



# Team Training Manual

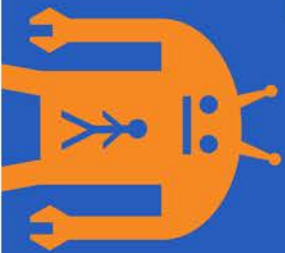


**We host an irresistibly**

**FUN**

**experience for  
children while guiding  
them as they grow in**

**FAITH**



*We accomplish this with our core values:*

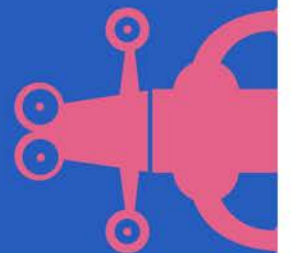
**Safety**

**Energy**

**Creativity**

**Timeliness**

**Connection**





# Our Mission

Helping Kids Love God  
& Love Everyone.

## Our Values

**Safety:** We realize the enormous responsibility we have when people entrust their kids to our care. Therefore, we take keeping kids safe very serious and follow Ax Kidz procedures at all times.

**Energy:** We bring fun and excitement to the kids weekends and make them memorable. We demonstrate our own faith to the kids by showing them how passionate we are about the topics we cover.

**Creativity:** We teach kids timeless Biblical truths in exciting and appropriate ways for their age. Activities, games, and imagination help make these principles graspable and applicable for the kids.

**Timeliness:** We arrive early in order to be 100% ready to lead kids. The kids deserve an amazing weekend experience, and we refuse to fail them because of something as manageable as time.

**Connection:** We are out of the main service while we serve, so it is critical that our team members attend a different service or watch the message podcasts. We stay connected to the vision and direction of Ax Church.

# Ax Kidz Team Expectations

Families, kids, and students are watching you. Your words, choices, and relationship with God will be carefully observed and replicated by the kids you influence. While we don't expect you to be perfect, we do expect you to strive to make wise decisions and glorify God with your life and choices.

## THE QUALIFICATIONS

- Be committed to following Jesus and growing in your faith.
- Be passionate about the mission of Ax Kidz.
- Be in agreement with the Closed Handed Beliefs at Ax Church.
- Live a life of integrity.

## THE EXPECTATIONS

- Serve on a monthly basis.
- Invite kids and parents to join you!
- Be friendly and greet every parent, kid, grandma, and crazy uncle.
- Wear your Ax Kidz t-shirt when you are serving.
- Be on time.
- Attend VIPs.
- Practice safety with kids at all times.

# Best Practices for Team Members

## SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Your faith inspires kids and team members you serve with. Because our team is out of the adult service, we have to be intentional about staying connected to Jesus and the Church. It is important we are strong so that we can lead others!

### **Ways you can be an example and grow in your faith:**

- Spend time with God daily through prayer and Scripture.
- Regularly attend weekend services at Ax Church.
- Watch the podcast to catch up if you were serving and missed the message.
- Participate in a group.
- Consistently invite people to church.

## ATTENDANCE

It takes many Ax Kidz team members to successfully produce each of our weekend experiences. Your attendance, punctuality, and involvement are crucial to the success of Ax Kidz and a huge blessing to the children who will participate.

When you are scheduled, **please arrive no later than 1 hour before our service start time.** This allows time for our VIP Meeting and overview of the service. We begin receiving children in rooms 15 minutes before the start of service. It is critical that every member of our team is in place and fully ready to serve by this time.

If you are unable to attend at a time you are scheduled, please give as much notice as possible to the Ax Kidz Director. In the event of a last minute emergency, communication is still appreciated.

## SCHEDULING

Scheduling of our team is managed one month in advance using Planning Center. Download the Planning Center Services App or use a web browser to go to [www.planningcenteronline.com](http://www.planningcenteronline.com).

Once you are established in the system, you will be able to log into Planning Center and set any "block-out" dates, which you can't serve, as soon as you know about them.

You will be notified via either text, email or both (you control this in your account settings) of scheduled days. Please confirm within 24 hours of receiving your schedule. If you need to decline for any reason, please give a brief explanation. The Ax Kidz Director will be notified automatically.

