

rvckids Playbook

At River Valley Church we believe in following Jesus together. Our Kids Ministry Team endeavors to live this vision. Thank you for having an interest in this ministry. We hope you will be blessed by the experience as you serve Jesus and His kids at RVC.

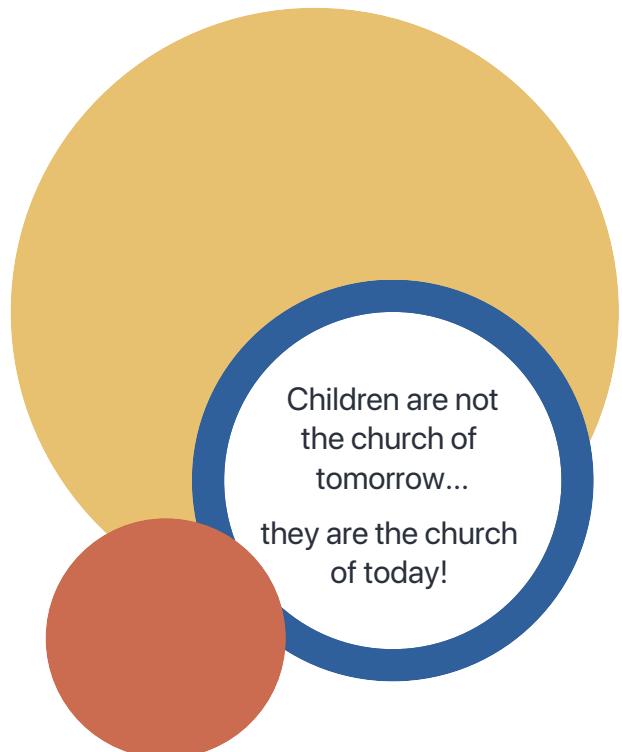
This playbook is designed to be a resource to create and maintain a thriving Kids Ministry at RVC and to provide a positive and rewarding experience for all volunteers. We want you to be comfortable and fruitful serving in the capacity to which God is calling you.

Our Mission

The mission of RVCKids is to cultivate an environment where children can deeply love, experience, and know Jesus. Our children are not just the future of the church, they are the church. We desire to partner with parents to lay the foundation where their children can be holistically formed by the power of the Gospel.

Our Strategy

Every service, we seek to connect children to Christ through creative activities, musical worship, Biblically-sound teaching, and a warm and relational small-group time. Each of our classrooms provide an energetic, engaging, and safe environment for children to meet friends, have fun, and most importantly grow in their relationship with Jesus. We also look to partner with parents by equipping them with tools and resources for their children during the week.



Our Core Values

Gospel Centered

We want children from a young age to know the unified story of the Bible - God's redemptive plan which unfolds and leads up to Jesus coming to earth, dying, and saving us from our sin, and offering them the gift of abundant and eternal life. More than just teaching Biblical morality, we want the entire ministry to be centered on Jesus.

Relational, Safe, & Warm Volunteers

We want our kids to interact with incredibly welcoming, kind, and hospitable volunteers across the board. We want the kids to walk into a church where they are noticed, smiled at, and welcomed into the utmost layer of safety and care from those shepherding them. We value the kids feeling known, cared for, and loved, which reflects the character of God. As they see this in the volunteers, they get a glimpse of the kindness of God.

Relevant & Contemporary Curriculum

Our gospel message never changes, but we value packaging the gospel and curriculum in a compelling and relevant way which reaches the next generation where they are at. We want to deliver an appealing and exciting product of excellence and fun for the kids.

Youthful, Upbeat, Relational Atmosphere

We value creating high-energy activities and an energetic environment for the kiddos. We want the kids to experience an interactive time not only with the Word, but with others. We want them to meet friends, make memories, and be excited about coming back to church each weekend.

Supporting Families

We desire to partner with parents to lay the foundation where their children can be transformed by the power of the Gospel. We value coming alongside parents by offering resources, support, and guidance as they raise their children in the Lord.

