

Dear KCC Children's Program Volunteer or Staff Member,

At KCC, we take our responsibility to care for children very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which children can grow in relationship with Buddhist teachings.

The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for volunteers and staff members. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for children, protecting children, you, and the mission of KCC. The following procedures have been adopted and will be diligently enforced.

After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.

Thank you for being part of our Children's Program,

# Policies & Procedures for KCC's Children's Program

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## **Overview of KCC Safety System**

Because we desire to protect children involved in our program, KCC requires all staff members and volunteers working with children to complete **FOUR SAFETY STEPS** before work in the children's program begins.

### **STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training**

KCC policies and procedures require that staff members and volunteers avoid abusive behavior of any kind. Staff members and volunteers are required to report any policy violations to the Children's Program Coordinator, a member of the KCC Human Relations Committee, a Harmony Council member, or the Resident Lama. Staff members and volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in 'grooming' a child for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or 'gatekeeper'), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.

To equip staff members and volunteers with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, KCC requires all staff members and volunteers to complete sexual abuse awareness training. This training will be renewed every two years.

### **STEP TWO: Screening Process**

Staff members and volunteers working or serving with children are required to complete KCC's Screening Process, which includes:

- an Employment Application (employees only);
  - a Safety Application (employees and volunteers);
  - a face-to-face interview (employees and volunteers); and
  - references to be checked (employees and Children's Program Coordinator).
- \*A volunteer must attend KCC for six months before being eligible to serve in positions providing services to children.

### **STEP THREE: Policies & Procedures**

Staff members, independent contractors, and volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page indicating that he or she has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

### **STEP FOUR: Criminal Background Check**

KCC requires that all staff members and volunteers working or volunteering in children's activities undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon the position, differing levels or intensity of criminal background check may be required.

## **Child Safety Policy**

### **ABUSE TOLERANCE**

KCC has a **zero tolerance for abuse** in all our programs and activities. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer at KCC to act in the best interest of all children in every program.

In the event a staff member or volunteer observes any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse or neglect (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is that individual's responsibility to immediately report their observations to the Children's Program Coordinator, an HR Committee member, a Harmony Council member, or the Resident Lama.

### **REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS**

KCC is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to the Department of Human Services (DHS) or another appropriate agency.

Because sexual abusers 'groom' children for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to 'groom' a child for sexual abuse. Staff members and volunteers are asked to report 'grooming' behavior, policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to the Children's Program Coordinator, an HR Committee member, a Harmony Council member or the Resident Lama.

### **ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES**

KCC staff members and volunteers who supervise other staff members or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all KCC policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from Children's Program positions for both volunteers and staff members.

KCC has a Communications, Conflict Resolution and Grievance Procedure which contains a process for the Harmony Council to address perceived misconduct, illegal or unethical behavior, harassment, or discrimination. This process will be used to investigate alleged violations. As stated in the Grievance Procedure, final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the Board of Directors and the Resident Lama.

## **Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse**

### **REPORTING VIOLATION OF POLICY**

All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to any of the following: the Children's Program Coordinator, an HR Committee member, a Harmony Council member or the Resident Lama.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION**

Any person suspected of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by KCC Children's Program personnel to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participation in the Children's Program. This suspension will continue during any investigation according to KCC's Grievance Procedure, or law enforcement or the appropriate governmental agency if deemed necessary.

Any person found to have violated this policy may be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming involving children or students at KCC. If the person is an employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from KCC.

Failure to report a policy violation is grounds for termination of an employee. IF IN DOUBT, REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO THE CHILDREN'S PROGRAM COORDINATOR OR ANY TEACHER.

Volunteers who fail to report a policy violation may be restricted from participation in any future activities involving children at KCC.

KCC POLICY IS TO REPORT ALL SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE, REGARDLESS OF STATE LAW REQUIREMENTS.

## **RESPONSE TO REPORT OF ABUSE**

KCC Leadership will take appropriate action, as delineated above, on behalf of KCC when a report of abuse occurs.

## **Safety Monitoring**

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for children, the Children's Program Committee will include monitoring and addressing Child Safety per KCC policy in order to enable the KCC Children's Program to carry out appropriate activities while safeguarding program participants against emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

Child Safety will be addressed at the quarterly Children's Program Committee meetings and noted in the minutes. The discussion will include risk management practices and updates. This committee will also meet on an emergency basis upon the recommendation of a member or following the report of any incident or allegation.

## **MEETINGS**

The Children's Program Committee meets quarterly.

## **COMPOSITION**

The Children's Program Committee consists of the Children's Program Coordinator or designee, the Resident Lama, and a minimum of 2 parents.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Along with its current responsibilities, this committee will be charged with the following duties related to child safety:

1. Applying existing KCC policies and procedures related to children's safety and risk management issues.
2. Monitoring all Children's Program activities for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
3. Making recommendations to the KCC Board of Directors regarding safety issues.

