

Dear Children's Ministry Volunteer,

Thank you so much for choosing to make a difference in the lives of the children in our valley! Our goal is that every child here at Calvary Chapel Murrieta would experience the love of Jesus through those they come in contact with.

I realize the responsibility of Christian education belongs to the family; however, we as a church need to be a strong encouragement and support to families. Our Children's Ministry is committed to providing Jesus Christ's example of love and acceptance to the children we minister to. Additionally, we are committed to Biblical teaching to help our children grow in their love and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Finally, we are committed to evangelizing children giving them the opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and to encourage them to share their faith with their family, friends, and neighbors.

I pray that as we partner with the parents of our valley, many children will come to know Jesus as their personal savior, and grow stronger in their relationship with Him! I am so glad you have chosen to be a part of that exciting process! Please review and familiarize yourself with the information contained in this handbook, as it is designed for two reasons. To help you be effective in your ministry with the children, and for your safety.

As we grow, so do our needs, and it is impossible for me to completely oversee the entire Children's Ministry. Once you have been assigned an area of service, you will receive the name and contact information of your Coordinator. If you have any needs, please don't hesitate to contact them. They will do all they can to help you or bring an issue to my attention if necessary.

I look forward to serving along side you in this exciting ministry! Please feel free to contact me or any of our staff if you have any questions or concerns regarding the Children's Ministry.

Blessings!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Schaffner'. The signature is stylized with a horizontal line above the letters 'T' and 'S'.

Tony Schaffner
Children's Pastor
Calvary Murrieta

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Our Philosophy

Vision:

A place where the children of Calvary Chapel Murrieta can discover Biblical truths in a fun, safe environment. Children are challenged to commit their lives to Jesus Christ by the example of a devoted team of servant leaders, dedicated to serving Him in their own lives. We commit to partner with parents in cultivating this into a real life relationship with Jesus. Out of this relationship our mission is to bring the Gospel to the Inland Valley and beyond!

Verse:

"I tell you lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are ready for harvest." John 4:35

Motto:

Equip the children today, to Reach their community tomorrow, and Impact their world for a lifetime.

Mission Statement:

Encourage - The children will be encouraged to make long-lasting meaningful relationships with other children who have made Jesus Christ their Savior.

Experience - The children will experience the love of Jesus with all of the children's ministry personnel they come in contact with.

Equip - The children will be taught in an exciting and interactive way, at their age appropriate level.

Engage - The children will be challenged to think critically, and have the opportunity to ask questions in class.

Empower - The children will be given the opportunity to accept Jesus as their own personal Savior.

Evangelize - The children will be given the tools to share their faith in Jesus Christ with others.

Volunteer Requirements

These are requirements that all Children's Ministry Volunteers at Calvary Chapel Murrieta must comply with and adhere to.

- You must have a personal relationship with Jesus that is evident by your life and your testimony.
- Calvary Chapel Murrieta must be considered your home church and you must regularly attend services.
- You must have a Children's Ministry Application Form on file.
- Please contact your coordinator, if you are unable to fulfill your commitment. This will allow them time to find a substitute for your class.
- You will need to be Live Scanned at the earliest possible opportunity. This is done quarterly at the church at a predetermined time.
- Prepare your lesson before you enter the classroom. We will provide you with all the tools and training for your classroom. You must arrive at least 20 minutes early to receive your students, and stay until the last student is picked up. Most students begin arriving 10-15 minutes before class.
- As a Children's Ministry Volunteer at Calvary Chapel Murrieta you must adhere to and comply with all safety policies and procedures in this Handbook.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Classroom Teachers:

- Learn the names of your students, pray for your students often.
- Plan your lesson during the week and delegate responsibilities.
- Arrive in your classroom 20 minutes before class begins.
- Call your coordinator to help find a substitute when you cannot be in class.
- Reach out to parents keeping a communication flow through an occasional note.
- Study the characteristics of your particular age group.
- Attend at least one service or other Bible Study opportunity here during the week.
- Attend required meetings for your own personal growth and encouragement.
- Meet with assistants to ensure good planning for the coming week.