You will get a second notification three days prior to your scheduled service.

If you are unable to use Planning Center, you can communicate dates you cannot serve to the Ax Kidz Director and get a paper copy of your monthly schedule at the Team Member station in Room 5.

## **CURRICULUM**

Each week we are entrusted with not only the care but the instruction of children. Our goal is to build a foundation of Biblical truth within their lives. If you are scheduled to lead a lesson, the curriculum will be emailed to you on the Wednesday before you serve.

Please make a point to review the curriculum before leading the experience so that you are well prepared to fulfill your role. Use creativity and excitement to communicate the lesson you have for the kids. Have fun as you teach Ax Kidz!

## **TEAM CHECK-IN**

Upon arriving, team members need to check-in at the Ax Kidz check-in stations. After printing your name tag, please go directly to your VIP meeting. For safety reasons, no one will be allowed into an Ax Kidz room without proper identification.

## **ATTIRE**

Wear your Ax Kidz shirt while serving to make yourself easily identifiable to the children and parents. Keep in mind that you may sit on the floor to interact with children through learning and play. Please make sure your clothing choice is appropriate for the age-specific area in which you are serving. Pay special attention to jewelry or other objects with small pieces.

## **INTOXICANTS**

Team members are prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal drugs while working with children in Ax Kidz. If any conduct is questionable, you will be released from your serving duties for that day and future serving obligations will be discussed.

## **CELL PHONE USE, PICTURES, & SOCIAL MEDIA**

To keep our focus on what is important, we ask that no cell phones or mobile devices be used during services. We also do not allow team members to take pictures of/with kids on their personal devices. No pictures of kids should ever be posted to your social media accounts at any time.

# Safety Non-Negotiables

## TWO ADULT POLICY

For safety and accountability purposes, we must always have two adult (above 18 years old) team members in rooms 1, 2 and 3. **This is for your protection and the child's protection.** A room is not allowed to begin checking in children until two adults are present. Never leave another team member alone with a child at any time. Student Helpers do not count as an adult and married couples count as one person.

## CHECK-IN AND CHECK-OUT POLICY

We have a strict check-in and check-out procedure in order to establish trust with parents and protect children. We must make sure all kids are properly checked in prior to entering an Ax Kidz room. This indicates to the family that we have taken over responsibility of them and will keep them safe. In every situation, we will make sure every kid gets checked out properly by matching the parent's security tag to the kid's name tag. We make no exceptions. (See page 7 & 8 for detailed instructions.)

## SECURITY

Only Ax Kidz team members who are serving are allowed inside the rooms. If a parent or anyone else wants to be inside the room during service please direct them to the Ax Kidz Director or Coordinator. Rooms doors are closed and locked 10 minutes after the start of service until check-out. For your protection and the protection of the children entrusted in our care, all Ax Kidz rooms are monitored via security cameras.

## OUTSIDE FOOD AND DRINK POLICY

We do not allow any food or drinks into our rooms by kids. We also ask that team members do not eat in the rooms and are careful with drinks. (Your food could cause an allergic reaction and hot coffee could burn a child.) Due to potential allergies, it is important to keep the vision of safety at the forefront of our mind and keep our classrooms as clean as possible.



## RESTROOM POLICY

To ensure that we protect the kids and our team members, there are detailed guidelines for restroom procedures. If a child has special requirements (i.e. special needs, physically handicapped, etc.) contact the Ax Kidz Director or Coordinator to discuss proper procedures.

### **CHILDREN IN DIAPERS:**

- Only female team leaders are allowed to change diapers.
- Check for a diaper bag by tag identification before you start.
- All diaper changes must be done at changing stations and NEVER on the floor.
- Please utilize safety restraints, provided gloves, and make sure all needed supplies are within reach prior to changing a diaper.
- NEVER LEAVE A CHILD UNATTENDED ON A CHANGING TABLE.
- Place a disposable changing table liner down before placing the child on the table.
- Put the diaper in the plastic bag provided.
- Immediately throw away the dirty diaper and the changing table liner.
- Clean the table by spraying with disinfectant and wiping clean after one minute.

