

Ebenezer Baptist Church

Nursery Handbook

2008-2009

“People of God, Reaching Everyone with the Love of Christ”

**Ebenezer Baptist Church
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Florence, SC 29501
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**”Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”
Proverbs 22:6**

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Rev. Ed Self – Associate in Worship
Pam Gaddy – Minister of Education
Justin McAlpin – Minister of Youth
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Introduction

Welcome to the Nursery of Ebenezer Baptist Church. It is our desire that every effort is made to promote a safe and healthy environment for your child. At the same time we want to share God's love in a way that will encourage your child to feel at home here at Ebenezer. Our Nursery policies are stated for the purpose of promoting understanding and consensus between parents and the Nursery Staff. Thank you for letting us care for your children.

This handbook is divided into two sections: one for parents of Nursery children and one for the Nursery staff. It would be helpful if both parties were thoroughly familiar with all of the information in this handbook.

Finally, if you have any concerns or suggestions about the Nursery Ministry, please call the Children's Minister, Nursery Team Hostess, or any member of the Nursery Team listed in the front of the Handbook. We welcome your comments.

Dear Friends:

One of the most blessed ministries at Ebenezer Baptist Church is our nursery ministry. It is truly one of the facets of EBC that brings young families into our fellowship. An old adage of church is "if you love my children, then you must love me." Another perspective on that is "if you love my children, then I will love you." That is how important our nursery ministry is at Ebenezer.

I am grateful that you have chosen to participate in this ministry. To the parents of little ones, I want you to know that we DO love your children. We know they are a gift from God. We believe they are the future of the kingdom of God, and therefore of Ebenezer Baptist Church. We will do everything in our power to help them and be a positive influence in their lives.

To the volunteers in this ministry, I want you to know that this ministry could not happen without you. You are a vital cog that makes this machine work. Your church appreciates you, and so does your pastor.

The following handbook is a great resource and tool for our nursery ministry. It is the culmination of hours of research, prayer, and hard work. Please know that every item in this handbook was carefully researched and placed because it is seen as a benefit to this ministry and to our children.

Thank you again for being part of the Nursery Ministry at Ebenezer!

Dr. David R Wike, Senior Pastor


Nursery Ministry Mission and Objectives

Mission:

Our mission as the Nursery ministry of Ebenezer Baptist Church is to provide a Christian environment for all children to be nurtured in a dignified and loving manner, and to come alongside parents as they seek to raise their children in the love and admonition of the Lord.

Objectives:

For Parents – The Nursery Ministry desires to provide a safe, loving environment for children; so that so parents can feel comfortable as they attend worship, Sunday School, and other church activities.

For Children – The Nursery Ministry not only provides a safe, secure environment for its children, but also seeks to foster in our children a love for God, a love for His Word, and love and respect for others.

For Nursery Staff – The Nursery Ministry desires to equip and to provide opportunities for service for parents and other adults who share a heart for children and their Christian upbringing.

This handbook containing all policies, procedures, mission statements, contact and any other information that pertains to the Nursery Ministry, is for every family who has nursery age children and for the Nursery Volunteers who staff the Nursery each week.

Section I

Nursery Parent Information

Facilities:

The nurseries are available 15 minutes prior to the 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. Sunday morning worship services, 6:00 p.m. Sunday evening worship and 6:15 p.m. Wednesday Mid-Week Activities.

General ages are:

Infants – Newborns to beginning walker

Toddler 1 - beginning walker to age 2

Toddler 2 – ages 2 & 3

At age 4, children are invited to worship in Children's Church at the 8:30 a.m. worship hour or with their parents in the 11:00 a.m. worship hour.

The nursery sign-in desk is located in front of the baby room on first floor of Young Hall. The nursery hostess or nursery team member is there to assist with sign-in, visitors and other needs during the services.

Nursery Staff:

Our nursery is staffed by nursery parents and adult members of EBC. Each room has at least 2 adults who serve once a quarter in the nursery. Youth, age 16 or older, may serve as additional helpers only in the toddler room provided there are at least 2 adults (age 18 or older) present in that room. Please contact the Nursery Hostess or Nursery Ministry Team if you would like to serve in the nursery. Because volunteers staff our nursery on Sunday morning, we ask that ALL nursery parents volunteer once a quarter. The Nursery Ministry Team will mail a quarterly schedule, and reminder cards are sent each week.