Classroom Assistants:

- Learn the names of your students, pray for your students often.
- Help plan your lesson during the week.
- Arrive in your classroom 20 minutes before class begins.
- Help keep a clean, cheery room atmosphere.
- Call your coordinator to help find a substitute when you cannot be in class.
- Study the characteristics of your particular age group.
- Attend at least one service or other Bible study opportunity here during the week.
- Attend required meetings for your own personal growth and encouragement.
- Meet weekly with the lead teacher to ensure good planning for the next week.

Classroom Helpers:

- Learn the names of your students, pray for your students often.
- Help the Teacher and Assistant.
- Arrive in your classroom 20 minutes before class begins.
- Let the teacher know when you will not be there.
- Give your full attention to the children.
- Attend at least one Bible study here at Calvary Chapel Murrieta.

Volunteer Guidelines

Here are a few guidelines to help your time with the children you minister to be the most effective.

- The Children's Ministry Office has all the supplies that you might need. If you would like something unusual for class, let us know. You may leave a message for supplies you might need. You will need to pick up your supplies before class! Don't forget to think ahead.
- Each classroom has a sign in book that will either be in the classroom or can be picked up before class in the Children's Ministry Office. Children must be signed in by an adult and given a ticket with a corresponding number. If it is necessary to contact a parent during service, use this number for identifying them.
- Review the lesson, pray, and make a plan! Gather your Bible and supplies and you are ready for your class!
- Always begin with prayer and end with prayer. Give children an opportunity to pray for things that are on their heart. God hears each one! Each is precious to Him!
- Everyone gets to participate in worship through music! Please note there will be no trips to the bathroom during worship; please ensure that they are going before or after. Join in, it's fun! They are looking to you, the teacher, to be their example!
- Parents may only pick up their children if they have their child's ticket. Always try to have the same person sign kids in and out. When parents come back to pick up their child, make sure all parents wait outside the classroom as you call for the child and have other helpers in the class gather the child with all their belongings. Our check in system is for safety and emergency purposes, so we ask that you make every effort to adhere to it.
- Each room, with a bit of creativity and a bit of time, can be transformed into your room. Whether you are a 2 Year Old Teacher or a 4th Grade Teacher, own your room with your kids. Anything goes just remember that you need to be consistent and clean up after your class time.

Frequently Asked Questions

What should my room look like?

- Neatness and order are important factors to consider in your room set up. Do not allow curriculum, sign in sheets or art projects to clutter any of the desks or tables in the classroom. The only items that should be on the check in table are the sign in sheets, the tickets and nametags. Once you are finished for the day, please return all supplies to designated area, and leave the room in better condition that you found it.

What do I do when at the end of service there are kids in my classroom?

- Please take the child along with the sign in sheet to the Children's Ministry Office. The children will be cared for until the parents are able to check them out.

I'm sick and I won't be able to fulfill my serving responsibility, who do I contact?

- Your coordinator is the best person to contact. Be sure to call in plenty of time so a replacement can be found for you.

What if I need assistance?

- If a child is sick, or cannot be consoled after 10 minutes of class. Contact the service overseer, or use phone in classroom and dial extension 1310. We will then notify the parents.

May I have coffee in my room?

- Hospitality is provided on Sunday mornings in the Children's Ministry Office for all volunteers. You may enjoy your coffee and snacks in the office only. Only water may be brought in the classroom.

Can we do outings with the kids?

- Yes! Plans for the outing must be submitted in writing to the Children's Ministry Director in advance for approval. You must be willing to plan and carry out the outings. You will be provided with direction and support as needed.

Relationships with Parents

Please use these as guidelines to help you in your relationships with the parents of the children in your class.

- Greet every parent and child at the door. Parents are positively affected by a cheerful show of welcome and concern by the teacher. Introduce yourself with a handshake and tell them that you are the teacher. Set their minds at ease that their child will be loved and ministered to in your class.
- Wear your nametag, give parents the feeling of comfort when they first arrive. Wearing a nametag gives the parent an opportunity to call you by name and also shows that you are a part of the Children's Ministry Team.
- Acquaint them with future lesson topics. Type or copy a brief description of future lessons. Give this to them with a letter of explanation and encouragement to be involved with their children.
- Involve parents in the class, parents can be extremely helpful in the classroom as aides or "important guests." If they are planning on helping the entire class time have them go to the resource room and pick up a Visitor Tag. If they are helping for just a short period of time they do not need to have a tag.
- Say "goodbye" to children in front of their parents, children love this exit greeting, and parents do not expect it. It is a good time to ask the parents to call you regarding a problem, to share some joy from the class, or pass on one of their children's special qualities, characteristics, or contributions.
- Your attitude must be one of humility towards the parents. First, you are a servant of Christ; then, you are a servant to the parents and their children.
- Know that God has placed each child in your class for spiritual guidance during the time they are with you. Pray for them weekly and watch God work in their lives.

