

Soma Kids Ministry Handbook
Updated October 2016

Extraordinary Roles of Soma Kids Ministry

As a Jesus glorifying ministry, Soma Kids will:

Encourage, support and equip parents to fulfill their holy assignment of shepherding their children through loving care, training, coaching and resourcing **so that parents feel confident, prepared and supported in discipling their children.**

As a Jesus glorifying ministry, Soma Kids will:

Provide red-carpet care to Soma's families during services through well-organized and administered children's ministry with individualized attention to families **so that parents are confident in entrusting their children to Soma Kids and allowed to peacefully engage in the service.**

As a Jesus glorifying ministry, Soma Kids will:

Model Christ to Soma's children and ignite in them a gospel passion through engaging Bible teaching **so that they grow in their relationship with Christ.**

As a Jesus glorifying ministry, Soma Kids will:

Steward faithfully Soma Kids volunteers through attentive collaborating, coaching, resourcing **so that they are prepared to serve Him with excellence.**

As a Jesus glorifying ministry, Soma Kids will:

Lead the church in the rescue of children in need in the greater Indianapolis area by partnering with local organizations and connecting needs with the body of Soma, **so that the body will be thoroughly supported as they serve as the hands and feet of Jesus to our city's children.**

As a Jesus glorifying ministry, Soma Kids will:

Hold up the arms of Soma staff families as they seek to balance family and ministry through personalized care, training and resourcing **so that Soma staff may thrive in their family life and ministry.**

Pillars of Soma Kids:

Discipling Parents
Missional Families
Believing Children
Servant-hearted Volunteers
Supported Staff Families
Transformed Lives

Volunteer Application Process

Thank you for your interest in serving with Soma Kids! We believe that ministry to our children is vital to the health of our families and church. At Soma, we are committed to providing our families with a safe and secure ministry environment. This includes volunteers who have been screened and cleared to work with children. Because of this standard, we require every adult who desires to work with our children to go through a comprehensive application process and background check.

1. Application

This form is used to help find the right placement for each volunteer and to gather basic information for future communications.

2. Criminal History Check

We will run the criminal history check on all adults applying to serve in Soma Kids.

3. Training

- Applicants must read and understand the Children's Ministry Handbook and Policies and Procedures.
- New volunteers will "shadow" an experienced Soma Kids volunteer the first time they serve.
- We ask that all volunteers attend at least one volunteer training a year.

Thank you for your heart for this ministry and your willingness to serve!

Soma Kids Ministry Positions

Sunday Service Coordinator:

- Must be a committed follower of Jesus Christ and be invested in a personal and growing relationship with God.
- Must also be able to invest in the children, families and fellow teachers/helpers in the classroom.

Description:

The Sunday Service Coordinator role exists in dual capacity as leader of Hospitality and Logistics for Soma Kids. Practically, this plays out in means of:

Responsibilities:

- Arrive at least **30 minutes prior** first Sunday morning service to help set up the space for coffee & donuts
- Assist Director of Soma Kids in time of prayer during coffee & donuts from **8:35-8:50**
- Turn on check-in computers
- Turn lights on and open doors in specific classrooms that will be utilized
- Guide volunteers to their rooms
- Welcome new families by:
 - Having them fill out a Soma Kids Connect Card
 - Fill out a guest tag sticker for their children and explain the tag to them (found in basket on the shelf below the welcome desk)
 - During the service, enter the Soma Kids Connect Card information into the Soma Kids Check-In computer, so the family will be activated the next time they visit
 - Write the new family a welcome card (cards/envelopes/stamps in basket under the desk) and place addressed cards in outgoing mail (the red file-folder box by the mailboxes under the stairs).
- Be available for anything your volunteers may need, and check-in on them during the service.. Many will not ask for help unless you offer it! :) If there are two coordinators, one may jump in a classroom if volume and capacity requires it.
- After service:
 - If serving in 1st service, ensure all 1st service volunteers have been replaced by 2nd service volunteers before heading upstairs for the 2nd service yourself. Fill in for a volunteer during that transitional time if needed. Pass along any important info from the 1st service to the 2nd service Coordinator.
 - If serving in the 2nd service, ensure bathroom and classrooms are cleaned and vacuumed, lights are turned off and trash is taken out prior to leaving Soma Kids.
 - Thank volunteers as they leave. We are working on building morale in Soma Kids, and want to encourage our faithful volunteers as much as possible!

Lead Teacher:

- Must be a committed follower of Jesus Christ and be invested in a personal and growing relationship with God.
- Must be able to teach children with provided material and lead both children and fellow workers.