### **POTTY TRAINED & OLDER KIDS:**

- Only female leaders should take children to the restroom.
- Check to make sure there are no adults in the restroom before allowing the child to enter and do not allow any adults into the restroom until the child is done.
- Student helpers are not allowed to escort a child to the restroom.
- Remain outside the bathroom in visual contact with a team member at your classroom door.
- If a child needs assistance, another adult team member (Not a student helper or spouse) must accompany you at the restroom.
- Only a female can provide assistance to a child in the restroom.
- The door must remain ajar the entire time assistance is rendered.
- The hallway liaison will see you in the hallway and stay outside your room to help watch kids. The hallway liaison is not background checked, and therefore cannot take children to the bathroom, or step into the room with children. They are there strictly to be another set of eyes while one team member steps away from the room.

## INJURY POLICY

Contact the Ax Kidz coordinator immediately if a child is injured in any way. An Incident Report will be completed on all injuries. Be observant as you will be asked for specific details regarding the incident.

## MANDATORY REPORTING POLICY

Ax Kidz team members are required to report and document suspected abuse or neglect. (See Page 6 for symptoms of abuse.) Imminent threats should be reported immediately. Suspected abuse should be reported to the Ax Kidz Director directly after service. This information shall then be kept strictly confidential.

# SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

Team members should be aware of the physical signs of abuse. The following characteristics may be indicators of abuse, although they are not necessarily proof. One sign alone does not constitute abuse and may simply be indicative of other issues.

Watch for patterns or a combination of these warning signs.

## **Possible Signs of Physical Abuse**

Hostile and aggressive behavior toward others

Fearfulness of parents and/or other adults

Destructive behavior toward self, others and/or property

Inexplicable fractures or bruises inappropriate for child's developmental stage

Burns, facial injuries, pattern of repetitious bruises

## **Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse**

Unusually advanced sexual knowledge and/or behavior for child's age and developmental stage

Depression- cries for no apparent reason

Promiscuous behavior

Runs away from home and refuses to return

Difficulty walking or sitting

Bruised or bleeding in vaginal or anal areas

Exhibits frequent headaches, stomach aches, extreme fatigue

Sexually transmitted diseases

## **Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse**

Exhibits severe depression and/or withdrawal

Exhibits severe lack of self-esteem

Failure to thrive

Threatens or attempts suicide

Speech and/or eating disorders

Goes to extremes to seek adult approval

Extreme passive/aggressive behavior patterns

## **Possible Signs of Neglect**

Failure to thrive

Pattern of inappropriate dress for climate

Begs or steals food; chronic hunger

Depression

Untreated medical conditions

Poor hygiene

## **Possible Signs of Abuse in Ministry Settings**

Unusual nervousness or anxiety about being left in a church room

Reluctance to participate in church activities that were previously enthusiastically approached

Comments such as, "I don't want to be alone with..." in reference to a team member

Unexplained hostility toward a team member

# How We Do What We Do

## CHECK-IN AND CHECK-OUT

### FIRST IMPRESSION

We only get one chance at a first impression! It's important we inspire confidence in parents in a very short amount of time. Imagine how you would feel if you were dropping your child off with strangers. **We want to knock the socks off parents so they can relax and enjoy the service, knowing their kids are in an awesome, safe environment.** The way we interact with parents is crucial. A nervous parent won't come back to Ax Church. On the flip side, an undecided parent will give church another shot if their kids had a blast and we have a seamless program.

### BE PRESENT

Show up mentally as well as physically. When you serve on a regular basis and are prepared to lead, you create relationships that can change a kid's life and lead them into a relationship with Jesus. **As you learn the kids' names, also create friendships with their parents.** Talk to them about their children and ask them about their lives.