What our Kids Team Members do... COACH!

Connect

Every interaction is intentional!

- We introduce ourselves, break the ice, even when it feels awkward.
- Commit to learning and calling kids by name – every kid desires to be known.
- Build trust with kids – we use lots of smiles, high fives, & side hugs.
- Help kids connect with other kids – kids take steps towards Jesus in community.
- Connect with other volunteers – kids volunteers thrive in community with other kids team members.

Own the Circle

Every minute matters!

- Assume responsibility for the spiritual development of your kids – no small group accidentally becomes a great group...you must lead it there.
- Spiritual growth happens in circles more than rows – small groups discussions more than sermons!
- Own the role! Our role is not just to read lesson plans, but to facilitate conversations of spiritual development, coming anticipatory and prepared, and being flexible to change plans in order to keep kids engaged.

Actively Participate

Everyone looks to you!

- Kids won't go where we point - they follow where we lead!
- Kids volunteers are the example, not the exception!
- Model how it's done – worship, games, competition, sharing, etc.

Challenge

Everyone has a next step as Christ draws them deeper!

- Spiritual development is a step-by-step journey - the Spirit is leading every kid to the next step.
- Regularly pray to help each kid identify a next step - baptism, serving, sharing, spiritual practice, giving, inviting a friend to church, etc.
- Identifying a kid's next step is just the beginning – walking alongside and encouraging them to follow through is where it counts!

RVCKids Volunteer Best Practices

On the Weekend

- Wear your RVCKids shirt and name badge.
- Look presentable: practice proper hygiene, good grooming, clean and appropriate attire.
- Be fully present - no phone zone.
- Arriving 10 minutes early to get situated before kids arrive is helpful!
- Use the provided curriculum and full game plan provided by RVCKids ministry.
- Consistency matters – your kids notice when you’re not there.
- Communicate to your Kids Director when you will be unable to attend.
- Get connected with other Kids staff – it’s more fun to serve with friends.
- No taking photos of children on your personal device for any reason.

Periodically

- Be present at annual children’s staff meeting/lunch.
- Attend scheduled trainings.

You and Jesus

- Stay spiritually healthy. We lead kids to greater spiritual health when we are there ourselves.
- Regularly attend weekend services. A good motto is serve 1 hr...and attend church the other 1 hr. (If you serve all morning/every week, we’d strongly encourage Sat. Night Service or Life Group)
- Read your Bible, have an active prayer life, and we’d encourage a RVC Life Group.
- At all times, in and out of church, conduct yourself in a positive manner that upholds the highest standard of Christlikeness and Biblical integrity.
- Make sure your family comes before your ministry.

Safety and Security

RVC is committed to ensuring the health and safety of our kids and volunteers.

These policies and procedures are to be followed by all volunteers serving within our RVCKids ministry. We rely on our volunteers to assist in maintaining a safe environment for our kids.

(see page 5 for details)

Policies

- RVCKids volunteers and RVC Safety Team are the only people permitted in designated kids space.
- All volunteers must wear their name tag and shirt while they are serving.
- Kids volunteers under the age of 18 are permitted to serve based on Kids Director discretion.
- There should always be at least two Kids volunteers with a child; this is to ensure you are never left alone with a child. A volunteer should not be left alone even with their own child while they are serving. Some guests/attenders would not be able to distinguish the relationship between the parent or legal guardian and the child.
- An adult is never to be alone in the restroom with a child - if assistance is required, parents will be notified via pager or text.
- Female volunteers are the only ones to change diapers.
- No food in the classroom except the provided snacks for the kids.
- Volunteers are not to take kids home from the weekend service.
- For any children still in diapers/pull-ups: volunteers will ask families at drop-off if they are comfortable with a volunteer changing their child's diaper. If not, we will call parents to do that.
- At check-in, parents are given a name tag for their child with a duplicate for them to keep - the duplicate tag must be shown at check-out or their child will not be released.