Training:

A nursery staff orientation will be scheduled at the beginning of the church year for first time parents. A thorough explanation of policies and procedures, expectations of staff, information on child development, and emergency procedures will be discussed. First aid and CPR training will be made available as requested.

Enrollment:

Children of Ebenezer Baptist Church members will be sent a nursery packet (bib, diaper bag tag, Bible, and copy of the Nursery Handbook) after the child's birth. New members and regular attenders will be sent the packet after 3 visits to the nursery or sooner, if requested. The guidelines for enrollment and necessary items are explained in these nursery packets. For enrollment, children need an

information card and diaper bag tag. These items can also be obtained at the nursery welcome desk.

Nursery Ages:

All children age 4 (4K) and over are invited to attend Children's Church at the 8:30 a.m. worship hour or to attend the 11 a.m. worship with their parents, unless there are other programs for their age. Due to safety and security reasons NO children should stay in the Nursery unless they are under the age of four.

Enrollment Card/Sheet:

The purpose of the enrollment card/sheet is to help the nursery staff have the information necessary to take the best care of your child. A parent should complete the card for each child enrolled in the nursery and return it to the nursery coordinator as soon as possible so that the child's information can be entered into our database. The family password is required to be on file in case the parent ticket is lost before the child is picked up. The parent picking up the child will use the family password instead. The original enrollment form is kept by the Children's Minister in a secure location.

Diaper Bag Tag:

The EBC diaper tag should be attached to the children's diaper bag when they come to the Nursery for any service. Tags can be obtained at the nursery desk on Sunday mornings or from the Nursery Team Hostess. Parents may use their own nametag on their diaper bag if they choose, but all bags must have identification.

Sunday Morning Check-in Procedures

Visitors:

Visitors, who are not enrolled in the Nursery, should check in at the Nursery desk. The Nursery Hostess or a member of the Nursery Ministry Team will help visitors to the age appropriate room and guide them through the check-in procedure.

Check-in and Checkout Procedures For Enrolled Children:

1. Please arrive a few minutes early so that you will have time to check-in your child at the computer kiosk.
2. Take the printed sticker and put it on your child's back. Keep the other sticker to present to the nursery worker when you return to pick up your child.

3. Make sure that your diaper bag has identification on it. If you need a tag, ask the nursery hostess for one as you sign in.
4. Please hand your child over the gate to the nursery worker, communicating any verbal instructions to the nursery worker that may not be printed on your child's tag. These will be written on the white marker board inside the nursery room.
5. Enjoy worship and Sunday School.
6. Return promptly to the nursery to pick up your child. Hand your parent sticker to the worker who will check the numbers to make sure that they correspond to the number on the sticker on your child. If you have lost your ticket, then you will need to use your family "password". You will need to see the nursery hostess to do this. If the hostess is not available, please go to the office area so that a staff member can help you. Siblings, age 16 years of age or older, can pick up the younger child with the ticket or the family password.
7. To avoid confusion we ask that parents pick up the child at the gate instead of entering the nursery room.

Items to be provided in the diaper bag:

1. Enough diapers and wipes for your child.
2. Enough milk, juice or water for your child in bottles and/or "sippy" cups labeled with your child's name. Please label the bottle caps as well.
3. A change of clothes.
4. If a child is using a pacifier, the pacifier needs to be on a "leash" that can be attached to the child's clothes. This will help prevent others from picking up dropped pacifiers.

Parents are discouraged from bringing any toys from home. These toys present hygiene problems, are a distraction to other children and are difficult to locate among the other toys in the room. However, an exception can be made if there is severe separation anxiety and the parent feels that their child needs this kind of comfort from home. This item should be clearly labeled with the child's name.

Sunday Morning Routine:

During each hour in the nursery, Children in the Toddler-Pre-school, 2K & 3K will have a time of free play, snack, music time and a brief Bible lesson. Diapers will be checked each hour and changed at least once during the morning. For snack, you can send a "sippy" cup that is labeled with your child's name, or your child will be given a paper cup for apple juice. Goldfish or crackers are provided, but you may bring snacks if you choose.