### WELCOMING KIDS

- Be in position and ready to receive kids 15 minutes before the service start time.
- Stand outside your room, welcome the child by name when they arrive and greet the parents.
- **Smile! A tone of enthusiasm communicates the excitement of what will be learned that day and adhering to our procedures communicates the safety of our environments.**
- If the child does not have a name tag, please direct them to the Ax Kidz check-in stations.
- If the child has a name tag, verify that the child is entering the correct room. If not, direct them to their appropriate room. Our curriculum is structured to teach age-appropriate messages, and this is for the safety of the children. If the parent insists on them being in a different room, contact the Ax Kidz Director or Coordinator.
- Hand the sign-in sheet to the parent for them to write the child's name, ID code, parents phone number, and special instructions. **We intentionally have parents do this as it gives us time to chat with them and create relationships and trust.** The sign-in sheet exists in case of power failure or other emergencies, so we have a roster of the kids under our care and can safely return kids.
- If the child has a diaper bag, verify the bag has a name tag on it. If not, one can be printed out at the check-in station.
- 10 minutes after the service start time, the door to the room should be closed and locked. Late check-ins will be required to knock. **Welcome late check-ins with enthusiasm!** We are happy they made it, and we want to put them at ease (they're already running behind and stressed out).

## CHECK-IN AND CHECK-OUT CONTINUED

When parents come to retrieve their kids, we want them to have a calm and positive experience. Seeing a leader who appears in control and not frantic gives parents confidence the children learned something and had a good time. Try to make a connection with the family of the kids you lead.

### GREAT GOODBYES

- Once the service is over unlock the doors and organize the room.
- Smile and make eye contact!
- When parents arrive to pick up their child, ask to see their parent tag.
- Check to see the security numbers and the picture match on both tags.
- If a parent does not have a parent tag: Kindly ask them if they can find it for you. If they cannot find it, please contact the Ax Kidz Coordinator or Director who can verify the guardian in our system.
- Call the child by name and thank them for coming. Tell the parents something positive about their child's day. Celebrate victories!
- Cross the name of each child off the sign-in sheet as they leave to keep the attendance accurate.

## WELL CHILD POLICY

We are not able to care for sick children. We want to stop illness from spreading, but we also want the child to be comfortable and relaxing instead of in church.

### • **A child will not be admitted with any of these symptoms:**

- Fever
  - Frequent coughing or sneezing
  - Runny nose (anything other than clear discharge)
  - Matter in the eyes
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Inflamed mouth and throat
  - Children with any known communicable disease
- 
- If you are concerned about the health of a child, contact the Ax Kidz Coordinator or Director, and they will make the judgment call and inform parents.
  - Team members are not allowed to give or apply any medications.
  - In the case where the child needs and Epi-pen or puffer, written instructions are to be provided by the parent or guardian to the team members. Requests should be written signed, dated and filed permanently with instructions on the prescription or from the prescribing Doctor.
  - A first aid kit will be kept in each classroom in the white cabinet.
  - If a child becomes ill during service, please contact the parent or guardian to come and sign the child out of Ax Kidz.
  - Children should be encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes, wipe their noses, and wash their hands.

## PARENT PAGING

- If you are faced with an upset or unruly child, make three attempts to calm or correct the child with multiple team members before we page the parents.
- After 10 minutes of an inconsolable child, you may contact the parent via the hallway liaison.
- Note the Child's ID number and the Room number on post it paper and pass to the hallway liaison.
- The Host Team member will notify the Tech team who will post this information onto the projector screens in the main service.

## SNACK TIMES

- Before snack times, use the name tags to verify any allergies.
- Due to food allergies and other safety considerations, we do not allow any outside food unless provided by the parent for only their child with allergies.

## DISCIPLINE

Verbal interactions between team members and children should be positive and uplifting. We should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their maturity.

- Each child should receive three warnings within a given service time. Each warning should be expressed with love, but also letting the child know the expected behavior and suggestions on how to correct. Example: "Johnny it's not nice to hit others. We show our friends love by sharing our toys. Can you help me out and share the toys with Molly?"
- After the third warning, a parent should be contacted via the hallway liaison.

