in VBS is a Mission and a Calling**

- Who is impacted by FBC Allen's VBS and why is it important?
  - The participants, their parents, the church body who serves them
  - VBS introduces many families to Christ
- A teen helper can positively influence or negatively affect every person they touch in the course of service
- Your service is invaluable to a successful VBS

### **Teen helpers should view their role as a job**

- You will have a "boss" – your classroom adult teachers
- As with any job you'll have, a Christian should always perform their jobs with:
  - Excellence (Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, Col 3:23)
  - A cheerful heart (Do everything without complaining and arguing. Phil 2:14)
- You can be reassigned.

### **Job Description**

Tasks teens can be expected to help with:

- Giving each child a nametag and make sure they have a bracelet each day
- Taking attendance in pew each day
- Giving one-on-one help to kids during crafts and other activities
- Keeping track of kids, transitioning children between activities & settings
- Setting up for the next activity this is a huge help to adult teachers!
- Helping keep the room clean/organized
- Preparing any take home material: group pictures, etc.
- Leading classroom games/activities, memory verses, skit to introduce story, or tell story
- Giving extra attention to children with special needs of any kind (loner, disabled, shy, etc)
- Helping maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning by sitting quietly by the kids and helping them stay focused if they get distracted. It is so important that the kids have fun as well as can learn about a relationship with Christ. (this is extra important)
- Alert your class teacher to your scheduling conflicts (arriving late, leaving early, etc)
- If you are unclear what to do, ask the teachers

## **Transitions and Taking Children Outside of Classrooms**

- Transitions are important as this is when children can get separated. Each youth helper should be spaced among the children (one in front, one in middle, one at rear) so that ample volunteers are visually tracking each child on the journey between settings
- Make sure all children are identified with name tags in case they are lost during transition (especially important for preschoolers)

## **Safety**

- We do things to **be safe** and to **appear safe...** perceptions are important
- Physical handling of children (no grabbing or jerking a child who is misbehaving)
- No horseplay or piggy-back rides or picking up the children
- Volunteers should never be alone with a child except when transitioning from one environment to another and in plain view (frequently traveled and public hallway)
- Don't encourage children to sit in your lap

## **Bathroom situations**

- No child should ever be alone with a single teen or adult, especially in bathroom settings. Teens/teachers may stand at edge of door in bathroom as child uses restroom. Always have at least 2 people (one person must be adult) nearby and in view of toileting situations.

## **Snacks from Fall-out Room**

- Eat all snacks inside the fall-out room which is the snack room for helpers
- Coordinate your break times with your teacher. They will make sure all youth have break time, but remember that going to the volunteer refreshment room is secondary to serving.

## **Check-In**

- Don't let parents leave a child with you without going through proper daily check-in
- Sit in the pews interspersed among the children; do not stand or sit in the aisles in the Worship Center. If there is not enough room on the pew, only 1 person from your class may sit on floor in the **main aisle**. Others may sit in the **side aisles** if there is still not enough room.
- Talk to the children and ask about their lives as they come in each day. Make connections.

## **Check-out: End of Day Procedures**

- Only release children to person listed on release sheet – any exceptions to be made only by adults.
- Be mindful of the importance of the teachers' interaction with parents during this time.

## **Handling Misbehaving Children**

The **R's** of Behavior Management:

**Request** a child to stop disruptive or harmful behavior. Give children the freedom to fidget. If necessary, tap a child lightly on the shoulder and ask them to refrain from disrupting behavior.

**Redirect** misbehaving children. Ask the child a question on an unrelated subject to break the focus or the conflict. Provide the child an alternate toy or ask the child to help with a task in another part of the room if necessary.

**Remove** obstacles. Recognize the underlying cause. If the child is tired, suggest a chill time on a bean bag. If the child is hungry, provide him a small snack. If a certain toy is causing constant conflict, tell the toy “goodbye” and put it out of eyesight for everyone.

**Responsibility** for instilling consequences or hard conversations should always be with adults. Teens should not be the ones to create “time outs” for the child. Teens are NEVER to talk to a child's parent about behavior challenges.

## **Classroom Visitors**

- On Thursday when counselors come and ask to speak with children who have questions about Christ, a teen worker should be stationed in the hallway to intercept if the visits are during story time. This is an important time and these visits can be disruptive to those not leaving the class. The teen worker stationed in the hallway should quietly open door and whisper to another teen in the room the name of the person the counselor wishes to see.

## FOR ALL VBS VOLUNTEERS

### Do's

- Do lead by example: listen quietly when teachers are talking, demonstrate respect to teachers and other teens and children, be attentive during lesson, be especially attentive during Pastor Chad's gospel presentation
- Do pray for each child each day. Ask God to prepare you and the teachers before and during VBS
- Do ask the kids about their interests
- Do remember that the kids look up to you! Let them know they matter to God
- Do spend time talking to each child, not just the pretty, or smart, or socially adept child
- Do talk to the kids about the story, or ask them to recite the memory verses during snack time or in the mornings when sitting in the pews with them
- Do encourage all kids to participate in activities but do NOT force them. You participate, too!
- Do associate with your other teen friends after VBS or during break time, not during class time
- Do tell adult teacher before taking a child to restroom or nurse, etc.
- Do ask the teacher if there are things that you would like to do like lead an activity or tell the story... show initiative
- Do protect the privacy of child & family
- Do come to the work days as much as possible and assist with cutting out games and decorations and reading the lessons before VBS starts
- Do be responsible: if you volunteer for a task, make sure you follow through and do a good job. Don't leave it until the night before. Prepare in advance
- Do be involved during rec and music. When the children see you participate it encourages them
- Do remember that you are there to assist, lead by example, and create a fun, safe, and calm environment in which the children can learn about Christ. Make the children your priority and leave interactions with other teens to times in the break room and after VBS each day
- Do let a child hold your hand if they want to as it may reassure the younger ones
- Do be willing to do whatever your teachers ask you to do with a positive attitude. The more helpful you are, the more willing the teachers will be to give you greater responsibility. Make a good name for yourself!
- Do remember that you are valuable and needed!
- Do wear nametag and bracelet each day so that teachers and parents know you are an approved worker.
- Do spread yourselves among the children during the story time. Don't sit with other workers. Sit with the kids on the floor and be available to quietly and gently tap a child's shoulder who is being distracting. Don't shush them (this is actually quite distracting in itself), simply show them the shush sign (finger to lips)
- Do look for the lonely child and befriend him/her
- Do affirm those kids who listen quietly during story as well as those who have good comments or questions
- Do show complete respect to your teachers... even, and especially if the teacher is your parent! Don't make your parent or VBS leadership have to ask you to be respectful. How embarrassing! ☺
- Do be willing to assist with whatever you are asked. The teachers need to know they can count on you to do what they ask and to do it with a good attitude.

## **Do Not's**

- Don't doodle, talk, get up, or fidget, during Pastor Chad's Thursday gospel presentation.
- Do not use cell phone use during VBS unless in the break room. You are needed!
- Do not take pictures – No texting pics of kids, no posting pics to Facebook, etc.
- Do not carry children, no piggyback rides or allow kids to sit in your lap
- Do not be a distraction
- Don't disappear!! Never leave unless the teacher authorizes it for break time or restroom break
- Don't play favorites. Remember the child who acts out may need extra attention and love and encouragement and you're just the person to do that!
- Don't be afraid to lead games or activities. Practice with your teacher to get comfortable. Prepare beforehand and don't wait till the night before

**DO REMEMBER TO BE A GOOD and GODLY EXAMPLE AT ALL TIMES!!**