

Code of Conduct for children's ministry staff

Basics

We want to do everything in our power to prevent sexual violence and any form of violence when it comes to church events. Therefore, we strengthen and protect those children and teenagers, who we are trusted with, from physical and emotional damage and violence.

In order to strengthen and protect those children and teenagers, we work according following principles:

1. We want to encourage children to trust their own feelings, to communicate them (verbally and non-verbally) and that they can decide for themselves on pleasant and unpleasant touching. In this, we protect the child's right to say "no" and we act accordingly.
2. We appreciate individual boundaries of children and teenagers and respect them - except they harm themselves or another person with their behaviour (e.g. crossing the street when lights are red).
This is especially important for private life (as well as private parts), their personal boundary of shame and other individual boundary perceptions.
3. In dealing with children and teenagers, we refrain from ambiguous hints or situations, inappropriate touching as well as derogatory behaviour. We take actively a stance against violent, discriminating, racist, and sexist behaviour.
Through our role-model in speaking and doing, in talks and lectures, we hand on values like equality, loving our neighbour and appreciation.
4. If we oversee situations or behaviours that do not comply with our code of conduct, we will broach this.
If it goes beyond a onetime violation of boundaries (cf. overview "violation of boundaries / sexual assault / sexual violence"), a confidential person needs to be informed and then agreed upon further actions.
5. We look for signs of neglect and violence (e.g. bruises, sudden change of behaviour ...) when working with children and teenagers. If a staff member assumes (sexual) violence or learns about it directly, s/he will immediately talk to a confidential person of his church. Then, further actions will be agreed on.

How to act in specific situations

Conversations

When talking alone with a child, your location needs to be open and visible. Either, the conversation takes place at the edge of proceedings, or in a room with an open door. Further, the staff member informs the others, where and with whom the conversation takes place. This information can also be given after the conversation, in exceptional circumstances.

Going to the restroom

Basically, every child can use the bathroom on their own. If a child needs support, the staff member can accompany the child until the door. Inside the restroom, every child will take care of him-/herself.

If a child needs help with wiping or a diaper needs to be changed, a parent will be addressed prudently and then do the task themselves.

Overnight stays

Supervision during those stays will be done by certain staff members, who will have to show a police clearance certificate when asked.

Changing clothes and washing will take place gender-segregated and alone in lockable rest- and bathrooms. Focus here is on basic hygiene like brushing teeth and washing hands and face.

With my signature, I,, therefore accept the code of conduct mandatorily for my work in children's ministry.

Date

Signature