## HOW TO LEAD A CHILD TO CHRIST

It's an amazing privilege to get to talk to children about their relationship with God! If a Child expresses interest in asking Jesus into their heart don't hesitate to pray with them. Here is how you can start the conversation:

Describe the Gospel in clear, age-appropriate words. Use simple phrases, not Christian-speak. Describe how God is holy and all of us have done wrong things called "sin". Explain that we couldn't fix this sin, so God's son, Jesus, came to this earth and paid for all of the wrong things we've done. Now, we just have to accept the free gift that he gave us by doing that.

If a child is ready to receive this gift, use Sorry, Thank you, Please to help them take the step.

**SORRY: "Lord, I am sorry for my sins."**

**THANK YOU: "Thank you, Jesus, for paying for all of my sins."**

**PLEASE: "Please, Jesus, become my savior and friend forever."**

Let the kids say these points in their own words if they can. But help them along if they can't put the words together. After a child has decided to follow Jesus, celebrate! Help them fill out a Yes Jesus card. Make sure to tell their parents and be prepared for them to either rejoice or be totally confused. Let the Ax Kidz Director or Coordinator know about the child's decision before leaving.

## APPROPRIATE ACTIONS

- Bending down to the child's eye level and speaking kindly, listening to him or her carefully.
- Taking a child's hand and leading him or her to an activity.
- Putting an arm around the shoulder of a child who needs quieting or comforting
- Taking both of the child's hands as you say "You did such a good job!" (or I'm so glad to see you. We've missed you, etc.)
- Patting a child on the head, hand, shoulder or back to affirm him or her.
- Redirecting a child's behavior: Get down to eye level with the child and point to your chin. Holding a child by the shoulder or hand to keep his or her attention is also acceptable.
- If a child tries to sit on your lap, you may do one of three things:
  1. Encourage the child to sit on the floor next to you
  2. Kneel, so the child sits on the floor in front of you
  3. Unfold your legs, so the child sits directly on the floor and not on your lap.Regardless of which option you choose, always be sure the child's bottom is on the floor.
- Hugging can ONLY be done if the child initiates the contact, and even then it must be a side-to-side hug. (Stand to the side of the child's shoulder and lean sideways toward them. Always keep a distance between your body and theirs.)
- Under no circumstances should you touch or hug a child out of view of others.
- Listen to the children. God has a blessing waiting for each of us if we will take the time to listen.
- Play with the children. Every child loves this time of interaction with you as a team member, and there is no substitute for one-on-one interaction. Remember to exercise appropriate play at all times.
- Holding crying children two years old and younger is acceptable, in a side straddle only.

## INAPPROPRIATE ACTIONS

- Kissing a child, coaxing a child to kiss you, extended hugging and tickling
- Touching a child in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit
- Carrying a child that is two years old or older
- Being alone with a child at any time
- Giving a full contact, body-to-body hug
- Prolonged physical contact
- Piggyback rides
- Seductiveness or suggestive contact
- Any physical contact unwanted by the child
- Any touching used to express power or control over a child
- Rough housing, wrestling, or tickling kids on the floor
- Sitting a child on your lap
- Horsey rides at any age
- Swinging a child by the arms
- Disciplining kids using harsh words or a loud voice
- Pointing or shaking of fingers
- Team members may not spank their own kids while serving

## CLEAN UP TIME

All team members are asked to help clean up as the last step of serving. Wait until the children are picked up to begin major cleaning efforts. We would rather have parents see team members interacting with their kids than running around the room, trying to get done.

- Pick up all toys, chairs, or major obstacles and put them away.
- Disinfect all hard surfaces down with Clorox wipes, and spray all soft surfaces with Lysol. If any soft materials have been exposed to germs (used by a sick baby, used to clean up spit up, etc.) give them to the Ax Kidz Coordinator or Director to wash.
- Vacuum entire room, including any rugs.
- Throw away any food left in bowls and take them with cups and utensils to the courtesy room to be washed and sanitized.
- Change the garbage bag and take the trash out.
- Note any snacks running low, any broken toys, or missing outlet covers and inform the Ax Kidz Coordinator or Director.



# Emergency Procedures

## MEDICAL EMERGENCY

Immediately report any medical needs or concerns to the Ax Kidz Coordinator, Director, or if life threatening dial 911. The team member should remain calm and divert the attention of the other children. The victim should be kept quiet and still. Do not attempt to move a severely injured person unless in imminent danger. Parents should be contacted as soon as it's safe to do so.