## **Children's Program Monitoring Plan**

Monitoring of staff members and volunteers will include regular (announced and unannounced) visits in each program to provide supervisors the opportunity to observe staff members and volunteer interaction with children.

1. **Children's Program Coordinator or designee** conducts an unscheduled observation at least once each time regular programs meet
2. **Children's Program Coordinator** conducts **periodic** verbal performance evaluations that address participation in risk management training and adherence to risk management procedures.
3. **Resident Lama** conducts unscheduled observations of the Children's Program.
4. **The Resident Lama** meets with the **Children's Program Coordinator or designee** at least quarterly to discuss the Children's Program, including safety training and procedures.
5. **KCC Program Council** meets with the **Children's Program Coordinator** at least once each year to discuss the Children's Program, including safety training and procedures.

## **Building Safety**

The Children's Program Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that the Children's Program is monitored during Sunday classes or programming. This will include unobserved monitoring of staff members, volunteers during activities.

No child will ever be left unattended in the building or on the grounds during children's programming or classes. Children's Program staff members or volunteers are prohibited from being alone with an individual child in any room or building. In the event a staff member or volunteer finds himself/herself alone with a single child, that staff member or volunteer will take the child to a room or building occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others. (Example: if a child is the last in a class to be picked up by a parent, move to an adjoining room where others are present.)

After every programming event, Children's Program staff members and volunteers must ensure every room and restroom is checked prior to leaving.

On the grounds, staff members and volunteers are to circulate, watching children during play periods, giving particular attention to the areas not easily seen from all viewpoints. (Example: under slides, in corners, behind structures).

Any two children together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area of the playground.

## **Worker to Child Ratios**

KCC is committed to providing adequate supervision in all Children's Program activities. Accordingly, the following worker to child **minimum ratios** will be observed:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Staff/volunteers</b>	<b>Children</b>
Preschool—3 to 5 years old	3	12
Elementary	3	20

If a worker is 'out of ratio' it is his or her responsibility to immediately notify the program coordinator for the day. Supervisors will make diligent efforts to find substitute workers to immediately bring worker to children ratios into compliance with KCC policy.

## Discipline

It is our policy that staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children. **No form of physical discipline is acceptable.** This prohibition includes restraint, spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, biting or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children. Children are to be disciplined using time-outs and other non-physical methods of behavior management. In employing this procedure, staff members and volunteers should observe the following guidelines:

- 1) Verbally redirect the child before physically intervening. With younger children some physical redirection may be necessary (for example, removing a toy from the hands of a child that is hitting another).
- 2) If the behavior does not cease, remove or direct the child away from the group to a corner of the room where the group is meeting (avoid being alone with the child).
- 3) Provide the child with a simple, understandable reason for the time-out, and provide the child with clear explanation of your expectations. (“Jamie, you didn’t stop hitting Chris when I asked you to, so you need to sit quietly in the blue chair for three minutes.”) In addition, be verbally reassuring, as being removed from the group will likely upset the child. Do not physically hold a child in time-out.
- 4) Provide the child with a chair to sit in or a “spot” to sit on (using a pillow, blanket, carpet square, etc.) until their time-out is complete.
- 5) Follow the rule of thumb that a time-out is ineffective if it lasts longer than one minute for every year of the child’s life (3 years old, 3 minutes).
- 6) Monitor the child through the entire time-out without giving your undivided attention. For longer time-outs give intermittent praise to reassure the child and keep them on task. (“Jamie, you’re doing a great job of sitting quietly – just 2 more minutes.”)
- 7) Praise the child once he or she has completed the time-out and tell them that their reward is being able to rejoin the group. Remind them that repeating their initial behavior will result in further time-out. Follow this with praise.

In addition to the policies above, it is our policy that for any KCC Children’s Program events, a parent or guardian is required to remain on the grounds and will be contacted if there are any concerns regarding their child.

Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to parents and to the Children’s Program Coordinator.



## **Bathroom Supervision and Assistance Guidelines**

### *Nursery children*

Because nursery children may require complete assistance with their bathroom activities, all staff members and volunteers will observe the following policies:

**Diapering** is to be done by the child's parent or guardian only.

### **Toilet training**

- 1) No child will be forced to toilet train.
- 2) Only female nursery workers or the child's parent or legal guardian will participate in toilet training efforts with children of either sex.
- 3) When children are taken into bathrooms the door will be left partially open.
- 4) Young children will never be left unattended in bathrooms.
- 5) Parents should be consulted on each child's progress in the toilet training process before leaving the child with volunteers or staff members. Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in the nursery will be recorded on the registration card ("Georgia can use the toilet, but she needs to be reminded – ask her if she needs to go.").
- 6) Children should be verbally assisted where possible. If physical assistance is necessary, another staff member or volunteer should be present, when possible.
- 7) "Accidents" should be handled by reassuring the child and completing the changing of diapers or underwear and clothing. Extra clothing and diapers are available in the children's area, if the parent has not furnished a clothing change.