Classroom Management

The most common discipline problem in classrooms are talking and fidgeting. This type of problem can usually be taken care of by a teacher getting near the child or relocating the child's sitting position.

- The key to less discipline is good planning. Have a variety of activities and well-set boundaries in your classroom for your own particular group, each group will vary.
- When a child is causing a problem the child should be given a verbal warning or a choice between behaving correctly or spending time doing something away from the group. Make sure children understand why you are disciplining them, so they can return to the group.
- The Parent of the Week Program is a wonderful way to deal with a discipline problem. Observe how the parent deals with the student and how that student reacts. Sometimes just having the parent in the classroom to help, the students will behave themselves. Try it, the parent may even realize they love working with kids!
- Positive reinforcement and preparation are the best deterrents to discipline problems. Sometimes there are exceptions. If a child is disrespectful to a person of authority or a classmate, address this immediately. Be consistent and respectful always!
- Never reprimand a child in front of other students. Give a warning, and if this does not stop the problem, discuss behavior with student privately in the back of the room or outside the door. Never hit or grab the child, please use wisdom!
- Sometimes those who are the most disruptive will be the leaders of tomorrow! Give them something to be responsible for they may feel like they are not a part of what the class is doing or they may need a challenge!
- As a last resort, contact the service overseer, or use phone in the classroom and dial extension 1310 to contact Tony Schaffner. He will then make the decision on how to deal with the student.

Child Safety Policy

Calvary Chapel Murrieta Children's Ministry will do everything possible to protect our children from child abuse, and to protect our volunteers. We expect the following from all who are involved in Children's Ministry:

- Everyone who is working with children must complete a ministry application form.
- Always wear your nametag when you volunteer, and follow the check-in and check-out policy
- Volunteers should never be alone in the classroom. All classes will have two or more working together in the room.
- Make sure the blinds are open on the windows and doors, and that the lights are always on.
- Never tickle, swing a child by the arms, wrestle or kiss a child on the lips or coax a child to kiss you. Be very wise how you treat a child physically.
- Children, kindergarten and up, are not to sit on male volunteers laps.
- Volunteers of 4 year olds and up do not need to go into the restroom with the children. You should wait at the door with the door opened and remind them to wash their hands. Check the restroom first to make sure no other adult is in the restroom.
- Female volunteers of 3 year olds and younger, should take the children into the women's bathroom and only help those who need help.
- Never touch a child inappropriately. Any place a bathing suit would cover, do not touch.

All of these things will help us stay above reproach and any accusation that could come against us. Please feel free to talk with the Children's Ministry Director or any of our staff, if you have any questions.

Suspected Abuse Procedure

If you or any other volunteer in your department suspects child abuse, these are the steps you should take:

- Contact the Children's Pastor immediately. Watch for visible signs, bruises, cuts, burns, etc. A staff member will handle it from this point.
- It is very important not to discuss your suspicions with anyone other than the Children's Pastor.
- Do not discuss it with the parents. It may scare them off or it could cause undue hard feelings for those who are suspected, but not offenders. If the parents are abusive, they may abuse the child further as a result of your talking to them.

Please note: Latino, African American, and Asian children may have skin discoloration, which resemble a bruise. If markings remain unchanged for weeks it's probably not a sign of abuse.

Emergency Procedure

If for any reason there is an emergency during services. Please familiarize yourself with this information.

Fire Alarm:

- If the fire alarm goes off please lead all the children out of the room to the specified location, there is a map on the wall. Make sure to bring your sign-in sheet. Please remain in the specified location until further notice.

Earthquake

- In the event of an earthquake, please have the children go under the desks and cover their necks and heads with their hands, until the earthquake is over.

Lock Down

- In the event of a lock down please turn out the lights, close the blinds, and sit on the floor with your children. Please remain there until further notice.

Parents

- If parents come to pick-up their children during one of these emergencies, do not release them, but have the parent wait with you until further instruction.

Service Overseers

- They will check all rooms during an emergency to ensure the class is either vacant or the children are safe.