Our Safeguards

- ALL employees and volunteers 18 yrs and above who work with children are required to pass a background check before beginning ministry.
- No registered sex offender will be allowed to serve as an employee of the organization or as a volunteer in any ministry that involves contact with children.
- All volunteers will submit a general RVCKids application, RVC Alignment form and Vision Agreement.
- Volunteers must actively attend RVC.
- After the volunteer & alignment form has been filled out, references have been checked, the campus kids director has met with the prospective volunteer, and they have been closely observed for the first month of volunteering, they may begin serving in an official capacity.
- Volunteers must complete the volunteer application and provide two non-family references that RVC will contact before the start of volunteer service.
- Ministry Safe Training is highly encouraged for volunteers to take - this is an online training that our church provides supplementally for those seeking additional safety training for working with children. If you have additional questions contact Michelle Rutherford, RVC HR Director

Camps/ Special Events

- Volunteers who desire to serve for overnight events will be hand-selected by the camp team. If a volunteer approaches the leader about serving, the decision to allow them to serve will be based on need, character, and relationship with RVC. Proper vetting/background checks will be followed.
- Should volunteers with specific skill sets be needed for RVCKids Events like winter/summer camp (bus drivers, camp cooks, medical staff), said volunteers will be background-checked, vetted, and met with multiple times in advance to make sure this will be a good fit for the event.

Physical contact with all children should be appropriate and limited

- The use of appropriate physical contact in a public setting to show support, encouragement, and healthy affection is acceptable if the child is receptive to this form of emotional expression. However, adults must exercise good judgment and never force any physical contact on a child.
- Examples of appropriate displays of affection are limited to ... handshakes, high fives, fist pumps, or a side hug.
- Infants - age 2 can be held, rocked, or soothed as needed.
- Kids volunteers may not have kids sit on their laps at any time.
- All communication to a child under the age of 13 (phone calls, texts, emails, social media, etc.) must be directed to the parent. Any communication with a child that is deemed inappropriate will not be tolerated (in person, phone calls, text, email, social media, etc.).

In order to provide a healthy environment

If you observe a child attempting to check-in to your classroom with any of the following symptoms, please locate your Kid's Director...Fever, vomiting, green or yellow runny nose, excessive coughing, questionable rash, discharge in or around eyes or any communicable diseases.

If a child suffers a minor injury during service

- For minor injuries, you may perform basic first aid using the provided kits, but NO medication of any kind should be given—only bandages and cold compresses. If there is any blood, you must use gloves to provide basic first aid.
- Complete Injury/Incident Report
- Deliver the form to the Kids Director or RVC staff member.
- Communicate with the parents at check-out. Explain what happened and assure them that all was done to comfort their child. Have the parent sign the Injury/Incident Report. If you feel uncomfortable answering the parent's questions, locate the Kids Director for assistance.

If a child displays physical harm

- Toward self: speak calmly to the child and ask if they need to take a break. If necessary, escort the child to a quiet area, keeping in mind there should always be two adults with the child.
- Towards others: separate the kids to different areas of the room. Do not take kids outside of the classroom, this could result in running. Stand between the kids and direct their activity to something which will distract them from the present negative behavior until the situation can be assessed.
- If behaviors continue or escalate, locate the Kids Director.

If a child is unmanageable in class

- Take the child aside (but still in the room - always two adults), be empathetic, and ask the child how you can help. Allow them to sit out if they don't want to participate.
- Only use calm words to correct, never lay a hand on a child in discipline or in anger
- Pull in one of the on-site directors
- Parent will be paged in service if situation does not deescalate

What to do if you suspect abuse

Contact a Kids Director. We are all mandatory reporters, and your Kids Director will guide you through this process. If possible, contact the Kids Director while the child is still in class. Only discuss this matter with the Kids Director.

Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline

- Call toll-free 1.855.503.7233 (SAFE)
- Please be sure to connect with the RVCKids Director before making any hotline reporting.