

NEXT PHASE IN REOPENING CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

- **Who can return?**

- As you may know, we have reopened our Children's Ministries at Covenant last month (beginning with our elementary classes: 1st-6th grades). So far, it has been running quite smoothly. Because of how well things are going, we are now ready to reopen the rest of the classes!
- Thus, starting October 11, 2020, we will be opening up our Children's Ministries fully (for ALL children birth to 6th grade)! 😊

- **What kind of Safety measures will be taken for the different age groups?**

- **CHILDREN: PRE-K to SIXTH GRADE...**

- **HANDS:** All children will need to use hand sanitizer prior to entering the CM Center; they will wash their hands at some point during their time in class.
- **PHYSICAL (not SOCIAL) DISTANCE:** We will attempt to keep children at a safe distance from each other by utilizing the large gathering space and the larger classrooms (using carpet squares to mark out spacing). We want the children to enjoy being together again while being aware of the need to stay safe. In saying that, please be aware that there may be times when children will play/interact in close proximity to each other.
- **GAMES & SUPPLIES:**
 - While we are in the large gathering space in the Children Center, we will sing a song or two and do a few fun activities (like motions or "Go Noodle" videos). Also, we will play some games. We will try to choose games that do not require much contact – but I cannot guarantee that the children will never touch.
 - **It would be helpful for you to send along any writing/drawing tools with your child (in a baggie with your child's name on it) so that they can use their own supplies.** If your child forgets his/her baggie, we will have supplies available...and will clean them after each use, minimizing any sharing.
- **MASKS:** All staff, volunteers, and children will wear a mask or face shield during the Sunday school hour. There may be times for a break from wearing masks – taking the opportunity for a 6-ft, 10-min "face-covering break" as permitted by PA Dept of Ed. **** We will not require your child to wear a mask if there is any medical reason that would make it unsuitable for him/her to do so. Please email Andrew Poe about this prior to bringing your child, though, so he can make sure teachers are made aware.**
- **TEMPERATURE:** To ensure all of the children are illness-free, we will be taking temperatures of the children after they have arrived. If we find any child has a temperature, we will direct that child to the lobby and notify you as parents to pick up your child early.
- **SYMPTOMS:** Please **DO NOT** send your children to Children's Ministries if they are exhibiting any of the following symptoms within the last 24 hours:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Vomiting/Diarrhea
 - Shortness of breath
 - Chills
 - Runny nose
 - Sore throat
 - Headache/muscle aches

○ **LITTLE CHILDREN IN OUR NURSERY WING...**

- **HANDS:** We would ask that your little ones either use hand sanitizer prior to entering their room or wash their hands immediately upon entering. The caregivers will wash the little ones' hands at some point during their time in class.
- **PHYSICAL (not SOCIAL) DISTANCE:** We will attempt to keep the little children at a safe distance from each other but, little ones do not understand this concept. Thus, we will not enforce the same level of social/physical distancing as with older children. **Caregivers will be willing to hold your child if he/she needs to be comforted.**
- **TOYS & SUPPLIES:**
 - We will remove toys that can not be cleaned/disinfected easily (cloth, cardboard, etc.).
 - We will then clean every toy that the little ones play with – doing our best even to clean a toy that has been touched by one child before another one picks it up.
 - **It would be helpful for you to send along any writing/drawing tools with your child (in a baggie with your child's name on it) so that they can use their own supplies.** If your child forgets his/her baggie, we will have supplies available...and will clean them after each use, minimizing any sharing.
- **MASKS:** All staff and volunteers will wear a mask or face shield during the Sunday school hour. **** We will not require your little ones in our nursery wing to wear a mask though.**
- **TEMPERATURE:** To ensure all of the children are illness-free, we will be taking temperatures of the children after they have arrived. If we find any child has a temperature, we will direct that child to the lobby and notify you as parents to pick up your child early.
- **SYMPTOMS:** Please **DO NOT** send your children to Children's Ministries if they are exhibiting any of the following symptoms within the last 24 hours:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Vomiting/Diarrhea
 - Shortness of breath
 - Chills
 - Runny nose
 - Sore throat
 - Headache/muscle aches
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● **Cleaning Procedures** (THE FACILITIES WILL BE CLEANED AND SANITIZED TO ENSURE SAFETY AS WELL)

- The Children Center (any rooms / furniture / toys) will be cleaned before, between, and after services.
- There will be a limited number of toys for the children to use/play with – they will be toys that are easily cleaned/disinfected (like plastic ones).
- Volunteers will have a heightened awareness of surfaces being touched in order to take measures to clean everything well alongside our Facilities / Cleaning Teams.

● **Standard Operating Procedures** (THESE HAVE ALREADY BEEN IN PLACE, BUT THEY ARE NOW EVEN MORE IMPORTANT)

- **As always, only cleared/screened/approved volunteers are permitted in the Children Center or Nursery Wing rooms.** Adults who are not cleared and approved to work with children **MAY NOT** enter the Children Center Gathering Space or classrooms. Those adults must remain in the lobby area and nursery corridor.
- **We will only release children to those who have a Covenant Pick-Up / Claim Ticket.**
 - We do not release children to older siblings still in Children's Ministries (in other words, only a sibling who is 7th grade and older may pick up a younger sibling).
 - We do not release children to relatives (e.g. grandparents) unless they have a Claim Ticket.

- *Final Thoughts:*

- **Take note, Covenant takes the safety of the children seriously.** We want to create a place where all children feel welcomed and comfortable – ultimately so that they can hear the message of **Jesus Christ** and grow to know, love, and serve Him – worshiping him in this delightful community!
- In saying this, if you feel uncomfortable about this plan and the steps Covenant is taking to care for your child, **simply stay at home and enjoy the videos and other resources available to you on our Children’s Ministries webpage.** While we all crave to come back together as a community – sharing in the joy of being together – you must do what you feel is best for your family during this time.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FLEXIBILITY AND SUPPORT!

As part of ministering to the weakest among us (your children), the Children’s Ministry at Covenant wants to take steps to safely build community – **not compromising on “doing ministry” but also not compromising on keeping everyone safe.**

These are not easy times for any of us...and we are all doing our best. So, I ask that you continue extending **GRACE** to us and everyone around you! We recognize that there are many thoughts and opinions about safety protocols, masks, and the virus itself. In saying that, I would strongly encourage you to model to your children how to walk in **CHRIST-LIKE LOVE** and **HUMILITY** during this time.

Phil. 2:3 / Col. 3:12 / Rom. 12:10