## HAZARDOUS WEATHER

In the event of dangerous weather team members should follow the guidelines below. The leadership team may give further instructions.

Stay calm. Grab your class roster and move the children to the interior hallway. Close the doors behind you. Make sure all children are accounted for. Crouch down low until it's safe.

## FIRE

The first priority in any fire is that all children and team member's safety is maintained. Any attempt by team members to put out a fire is absolutely forbidden unless judgment to do so is unquestionable and presents no possible danger.

In the event of a fire, at the sound of an alarm, or if smoke or flames are visible, team members should calmly and quickly gather the children and their class rosters, get the children to quickly form a line if they can walk, account for every child on your roster and escort the children out the North hall exit of the building. If this primary exit is blocked, use an alternate route.

In the Nursery and Toddler room, the kids should be split so each volunteer takes an equal amount of children with them as they exit out the emergency exits.

Walk the children to the shelter at Pulaski Park and re-account for each child on the roster.

Ask parents to form a line to pick up their children. Normal check out procedures are still in place and parents will need to show their tags to pick up their child.

Cross off each child from your roster as the parent picks them up.

Parents may stay with you and assists, but they MAY NOT take their child and leave during an evacuation until the children are in a safe location and officially signed out.



# VIOLENT INCIDENT

The first priority in any dangerous situation is that all children and team members are safe. Any attempt by team members to confront the intruder is forbidden unless it is necessary to maintain the safety of the children.

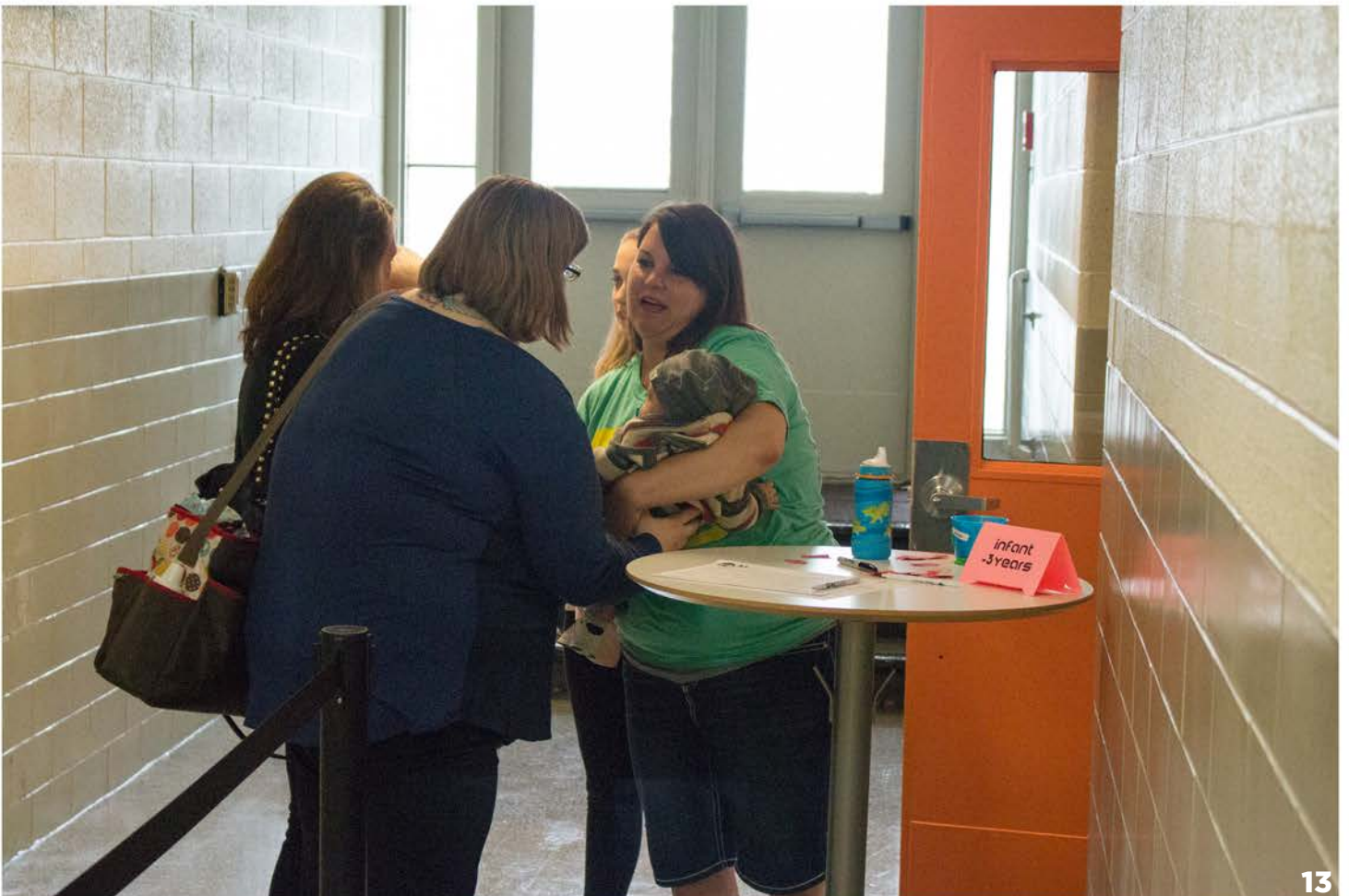
In the event of a violent incident lock all doors and move the kids to the Northwest corner away from all doors and windows.

