

Pearland FUMC Discipline Policy

GUIDELINES FOR CHILD BEHAVIOR

BEHAVIOR GOALS:

- To show constant respect for and courtesy to all persons through action and language.
- To cooperate with and assist the church staff and volunteers in maintaining safety, order and an atmosphere that is conducive to learning.
- To demonstrate respect for personal and community property.
- To accept accountability and responsibility for one's actions.
- To recognize that, as children of God, there are times when we err and, therefore, there are times when forgiveness needs to be asked for and when forgiveness needs to be given.

CHAPEL AND ASSEMBLY EXPECTATIONS:

- Follow the teacher's instructions for seating
- Show respect for the speaker and each other by being quiet and attentive

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS:

- Be safety conscious
- Obey classroom procedures as directed by the teacher
- Respect and be polite to all people
- Respect the property of other people and of the Church

HALLWAY EXPECTATIONS:

- Walk on the right side of the hallway, in single file, so others may pass
- Talk only in quiet tones
- Keep hands to oneself
- Follow the teacher's instructions for holding doors, stopping and starting

GENERAL CONDUCT VIOLATIONS

The Church prohibits the following:

DISREGARD FOR AUTHORITY

- Failing to comply with directives given by church staff and/or volunteers (insubordination)
- Leaving church grounds or church-sponsored events without permission
- Disobeying rules for conduct while being transported via bus or car
- Refusing to accept discipline management techniques assigned by a volunteer or staff member

- Falsifying records, passes, or other school-related documents

MISTREATMENT OF OTHERS

- Pushing, hitting, fighting or scuffling
- Engaging in physical or verbal bullying and harassment, to include teasing or name-calling
- Using profanity or vulgar language or making obscene gestures
- Engaging in inappropriate or indecent exposure of private body parts
- Hazing
- Engaging in inappropriate verbal, physical, or sexual conduct directed toward another person at church

SAFETY TRANSGRESSIONS

- Engaging in verbal (oral or written) exchanges or possessing material that threatens the safety of another person or church property
- Making false accusations or perpetrating hoaxes regarding church safety
- Engaging in any conduct that church staff or volunteers might reasonably believe will substantially disrupt the church program or encourage unsafe behavior
- Throwing objects or engaging in behavior that can cause bodily injury or property damage
- Discharging a fire extinguisher or activating a fire alarm without valid cause

GENERAL DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES

When a discipline problem arises and is not controlled with verbal correction, volunteers should use the following steps, as necessary.

- **Warning** – Calmly and clearly describe to the child the behavior or problem that must be corrected. Notify the child that failure to correct will result in a “time out” or a separation from the class within the room. Express confidence that the child can modify the behavior and participate in the activities appropriately.
- **Time out in the room** – Designate a place in the room, a separate chair or seating area where the child must sit until he/she is able to participate appropriately in activities again. Use judgment as to how long this separation or “time out” should last. It might be for a certain number of minutes, until the completion of the current activity or until a certain level of compliance is demonstrated.
- **Time out with another volunteer or Church staff member** – If a separation within the room is ineffective in correcting the problem or behavior, remove the child from the room for a period of time. Again, use judgment in how long the separation should last and if re-entry is an option. Let other adult know the nature of the problem and the conditions of the child’s re-entry to the room. The

other adult should find an appropriate place for the child to sit until the Small Group Leader's conditions are met. Any time this step is taken, the parent should be notified. Volunteers should document the issue on the Behavior Incident Report form for Director of Children's Ministry and parent to discuss in a phone call during the week.

- **Immediate Parent Conference** – A child whose behavior is so disruptive that it can not be managed with the techniques above should be escorted to the Director of Children's Ministry where parents will be summoned for an immediate conference.

DISCIPLINE CONTRACT

The Church Discipline Contract is implemented by the Director of Children's Ministry when a child repeatedly commits Conduct Violations described within this policy with no observable effort to change. A Discipline Contract may be created after a child receives multiple Behavior Incident Reports and parent conferences and other avenues of offered help show no change in a student's conduct.

The contract will include such items as:

- A description of the Conduct Violation and Behavior Goal/Expectation desired
- Consequence of repeat offenses
- Special instructions might include that a parent must carry a pager or must be on the property or in the room while child participates in church activities or alterations to the child's supervisions or assignment while in church activities

At FUMC, we believe that discipline is an important part of learning. Clear limits protect children and volunteers from harm and create an environment where our children are able to Connect to a Greater Life in Christ. Verbal and physical aggression and continued misbehavior will not be tolerated. In extreme cases, the final Contract step may result in a child's removal from children's programs at FUMC.

DISCIPLINE FILE

The Director of Children's Ministries will create a file of Behavior Incident Reports that should be shredded annually. Any Discipline Contracts and related Behavior Incident Reports for a child will be kept until the child has reached an age where he/she will not be participating in children/youth-oriented programs.

PARENT AND VOLUNTEER CONCERNS

Parents should take concerns or questions about the environment, children, or volunteer/staff member directly to that volunteer/staff member. If the parent does not feel comfortable doing this, he/she should include the Director of Children's Ministry in any discussion with the volunteer/staff member.

Similarly, volunteers should take concerns or questions about a child directly and to that child's parents. If the volunteer does not feel comfortable doing this, he/she should include the Director of Children's Ministry in any discussion with the parents. Unresolved issues must be brought to the attention of the Director of Children's Ministry.

It is most important, as a Christian example, that disputes not be allowed to become part of a community discussion. Matthew 18:15-20 is our guiding principle. If the volunteer does not feel comfortable keeping a particular child in his/her classroom (or activity), he/she needs to discuss that with the Director of Children's Ministry, so that the Director of Children's Ministry can work with the child, the child's parents, and another volunteer to find the best place for that child in the program.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE PEARLAND FUMC DISCIPLINE POLICY

This entire policy should be:

- Given to parents when their children register for specific activities, such as VBS, G.I.F.T.S. Camp, JoyQuest, etc. On the registration forms for the various activities, there should be a place where the parents can sign that they have read and reviewed the appropriate rules with their children who will participate in that PFUMC activity.
- Reviewed with children at the beginning of each program (i.e., the first day of VBS, the first Sunday of JoyQuest, etc.) Please note that not all rules need to be shared with children of all ages. For example, young children are not going to know what hazing and sexual harassment are.

Attachment – Behavior Incident Report form

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

Warning-

- Calmly tell the child what behavior to correct
- Tell the child that if they do not correct their behavior they will be sent to time out
- Let the child know that you think they can behave properly

Time out in the room-

- Send the child to the time out space
- It might be for a certain number of minutes, until the completion of the current activity or until a certain level of compliance is demonstrated.

Time out with another volunteer or Church Staff Member-

- Remove the child from the room and place them in the care of another volunteer or a church staff member.
- Let other adult know the nature of the problem and the conditions of the child's re-entry to the room.

Immediate Parent Conference-

- Contact the Director of Children's Ministry to come retrieve the child or contact his/her parents

Any time a child has been placed in time out either in the room or with an adult, the incident will be reported.

At the end of class the child will be taken to the Director of Children's Ministry who will inform the parent of the child's behavior.