

Job Descriptions that Outline

- Responsibilities of nursery committee chairperson.
- Qualifications and responsibilities of the lead nursery workers.
- Qualifications and responsibilities of nursery helpers.

Training for ALL Nursery Workers

- Conduct background checks on all nursery workers
- Have a "Nursery Worker Orientation" that includes an explanation of expectations, discipline policies, information on child development, information on fire and emergency procedures, and training in infant CPR.
- Have regularly scheduled orientations and refresher courses.
- Make sure that all workers receive a copy of your Church's Child Protection Policy along with your Nursery Policy and Guidelines. A statement should be signed by all workers saying that they have received and read this information.

Guidelines for a Clean Nursery

- Have non-toxic cleaning supplies readily available to nursery workers but well out of the reach of children.
- See that nursery carpets, floors, furniture are thoroughly cleaned on a regular basis.
- Check premises for adequate ventilation and test for the presence of lead, especially in buildings older than 1970.
- Have clean crib sheets readily available and have a plan for making sure used crib linens and changing table covers are washed and returned each week.
- See that toys are washed on a regular basis with a non-toxic detergent, and that toys handled by children with colds are washed immediately.
- If there is no sink in the room, have disinfectant hand cleaners available for care givers.

Guidelines for a Safe Nursery

- Establish a committee to oversee nursery.
- Follow directives outlined in your congregation's Child Protection Policy such as screening everyone who has access to the children and youth in your church, following a practice of two adults (people 18 years of age and older) present at all times, having windows in entrance doors, and having diaper changing stations in central locations.
- Always have an adult in charge. It is best if the same person is there each week.
- Require all nursery workers to go through an orientation before working in the nursery.
- Have a back-up plan for staffing the nursery.
- Minimum adult to child ratio recommendations- 1 adult to 3 infants. 1 to 4 toddlers. 1 to 6 children 3 years and older.
- Have only age appropriate toys in the nursery. If a toy, or parts to a toy, is small enough to fit through a toilet paper tube, do not use.
- Regularly check floors for choking hazards such as: coins, marbles, safety pins, jewelry, buttons, crayons, pen caps, nails, screws, etc.
- Avoid stuffed animals, as they are great germ carriers.

- Establish a regular schedule for checking, cleaning, and replacing toys and other nursery equipment.
- Practice SIDS prevention: always put infants to bed on their back.
- Check that mattresses used are firm and flat, do not use blankets or pillows in the crib.
- Check that crib sheets cover the mattress snugly. If a sheet comes off easily when you pull at the corners or sides, do not use.
- Make sure that crib slats are spaced properly. You should not be able to pass an upright can of soda between the slats of a crib.
- Cribs should not have cutouts in the end panels or corner posts.
- Keep cribs away from windows.
- Make sure all electrical cords are out of the way and all electrical outlets are covered.
- Tie up window-blind cords.
- Post emergency exits and phone numbers, including poison control.
- Have fire drills on a regular basis.
- Always make sure children are seated while eating.
- Don't get too comfortable. Keep checking and revising your nursery policies.

Good Communication with Parents

- Have a check-in system that includes having parents fill out information cards on their children. Below is a link to a PDF of nursery cards.
- Keep up-to-date information on all children.
- Ask parents to label their child's diaper bag, bottle, spare clothing, toys, etc.
- Be sure to talk with parents each Sunday about any concerns and joys related to their child.
- Ask parents not to bring their children to church who have a sore throat or deep, liquidy cough, a fever in the last 24 hours, colored nasal discharge, pink eye or other eye infections, skin infections and sores that are appearing to spread, rashes (other than diaper rash), diarrhea or vomiting in the last 12 hours, swelling or tenderness of glands around face or neck.

Necessary Nursery Supplies

- Disposable diapers
- Paper lining for changing tables
- Premoistened wipes
- Tissues
- Cotton balls
- First-aid kit with syrup of Ipecac, thermometer, alcohol/antibiotic ointment, bandages, cold pack
- Name tags and markers
- Plastic bags and ties for soiled clothes
- Disinfectants and nontoxic cleaning solutions
- Emergency manual
- Posted fire exit plans/maps
- Graham or soda crackers (Be sure to check for allergies and preferences listed on parent information cards.)

- Children's books and toys
- Nursery Pager System
- Telephone
- Fire extinguishers
- Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors (check batteries often and replace twice a year)
- Paper towels
- Electrical outlet covers

Furniture

- Rocking chairs
- Child size table and chairs
- Cribs
- Changing table(s)
- Locked cabinet for supplies
- Hooks for hanging coats and diaper bags
- Bulletin board for announcements and pictures
- Baby swings and walkers are optional (Strict guidelines should be established for the use of these items.)