Wellness Policy:

To create the healthiest environment possible for your child, the nursery is cleaned thoroughly every week. Workers are encouraged to wash their hands continually in order to prevent spreading germs. To assist us in this effort to create a healthy environment, please do not bring your children to the nursery if they are sick. A child with the following symptoms should not be brought to the nursery:

Fever of 100 degrees or more

Diarrhea
Vomiting
*Runny nose (other than clear)
Severe coughing
Pink eye
Sore throat

If a child has displayed these symptoms in the past 24 hours, he/she should not be placed in the nursery. If a child who is sick is brought to the nursery, the parent will be contacted. This child will be isolated until the parents can be reached.

Our nursery staff will not administer any medications.

*If your child has a clear runny nose due to allergies, please let us know. We realize some symptoms hang on when a child is not contagious. Thank you for doing your part to adhere to this wellness policy.

Crying:

If a child continues to cry for 15 minutes and just cannot be consoled, then we will get the parent. Parents will either be alerted in the Sanctuary with their family pager number or will be contacted in their Sunday School class. No parent wants a child to cry for an extended period of time.

Potty Training:

The Nursery is very willing to help and cooperate with the parents when they are potty training their child. We ask, however, that parents of children being potty trained please 1) provide a complete change of clothes, extra underwear or disposable pull-ups for the child in his/her diaper bag, 2) communicate to the nursery staff that their child is potty training, and 3) be willing to return to the room, if necessary, to help the child use the bathroom.

Using the Parent Notification System:

If it becomes necessary to contact the parent during the worship service, the family pager number will appear in the box located to the left of the podium over the exit door. If your family number appears in the box, then you should report to the Nursery area immediately to take care of the emergency with your child. (The family pager number will be printed on the child's sticker, as well as the secure number for parent pick-up. The pager number assigned to each family is a permanent number, but the secure number for picking up your child changes each time you attend a service.)

Behavior and Discipline:

The safety of all the children in the nursery room must be maintained. No throwing, biting, kicking, pushing, or hitting will be allowed. When a behavior problem occurs, the child will be redirected to a more appropriate behavior. Older children will be told that their behavior is inappropriate, have the behavior modeled for them and then may be asked to apologize to the other child if the circumstance calls for reconciliation. If the above procedures are ineffective, the parents will be asked to come to the nursery room. If aggressive behavior occurs, parents

may be asked to stay with their child in the nursery until the behavior has improved. If your child is struggling with a certain behavior, please communicate this information to the nursery staff so that they can monitor the situation closely.

Promotion:

Promotion Sunday for the Sunday School classes and nursery is usually the first Sunday in September. During the year, early walkers could be promoted in order to make room for newborns and new members joining the nursery.

Section II

Nursery Staff/Volunteer **Information**

Job Descriptions

Nursery Ministry Team:

This team consists of 6 church members, each selected for a 3-year rotational term with 2 new members added yearly. The Ministry Selection Team, based on recommendations from the previous team selects a chairman. The vice chairman and secretary will be selected at the beginning of the church year by nursery team members. This ministry team will be responsible for overseeing the nursery, carrying out the policies and procedures in the nursery handbook, and updating the handbook when necessary. The ministry team will meet quarterly to review nursery needs.

Nursery Ministry Team Hostess:

This person assists the Nursery Ministry Team by providing a consistent “face” for parents each Sunday when they bring their children to the nursery before a service. Her duties include helping each family get the child signed in with a name tag, soothing children who have problems “letting go” of parents, making sure that each room is staffed with the correct number of volunteers, helping newcomers and visitors get settled in the right class, and alerting the ministry team to any nursery needs that may arise. The hostess serves as the authority present that deals with sickness, accidents or special needs. In a situation that requires more assistance, the Children’s Minister or Minister of Education will be available.

Quarterly Volunteers:

Adult volunteers serve in the nursery on a quarterly or more frequent basis. At least 2 adults are required for each class for each service. Volunteers carry out the scheduled activities and minister to the needs of each child (changing diapers, playing with children, setting up snacks, etc.) They also assist in straightening up the room and emptying the trash after the 11:00 a.m. service.

If you are scheduled to work in the Nursery and your child is not nursery age, please make arrangements for your child to stay somewhere else. If arrangements for your child cannot be made, please contact someone on the Nursery Ministry Team.

Training:

Training takes place once a year for the Nursery Ministry Team, Hostess, Volunteer adult workers and teenagers. This training will take place before the new church year begins in September.

Age requirements for Nursery Staff:

Nursery volunteers must be at least 18 years old to work in the nursery. When Youth, over 16 years of age work in the nursery, they must have had the training class and must not serve in a room with another Youth, but should be additional staff(volunteers) beyond the 2 adult requirement.