Try to calm children and keep them silent.

Stay low until it is safe.

Call 911 as soon as you can. Silence phones. Inform each other about the event by text if possible.

Team members should remain within that classroom until an authorized authority communicates that it is safe to exit. Do not open your door until you have verified identification of the person who is giving you the all clear.





**Jesus said, “Let the children come to me. Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children.”**

**Mark 10:14**

**Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.**

**Proverbs 22:6**

**God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.**

**Hebrews 6:10**

# Where Do You Fit in All of This?

## TEAM MEMBER ROLES

### **Ax Kidz Director**

Oversees the ministry of Ax Kidz including: coaching leaders, developing team members, creating plans for curriculum, and working with parents.

### **Ax Kidz Coordinator**

Works closely with Ax Kidz Director and helps in any or all of the Director's roles.

### **Leader**

Leads a room of kids through provided curriculum and oversees team members to accomplish activities and tasks. (Must be at least 18 years old.)

### **Team Member**

Engages and influences kids to support the goals of the leader. (Must be at least 15 years old.)

### **Student Helper**

Helps provide a good example to kids and supports the goals of the leader. (Must be at least 7th grade and completed one year of Ax Kidz.)

## AGE GROUPS

**Infants to Two Years** Ages newborn to two years old. Kids move up at their third birthday.

**Three to Four Years** Ages three and four years old.

**K to 3rd Grade** Beginning of kindergarten through completing 3rd Grade.

**4th to 6th Grade** Beginning of 4th Grade through completing 6th Grade. Graduates to Ax Students.

All of the kids Pre-K to 6th Grade move up to the next age group on the same weekend each year.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

We are excited to have you on the Ax Kidz Team! Since safety is a priority in this ministry, here are a few steps we take before you fully join the team.

Each team member must:

- Fill out team member application
- Complete an online background check
- Review policies and procedures in this handbook
- Attend orientation training
- Serve two weekends under supervision



## **Ax Kidz Handbook Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement**

I have received and read a copy of the Ax Kidz Handbook which covers the policies and procedures. I understand the importance of the material in the manual. I agree to abide by these guidelines while serving in Ax Kidz.

I understand the manual may be modified, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated by the leadership at Ax Church.

I understand it is my responsibility to review new guidelines which may be created and distributed.

I agree to future background checks as requested by Ax leadership in order to maintain my ability to serve in Ax Kidz. I will immediately report any instances that could impact my ability to serve in this area of ministry to the Ax Kidz Director.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Ax Kidz Director \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



 **AxChurch**

[axchurch.com/kids](http://axchurch.com/kids)