These plans are not made to scare you, but to help you be prepared for an emergency. Please familiarize yourself with these plans.

Age & Grade Characteristics

Preschool Level:

Knowing the children you work with is something that we would all agree is a basic requirement prior to ministering to them; but, this basic step is all-too-often neglected. It's like buying insurance. We don't want to sit through the slide show of the history of the insurance company, we just want to sign the policy and be done with it.

Jesus was well aware of those to whom He taught. His lessons showed a certain tailoring to fit the needs and interests of the people. When He talked to farmers, He spoke of sowing seeds and the plight caused by weeds and birds. When He spent time with fishermen, He related the lofty concepts of the Christian life to fish and nets. He knew just how to "hook" His listeners with words and concepts they were interested in. He was an example of a teacher who showed His love for the people by getting to know them. He hasn't changed a bit.

Let's look at some of the general characteristics of the different age groups that you will meet in the children's ministry.

Elementary Level:

The elementary aged child is an ever-changing creation. Just when you think you know them, the smoke from their smoldering birthday candles seems to signal a new era complete with personality changes, advanced discipline needs, and expanding horizons. The tricky part of working with this age child is that we are required to keep up with the changes. If we lag behind, we will lose our potential for being a role model.

Even though the personalities are changing drastically, the basic needs of every child remains consistent. I believe the basic needs of security, significance, and belonging, are never packed away with the other "toys" of our childhood. We, as adults, keep them with us forever. If we can understand our needs, we will better understand the needs of those around us.

Nursery (1 - 12 Months)

General Characteristics

- Helplessly dependent on adults to meet his needs
- Communicates needs by crying
- Requires individual attention (Holding, rocking, etc.)
- Sleeps a great deal
- Learns by the attitudes of those around him

Needs

- Loving physical care (feeding, changing, etc.)
- Clean surroundings
- Security at his level:
- Familiar surroundings (sights, sounds, smells)
- Familiar people caring for him
- Consistent schedule
- The presence of his parent(s)

Level of Understanding

- Absorbs the attitudes of those who care for him
- Can understand simple words
- Beginning to recognize signs of “love”
- Can connect places, situations with concepts of “good” or “bad”

Toddler (13 - 24 Months)

General Characteristics

- Constantly moving
- Learning to talk
- Uses all five senses to learn
- Limited vocabulary (two or three word phrases)
- Short attention span (two minutes maximum)
- Requires individual attention
- Developing social skills
- Fearful
- Susceptible to sicknesses

Needs

- Loving physical care (snacks, changing, etc.)
- Frequent change of activity (variety)
- Frequent rest times
- Activities for large muscles
- Room to “explore”
- Personal attention from adults he knows
- Familiar surroundings (sights, sounds, smells)
- Familiar people caring for him
- The presence of his parent(s)
- Consistent discipline/reward system

Level of Understanding

- Most learning is still through the senses
- Concepts of God, Jesus, and the Bible can be introduced
- Concepts of good and bad can be further understood

2 & 3 Year Olds

General Characteristics

- Extremely active
- Attention span of three to five minutes
- Responds to guided play
- Rapidly growing vocabulary (although still limited)
- Imitative in actions and speech
- Still learning to use all five senses
- Learns by repetition
- Plays alongside others rather than with them
- Understands, and fears being “away” from parent(s)

Needs

- Frequent change of activities (every 10 minutes)
- Frequent rest periods
- Exploration using senses (coloring, clay, etc.)
- Consistent discipline/reward system
- Large-muscle activities
- Repetition for learning
- Frequent restroom trips
- Familiar adult figures (teachers, baby-sitters, etc.)
- Familiar surroundings (furniture, toys, etc.)
- Consistent schedule
- Knowing that parent(s) will always return
- Loving, understanding, gentle care

Level of Understanding

- Can understand simple, brief stories (retold often with short sentences)
- Understands the concept of love as it relates to self and others
- Appreciates Jesus as a friend and the Bible as a special book
- Knows right from wrong.
- Beginning to understand concept of "being sorry"

4 & 5 Year Olds

General Characteristics

- Very active - enjoys imitating
- Attention span of five to ten minutes
- Enjoys playing with other children
- Forming concepts of social behavior (teamwork, partnership, etc.)
- Inquisitive - large imagination
- Learning to relate to adults other than parents
- Further developing sense of right and wrong
- Learning to share (with encouragement)
- Growing vocabulary - able to express self in sentences with feeling
- Thinks of God in personal terms
- Responds to Jesus with simple trust