Getting a Substitute:

Staff are responsible for getting a substitute. Please refer to the quarterly list to find that person. The best option is to swap with other staff. It is advisable to begin looking for a substitute as soon as you know you are going to be absent. After finding a sub, please notify the Hostess and the Church Office of that change prior to that Sunday morning. The contact list will be distributed for the first quarterly rotation at the training session in August prior to the beginning of the new church year. You will be reminded the week prior to your date of service on the worship folder and with a postcard.

Ending Nursery Service:

If a staff member needs to stop serving in the the nursery due to pregnancy, illness, relocation, etc. please give the Nursery Ministry Team as much notice as possible to fill your position.

Nursery Ages:

All children age 4 (4K) and above are invited to attend Children's Church at the 8:30 a.m. worship hour and attend with their parents at the 11 a.m. worship hour. Due to safety and security reasons NO children should stay in the Nursery unless they are under the age of 4. As a Nursery Volunteer, please do not make exceptions on the Sundays that you volunteer.

Enrollment and Visitors:

Children of Ebenezer Baptist Church members will be sent a nursery packet after the child's birth. New members and regular attenders will be sent the packet after 3 visits or sooner if requested. The guidelines for enrollment and necessary items are explained in these nursery packets. For enrollment, children need an information sheet and diaper bag tag. These items can be obtained from the nursery welcome desk. The purpose of the enrollment sheet is to help the nursery staff have the information necessary to take the best care of each child. After entering the information into the database, the enrollment sheet hardcopies are located in the Children's Minister's office.

Visitors not already enrolled in the Nursery should check in at the Nursery desk. The Nursery Hostess or a member of the Nursery Ministry Team will help visitors to the age appropriate room and guide them through the check-in procedure.

When a Child is Sick:

If a child seems or becomes sick, do not hesitate to inform the Hostess on duty. The parents will be contacted to come and take or evaluate the child.

Crying:

If a child continues to cry for 15 minutes, then parents should be contacted. If it is during the worship hour, then use the family pager number by typing it in to the Parent Notification System. Remember to press, "enter" after you put in the number and after the parent arrives to take care of their child, press, "delete" so the number will disappear from the screen in the Sanctuary. If the crying occurs during Sunday School, then you will need to locate the parent's SS class and send someone to get the parent.

Checking In:

The nursery staff is to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the service. The previous staff should stay in the room until the staff for the next service arrives.

Worker Name Tags and Smocks:

Nametags must be worn by all nursery staff and be visible at all times. Tags will be located at the Nursery Sign-in desk. Smocks are available for workers in the infant and toddler rooms.

Supplies:

The nursery rooms should be adequately supplied with all items that you need on Sunday morning. If a supply is low, please alert the Hostess as to the items that are needed.

As the children Check In.....

The hostess is at the sign-in table greeting children while the adults sign them in. One of the nursery staff should be at the door of each room to greet the children warmly and accept any diaper bags. Parents should alert the staff to any special needs or **allergies** by writing that on the sign in and giving verbal instructions to the staff. Children should be handed over the door gate to the nursery worker. This helps the transition if there is separation anxiety. The child must have the sticker nametag placed on his/her back before the parent leaves the room and

the extra tag placed on any bag brought by the parent for that child. The parents are given the corresponding sticker so that they will have it for pick-up after the services are over. If the parent sticker is lost, then the family password will be needed for pick-up. The parent will need to see the hostess or the church office for that.

When the last service is over and all children have left, staff picks up toys, wipes the dirty toys with Clorox wipes, and empties the trash in the outside dumpster.

Using the Parent Notification System:

If a parent needs to be contacted during worship using the parent notification system, the staff member should follow the directions that are posted by the visual pager located in the glassed-in area in front of the infant room. The parent pager number should be typed in and “entered”. After the parent comes to take care of his/her child, remember to press “delete” on the system so the number will disappear from the screen. If there is an emergency in the Nursery during the worship hour, type in “999” and “enter”. One of the staff will be there as soon as possible.

Interaction with Children:

All workers are expected to show love, understanding, and acceptance for all the children. Workers are encouraged to get on the child’s level, by stooping, squatting, holding or sitting in a child-sized chair near the child while interacting with them. The correct ratio of children and adults should always be maintained throughout the service. Do not take a child out of the nursery area. If a child needs to be “walked” and separated from the other children, the hallway of first floor of Young Hall is a good area to give the child a break.