Responsibilities:

- Regularly attend Soma Church and be committed to the mission and vision of the church.
- Serve at least twice/month in the same classroom (two “safe adults” per classroom).
- Plan and prepare the Bible lesson and gather all needed materials (please let the children’s ministry staff know if materials are needed for crafts/activities in advance).
- Welcome each child into the classroom and sign them in.
- Clean-up the classroom after the last child is picked up (all toys/materials back into their assigned tubs and desks returned where they belong).
- Comply with all policies and procedures.

Teacher Helper/Teen Helper:

- Must be open to a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and actively seeking to live a Christian lifestyle.
- Must also be willing to help and serve the lead teacher and children at all times.

Responsibilities:

- Regularly attend Soma Church and be committed to the mission and vision of the church.
- Serve at least once a month in the classroom.
- Assist during the Bible lesson with gathering supplies, helping keep children’s attention and providing support to the lead teacher.
- Clean-up the classroom after the last child is picked up (all toys/materials back into their assigned tubs and desks returned where they belong).
- Comply with all policies and procedures.

Soma Kids Volunteer Information and Requirements

Application & Background Check

All volunteers (18 years and older) must complete a volunteer application from which Soma staff will complete a background check.

Age Requirements:

Junior Volunteer: Children 1st through 5th grade can serve two-year olds and up only if accompanied by a parent.

Student Volunteer: Middle school students (6th-8th grade) and high school students (9th-12th grade) can serve in any area of Soma Kids as long as they are paired with an adult volunteer.

Adult Volunteer: Adults 18 years or older can serve in any area of Soma Kids as a volunteer or leader.

Soma Kids Handbook and Trainings

Each volunteer is asked to review the Soma Kids Handbook and to sign the volunteer agreement.

General Expectations

- Have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and be growing in Christian ministry
- Believe God has led them to serve Him and His church by being a part of the Soma Kids team
- Have completed the following:
 - Background check (Soma staff will complete)
 - Review Soma Kids Handbook
 - Soma Kids training
- Be committed in the following ways:
 - Consistent in church attendance
 - Consistent volunteer attendance and preparedness
 - Willing to receive training
- Notify the Soma Kids staff before being absent and put forth effort in finding another Soma Kids Volunteer to take your place during your absence
- Attend required training sessions
- Help keep the classrooms organized and clean
- Inform Soma Kids staff when additional supplies are needed
- Seek help from the Soma Kids staff when needed

You have been entrusted, as a volunteer in the Soma Kids Ministry, with the tremendous responsibility of caring for and teaching our young children about Jesus, ministering to their families, and representing our church to all you encounter. Prayer and time in the Word will be your greatest source of wisdom. Pray for God's wisdom and discernment in all that you do and say. Soma Church desires to be a safe and healthy place for all children who attend.

Soma Kids Policies

- Scheduled volunteers are the only individuals allowed into Soma Kids rooms.

- Children should never be left unattended.
- Children should remain in their assigned room, except for trips to the bathroom.
- Hot beverages may not be consumed around children.
- Only age-appropriate snacks may be fed to children by our volunteers (I.E. Cheerios to older babies, animal/graham crackers or goldfish to toddlers and older children).
- Two-Deep Policy: There must always be two volunteers providing direct and indirect supervision over children from the time a child enters their classroom until they are released to their parents. This policy is to ensure the safety of the child and the protection of the volunteers.

Procedures

Soma Kids Check-In

- Parents check all children in through the check-in station in the hallway outside of Soma Kids rooms. A nametag will be issued for each child with a corresponding guardian tag.
- Soma Kids volunteers should help with the check-in process and explain to guests the policies and procedures of Soma Kids.
- The nametag should be placed on the child's back and the parents retain the guardian tag to be used for pick up.
- Child should be released directly to teacher at the door of their classroom and is encouraged to depart without lingering (children are often upset by parents lingering at drop off).
- Volunteer will greet each child, sign them in and check for any allergies.
- If the volunteer notices any of the symptoms listed in the Good Health Guidelines, the child must remain with the parent and may not come into the Soma Kids classroom.

Soma Kids Check-Out

- Children should only be released to the parent with the matching guardian tag which has a matching number. Children may NOT be released to a parent without the matching stub.
- Soma Kids volunteer must take the parent label and stick it to the corresponding child's label at pick-up.
- If a parent has lost their pick up tag then the Soma Kids Coordinator should be contacted and their identity and relation to the child should be confirmed via CCB and a photo ID.

Soma Kids Clean-Up - After 2nd service

- Sanitize and put away all supplies and toys into appropriate space.
- Vacuum the room.
- Do not leave the classroom until the last child has been picked up.
- Wipe off chalk boards in lower and upper elementary .

- Empty classroom trash and place clean trash bag in bin.

Food Policy

- Check all of the children for allergy alerts on their nametags before serving snack.
- Only serve snacks provided in the room.
- If parents bring a snack for their child, only serve that snack to that particular child.
- If you or a parent desires to provide an outside snack for the entire class, please contact a Soma Kids staff member for approval.