Needs

- Loving, supportive care
- Consistent discipline/reward system
- Interaction with adults who are interested in them
- Frequent change of activities
- Consistent models of Christian behavior
- New or different words defined
- Activities that involve physical movement
- Freedom to explore new things (places, thoughts, etc.)
- Clear signs of love shown to him
- Respect from those around him
- Feeling valuable (significant)
- Unbroken trust/promises
- Knowledge that God & significant adults will not abandon him

Level of Understanding

- Can understand that God created the world
- Can reason and deal with questions regarding the “whys” of life
- Can learn through humor
- Can learn through role-playing or role-reversal
- Beginning to read simple words
- Still learns, thinks in concrete terms

First & Second Grade

General Characteristics

- Active, Talkative, Imaginative
- Likes group activities
- Inquisitive - eager to learn
- Seeks personal attention from the teacher
- Small muscle coordination developing
- Building attitudes about self
- Learning masculine or feminine roles
- Learning to read confidently, Learning to write
- Developing conscience and sense of morality
- Still thinks in concrete terms
- Emotionally immature
- Attention span of 20+ minutes
- Peer group pressure beginning
- Life's values rotate around having fun
- Selfish, but capable of caring and giving to others

Needs

- Loving, respectful, patient care
- Variety in activities
- Freedom to express themselves orally
- Opportunities to exhibit the things he has learned
- Abstract concepts presented in concrete terms
- Sense of belonging among his peers
- Support and belief in abilities from his teacher
- Sense of belonging, unending love from his parent(s)
- Sense of unconditional love and forgiveness from God
- Consistent discipline/reward system
- Freedom to make, and learn from mistakes

Level of Understanding

- Genuinely loves God and Jesus as real people
- Appreciates the Bible as a special book
- Prays sincerely
- Beginning to understand what sin is
- Beginning to apply Biblical principles to life

Third & Fourth Grade

General Characteristics

- Energetic
- Still thinks concrete terms (may think abstractly)
- Likes group activities
- Asks challenging questions
- Enjoys personal attention
- Continuing to build personal attitudes
- Developing specific interests (hobbies, etc.)
- Strong sense of morality, fairness
- Emotionally immature
- Eager to learn about things that interests him
- Memorizes easily
- Wants to help
- Attention span of 20+ minutes (depending on subject or activity)
- Fashion conscious
- Interested in being popular or “cool”
- Has a vision of being older, or capable of doing anything

Needs

- Supportive, loving care
- New experiences (educational and memory-building)
- Freedom to express himself within respectable boundaries
- Security at his own level:
- Sense of belonging among his peers
- Support and belief in abilities from his teacher
- Sense of belonging, unending love from his parent(s)
- Sense of unconditional love and forgiveness from God
- Consistent discipline /reward system
- Freedom to make, and learn from mistakes

Level of Understanding

- Can understand cause/ effect relationships
- Can understand order, chronology
- Able to apply Biblical principles to life
- Able to know and accept Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior
- Understands the need for salvation

Fifth & Sixth Grade

General Characteristics

- Energetic, Healthier
- Loud, Imaginative
- Inquisitive, Talkative
- Beginning to understand abstract thought
- Has many interests
- Likes competition
- Hero worshiper
- Dislikes outward display of affection
- Performance is effected by self-image
- Independent
- Attention span of 20+ minutes
- Can be rebellious
- Can be disrespectful on purpose
- Can be emotional (especially girls)

Needs

- Firm, loving, supportive care
- Consistent discipline/reward system with clear consequences
- To know the results of choices
- To learn from the consequences of poor choices
- Quality adult-like time with teacher, parent(s), etc.
- Freedom to begin to make significant choices with guidance
- Freedom to communicate feelings, etc. to parent(s) and teacher
- Sense of belonging among his peers
- Support and belief in abilities from his teacher
- Sense of belonging, unending love from his parent(s)
- Sense of unconditional love and forgiveness from God
- Consistent discipline/reward system
- Freedom to make, and learn from mistakes

Level of Understanding

- Is interested in and understand Bible history and backgrounds
- Can understand the need for learning
- Is able to teach others