Snacks:

The children have a snack time in the 8:30 service and/or Sunday School hour except for infants. Goldfish or crackers are given with apple juice in a paper cup, unless the child has his/her own “sippy cup” from home. These are the only food items that may be given unless a child has brought something from home. We do not give children candy in the nursery.

In each room a list of children with **allergies** is posted on a laminated sheet. Staff should check that sheet each Sunday before any snack is served to any child. In the case of visitors, parents should alert the staff to any special needs and these should be written on the white marker board.

Diaper Changing:

In each service the nursery staff checks to make sure that each child's diaper has been changed. Each child should be changed at least once during the morning. Diapers are to be changed on the changing tables on the pads provided. Each child should have a clean pad before being changed. Workers must wear a new pair of disposable gloves for each child. Dirty diapers are to be placed in the bins along with the pads and gloves each time. Nursery staff washes hands after each child that is changed. Extra diapers for emergencies are located in the storage cabinets if needed. A "changed with care" sticker is to be put on the diaper of each child as it is changed.

Taking a Child to the Bathroom:

Only a female worker can accompany girls to the bathroom. A male or female worker may take boys. Workers and children are to wash their hands afterwards. Do not take a child to any bathroom except the one in the nursery room. Leave the door to that room ajar when occupied.

Discipline:

The safety of all the children in the nursery room must be maintained. Children are not allowed to throw, bite, kick, push or hit. When a behavior problem occurs, redirect the child to a more appropriate behavior. Older children should be told that their behavior is inappropriate, correct behavior modeled for them, and you may need to ask the child to apologize to the other child if the circumstance calls for reconciliation. If the above procedures are ineffective, the parents may need to be called to come to the nursery room. If aggressive behavior occurs, please notify the Nursery Hostess so she can discuss the problems with the parents. She may need to ask a parent to stay in the nursery room with the child until the behavior has improved. When discussing problems with parents, please make sure to do so in a loving and caring way and in a private setting.

Care of Toys:

If a toy has been put in a child's mouth, the worker needs to spray or wipe the toy with disinfectant and put it on a shelf to dry. After the toys are dry, they can be returned to the appropriate location.

Attendance:

The nursery hostess will print a roster from the sign-in kiosk and will double check the list during that session. She will keep the list on file for the Children's Minister to file for future reference.

After the Last Service of the Day:

The staff for that day will complete the checklist on the clipboards in each room to make sure that the nursery area is in order. Any notes to the Nursery Ministry Team, Hostess or Children's Minister will be noted on that list. One staff member will leave the completed checklists in the infant room for the Children's Minister.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure:

In the event of an emergency when immediate evacuation is necessary, the nursery staff should use every available means to get all of the children outside to a safe area for parents to pick them up. Ushers who are assigned for security checks during services would go immediately to that area to assist with the children. One of the infant room staff will be responsible for taking the sign-in book outside so that we can account for all of the children and make sure they are reunited with their parents. The "safe" area to reunite children with parents will be the softball field. Children and adult helpers will move away from the church building through the playground, out the back gate to the ball field.

Information Regarding Toys and Equipment:

Only age-appropriate toys will be used in all nursery rooms. A high standard of toys is to be maintained. Any toy that is broken, torn, rusty or dirty beyond cleaning should be removed. Toys in the nursery should be the type that can be easily cleaned.

Twice a year in January and August, the Nursery Ministry Team and the Weekday Ministry Team should meet to evaluate the condition of all toys in the Daycare/Nursery.

Toys that have been mouthed should be cleaned after each service on Sunday mornings. Place them on a paper towel for them to dry. After they dry, they can be returned to the appropriate room. The nursery is thoroughly cleaned once a week and straightened up and lightly cleaned after each use. All toys used during the Sunday services should be returned to the correct shelves after the last service of the day.

Equipment

Cribs:

There are 4 cribs. The crib sheets are to be changed after each use. If any sheet becomes wet or soiled, it is to be immediately changed. Sheets are in the

storage room. At the end of the 11:00 a.m. service, sheets should be stripped and placed in the dirty clothes hamper.

Changing Table:

Changing tables should be wiped clean with a disinfectant cloth after each child is changed unless pads are used. In that case, changing tables should be wiped clean after the last service on Sunday.