**Appendix L
Disciplinary, Bullying, Bathroom and Sickness Policies**

**Discipline**

It is the policy of the Presbyterian Church of Novato that staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children and youth. **No form of physical discipline is acceptable.** This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children or youth. When a child or youth is misbehaving, follow these steps:

1. Go to the child or youth and calmly ask him/her to stop the behavior. (Most children or youth respond immediately and correct the behavior.) Give a warning and remind the child of class expectations and redirect to a positive behavior. Do this individually, when possible, try not to single out a specific child in a large group setting. \*When working with younger children, some physical redirection may be necessary: for example, removing a toy from the hands of a child who is hitting another.
2. If the child or youth repeats the action, guide them to a quiet place – separate from the other children or youth – for a short but designated period of time. Stay within sight of others and avoid being alone (or unseen) with the child or youth.

Provide the child or youth with a simple, understandable reason for the separation, and a clear explanation of your expectations.

(“Terry, you didn’t stop hitting Kelly when I asked you to, so it was necessary for me to separate you from the group.”)

1. After a 3rd time, refer to a staff member. The ministry supervisor may inform a parent or guardian, who may be asked to become involved in redirecting misbehavior.

Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported to ministry supervisor.

NEVER...

* Never yell at a child or youth.
* Never grab a child or youth.
* Never threaten a child or youth. Always follow through with your word.
* Never hit a child or youth.
* Never confront a parent in front of others.
* Never openly humiliate a child or youth in front of others.

**Bullying**

Verbal, physical, or emotional bullying is not acceptable in the Presbyterian Church of Novato ministry programs. At the first sign of bullying in any form, act decisively, and inform your ministry supervisor. There is no “harmless put-down” or “jokes” where bullying is concerned.

1. First Offense: Issue a warning to the child or youth and a general reminder to the group that this kind of interaction is wrong. Try not to embarrass or chastise. DO NOT SINGLE A CHILD OR YOUTH OUT IN FRONT OF OTHERS ... be discreet.
2. Second Offense: Pull the offending child(ren) or youth from the group (in a seen or supervised location) and discuss the inappropriate interaction or behavior. Set clear parameters and behavioral goals. Let the child or youth know that the next step is communication with the ministry supervisor and the child’s or youth’s parents. Notify the ministry supervisor of ANY signs of bullying or verbal abuse.
3. Third Offense:Send the child or youth to ministry supervisor for a phone call (or communication onsite) with his or her parent(s) and possible removal from the activity or event.

**Bathroom Policies**

Because children may require assistance with their bathroom activities, all staff members and volunteers will observe the following policies:

**Diapering**

* Only female nursery workers or the child’s parent or legal guardian will undertake the diapering of children of either sex.
* To the greatest extent possible, changing of diapers should be done in plain sight of other nursery workers.
* Children will never be left unattended on changing tables.
* Children should be re-diapered and re-clothed immediately upon the completion of changing their soiled diaper.
* Children should be changed on changing stations only.

**Bathroom**

* To the greatest extent possible, a single staff member or volunteer should never take a lone child to the restroom.
* The staff member or volunteer should check the bathroom first to make sure that it is empty, and then allow the child inside. The staff member or volunteer should then remain outside the bathroom door and escort the child back to the classroom.
* In general, children should receive the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities. Encourage children to do all they can for themselves.
* If you must go into the restroom to check on an individual child, seek out another worker to accompany you. If another worker is not available, go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance. Do not enter the restroom.
* If a child requires immediate assistance, leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and first try to verbally assist the child in completing his or her toileting activities, while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall.
* To the greatest extent possible, any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another staff member or volunteer.
* No child will be forced to toilet train.
* Only female nursery workers or the child’s parent or legal guardian will participate in toilet training efforts with children of either sex.
* “Accidents” should be handled by reassuring the child and completing the changing of diapers or underwear and clothing.
* No adult OF ANY AGE should enter or occupy a bathroom while children are using it.
* For the protection of all, workers should *never* be alone with a child in a bathroom with the door closed and never be in a closed bathroom stall with a child.
* Parents are strongly encouraged to have their children visit the bathroom prior to each class.

**Sick Child Policy:**
It is the policy of the Presbyterian Church of Novato that children and youth with the following symptoms should NOT be dropped off:

* Fever, diarrhea, or vomiting within the last 48 hours;
* Green or yellow runny nose;
* Eye or skin infections; and/or
* Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease.

Children or youth who are observed by our workers to be ill will be separated from other children or youth and the parent or guardian will be contacted to request that the child or youth be picked up.

**Liability Form:**
It is the policy of the Presbyterian Church of Novato that parents and guardians need to complete and return a Presbyterian Church of Novato Liability and Release Form, which includes pertinent medical information and emergency phone numbers, a medical release, and general permission to participate in the activities and events organized by the Presbyterian Church of Novato or its Agents. These forms will be updated every year and filed with the PCN Safe Church Coordinator.