### *School age children*

School age children may be accompanied to the restroom for supervision and assistance when needed. Children should receive the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities. Staff members and volunteers should never take a lone child to the restroom.

If a staff member or volunteer must go into the restroom to check on an individual child, he or she should seek out another worker to accompany him/her. If another worker is not available to accompany, he/she should go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance. If the child requires assistance, the worker should leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child in completing their activities, while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall. Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another staff member or volunteer.

We cannot accommodate Special Needs children unless their parent or guardian remains with them.

## **Intoxicants**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug while at any KCC facility, while traveling with children, or while working with or supervising children during any KCC program or activity.

## **Medications**

A staff member or volunteer may not administer medication to any child while serving in KCC's Children's Program.

## **Nudity**

Staff members and volunteers serving in the Children's Program should never be nude in the presence of children in their care. In the event there is a situation that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes during a pool party, weekend or overnight retreat, etc.), the staff member or volunteer leading the event will submit a plan to the Children's Program Coordinator concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.

## **One-to-one Interactions with Children**

Staff members and volunteers should never conduct one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interaction with children while participating in Children's Program activities. Another trained, screened adult should always be present.

## **Transportation**

Staff members and volunteers may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for children. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of children:

1. Children should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one child in transport.
2. Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.
3. No cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving vehicles owned or rented by KCC, unless in an emergency.
4. No drivers under age 25 may drive KCC-owned or rented vehicles for Children's Program activities.

## **Parental Contact**

Parents who leave a child in the care of KCC staff members and volunteers during Children's Program activities will be contacted if a child becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating.

## **Parental Involvement**

Parents have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in which their child is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with the Children's Program will be required to complete KCC's volunteer application and screening process.

## **Physical Contact**

KCC is committed to protecting children in its care. To this end, KCC has implemented a 'physical contact policy' that promotes a positive, nurturing environment while protecting children. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by those working in the Children's Program:

1. Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members or volunteers and children are important for children's development, and are generally suitable in the KCC setting.
2. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to the Children's Program Coordinator, an HR Committee member, a Harmony Council member, or the Resident Lama.
3. Physical contact should be for the benefit of the child, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.
4. Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other children or Children's Program staff members and volunteers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation.
5. Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of staff members or volunteers in KCC's Children's Program must foster trust at all times. Personal conduct must be above reproach.
6. Do not force physical contact, touch or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.
7. Staff members and volunteers are responsible for protecting children under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.
8. Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse must be reported immediately to the Children's Program Coordinator, an HR Committee member, a Harmony Council member, or the Resident Lama.

## **Sexually Oriented Conversations**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with children, and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any child in the program.

## **Sexually Oriented Materials**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from possessing (or transmitting to a child) any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) on KCC property or in the presence of children in their care.

## **Tobacco Use**

KCC requires staff members and volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products in church facilities, while in the presence of children or their parents, or during KCC activities or programs. KCC is a tobacco-free facility.

## **Verbal Interactions**

Verbal interactions between staff members or volunteers and children should be positive and up lifting. Staff members and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children.

To this end, staff members and volunteers should not talk to children in a way that is or could be construed by a reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, staff members and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children.

## **Release of Children**

At any time that a child has been entrusted to KCC Children's Program staff members or volunteers, KCC incurs responsibility for the safety and welfare of the child. Staff members and volunteers must act to ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of children in their charge.

KCC staff members or volunteers are responsible for releasing children in their care only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians at the close of services or activities.

Upon arrival at KCC for any Children's Program event/program they will sign their child in. At the end of the event/program each child will be signed back out to their parent or guardian.

It is presumed a person who drops off a child has authority to pick up that child.

In the event that staff members or volunteers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they should immediately locate or contact their immediate supervisor or the coordinator for the day before releasing the child.

### **Supervision**

Staff members and volunteers in KCC's Children's Program are expected to provide adequate supervision for children in their care while working in church programs.

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement**

I have received and read a copy of KCC's Children's Program Policies and Procedures Manual and understand the importance of the matters set forth within the manual. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service at KCC.

Further, I understand that the manual may be modified at any time, and that any guidelines may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time by KCC.

I also acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to fulfill the duties listed in the Manual. While, ideally, I will serve in this program for the agreed term, I understand that I may choose to end this relationship at any time. If possible, I will provide two weeks' notice to the Children's Program Coordinator.

I further acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this manual in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between KCC and me. If I am applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no compensation for hours worked.

Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed, as well as manual guidelines that are changed or deleted.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of KCC policies and procedures manual.

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Staff Member or Volunteer's name (please print)

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Staff Member or Volunteer's signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

[This page is to remain attached to KCC Children's Program Policies.]

**Policies and Procedures**  
**Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement**

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Staff Member or Volunteer's name (please print)

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Staff Member or Volunteer's signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Staff Member or Volunteer's name (please print)

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Staff Member or Volunteer's signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

[This page is to be signed, detached and delivered to KCC's Business Office.]