

Caring For Kids at Trinity Fellowship

Why Caring For Kids?

Unfortunately, the reality of today's society means that placing children in the care of the wrong people puts them at risk for physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. At Trinity Fellowship we see children as a trust from God and from the children's parents. Psalm 127:3 says, "Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him." We take very seriously the responsibility of keeping children safe. Knowing that there are people who want to hurt children means that we must do all we can to make sure that they do not have access to the minors entrusted to Trinity Fellowship. Therefore, we developed the Caring For Kids process to ensure that the paid staff and volunteers working with minors in the church have been adequately screened. We also require that all ministries involving minors follow Caring For Kids approved procedures.

How Do I Become Caring For Kids Approved?

Anyone working in Children's Ministry, Powerhouse Student Ministries, in the Nursery, or any other ministry with minors needs to have Caring For Kids approved status. This means that each person working with minors must fill out a Caring For Kids application. This application includes some personal information, as well as references supplied by the applicant. Once the application is submitted, letters are sent out to the applicant's references, and a criminal background check is completed. After three letters of reference are received, the Caring for Kids administrator reviews all the materials. If an applicant wishes to withdraw the application at any time, he or she is free to do so. The applicant will be notified when he or she has been cleared. If the application is not approved, the Caring For Kids administrator will notify the applicant in a face to face meeting and a follow up letter.

Who Sees My Application?

Since we recognize that any application involves personal data, all information supplied by the applicant and references is considered confidential. Only the Caring For Kids administrator views all the application materials. The Caring for Kids assistant keeps track of correspondences. The administrator has access to all the documents in the applicant's file and is responsible for contacting agencies outside the church. The assistant is in charge of maintaining files and tracking all incoming documents towards the completion of an application. Since each application involves several letters of reference, a minimum of four weeks is needed for an individual to become Caring For Kids approved. This time period begins when the completed application is turned in.

Isn't This Procedure Intrusive?

We realize that the Caring For Kids process can be bothersome, and in some cases, can be uncomfortable. But when weighed against the safety of our kids, the trouble is well worth it. Remember, we are trying as hard as we can to protect children. Jesus said, "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me" (Mark 9:37). If you have questions or concerns about any part of the Caring For Kids process, please contact Joe Gardner, one of our elders who oversees the Caring For Kids process. Arrangements can also be made for you to meet with a woman in the church with whom you are more comfortable talking.

What Procedures Are In Place Presently?

All those working with minors must read the Caring For Kids procedure manual and are expected to make every effort to protect children from abuse. Second, all workers have the responsibility of reporting abuse that is suspected, witnessed, or disclosed by a child. Third, all workers must support and not contradict Trinity Fellowship's Statement of Faith. As far as procedures for day to day ministries are concerned, the Caring For Kids procedure manual outlines the minimum number of approved workers that must be present for any activity involving children. We require that more than one worker is present so that we can protect children and also protect workers from false accusations. We also have specific procedures for taking kids to the restroom, nursery check-in and check-out, and overnight youth trips.

How Can I Protect Kids?

First, if you foresee yourself working in any ministry involving minors, then you need to submit a Caring For Kids application. Second, please pray for the safety of our children. By God's grace and our vigilance may we do our best to give children a safe and happy place of worship where they can learn about Jesus. If you are interested in a Caring For Kids application, please contact our Children's Ministry Director Connie Lossing or Powerhouse Student Ministries Pastor Don Hancock.