Diaper Changing Procedures

- Only a female adult leader over 18 years of over may change a diaper.
- Children should be checked for wet/soiled diapers during each service and changed as needed.
- Diapering should be done in open view of other volunteers.
- Never leave a child unattended on the diaper changing pad.

Restroom Procedures

- Volunteers should supervise restroom visits by standing at the closed bathroom door and waiting for older children to exit.
- Toddlers and younger children may need assistance – always leave the door open with the other Soma Kids volunteer at the classroom door entrance, so the restroom volunteer and the children in the classroom are both visible.
- Assist children (as needed) in washing their hands.

Discipline

- We take a positive approach to discipline by emphasizing what is right and what is acceptable behavior according to our Biblical example.
- Self-control is the goal of all discipline. Children are not born with self-control, rather it is a learned behavior that we are here to help teach.
- Unacceptable behavior is dealt with in a calm, confident manner, which does not disturb the total class, or call unnecessary and undesirable attention to the child who has misbehaved. This is accomplished through intervention and redirection.
- A “break” (within the classroom) may be used sparingly in increments of one minute per year of the child’s age when the child needs time to calm themselves and work on self-control.
- Teachers do not use corporal punishment. If inappropriate behavior continues after the “break”, the Lead Teacher should speak to the coordinator for help.
- Parents are contacted by the Children’s Director or Soma Kids Coordinator when unacceptable behavior so warrants. In extreme cases, the parent may be asked to shadow the child in the classroom until the behavior is corrected.

Injuries/Sickness

When a child is injured or becomes sick while in your care, use the following procedures:

- If bodily fluids are involved (blood, mucus, vomit, etc.) use latex gloves while treating the child.
- Volunteers or staff may not administer medications.

Minor Accidents

- Most classroom injuries can be treated with loving care, soap and water, ice and a band-aid.
- An ouch report should be completed to send home with the child; this keeps the parents informed and helps you transfer information during a time of “high traffic” as many parents pick up and drop off.

Serious Injury

- If an injury requires immediate attention, notify the other volunteers and coordinator

right away.

- DO NOT MOVE THE CHILD UNLESS THEY ARE IN DANGER OF FURTHER INJURY.
- Speak calmly to the child involved; send another adult for help and to find the parent.
- A volunteer should call 911, if necessary.
- An accident report should always be completed.

Emergencies

Occasionally, the fire alarm will sound. Whether the emergency is real or a false alarm, everyone is to be evacuated from the building in the quickest manner possible, until a Soma Staff member clears it.

- You will find an evacuation route posted next to your classroom door.
- Please make yourself familiar with your class route so that there is no need to panic or read the route when the alarm is sounding.

Emergency Evacuation for Infants

- The classroom door should be closed immediately (so no children crawl/walk out of the room in panic).
- Have each volunteer pick up 2 kids each. If there are more kids than the volunteers can carry, contact the coordinator to help carry them.
- Be sure to take along your sign in sheet and count heads multiple times.
- Stay together and move to the northwest or southwest stairway - whichever is closest and unobstructed.
- Go outside to the west side of the parking lot (side closest to Target) where everyone else will gather.
- Children should not be released to the parent **until** all children are safe and accounted for; the parent must present their badge to the teacher to retrieve the child.

Emergency Evacuation for Toddlers and Preschool

- Line the children up quickly against the wall inside the classroom.
- Be sure to take along your sign in sheet and count heads multiple times.
- Walk the children quickly out the designated evacuation route and line them up on the west side of the parking lot (side closest to Target).
- Stay together with one teacher in front of the line and one at the back.
- Children should not be released to the parent **until** all children are safe and accounted for; the parent must present their badge to the teacher to retrieve the child.

Good Health Guidelines

- Sick children are happier in their home environment. In addition, we want to provide a healthy environment in our Soma Kids rooms, so we ask you to have parents keep their child at home when they observe any of the following:
 - Fever

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Discharge in or around the eyes
- Questionable rash
- Green or yellow runny nose
- Any communicable disease
- Excessive coughing
- If a child becomes ill while in the Soma Kids classroom, you should:
 - Notify the other volunteer and coordinator.
 - Notify the parent and the child should be picked up immediately.
- If a child is being treated with an antibiotic, he or she should have received treatment for at least 24 hours before being allowed in the nursery
- Medication may not be administered by Soma Kids Volunteers or Staff, unless emergency asthmatic or allergy-type medications are needed and the time to locate the parent would be detrimental to the child. **Parents are responsible for informing and training staff.**
- Parents are not allowed to put medication in a child's cup or bottle where another child may ingest it.

Soma Church Open Door Policy

Soma Church encourages all volunteers to provide input and suggestions concerning the ministry area, in which they serve, as well as the overall operation and programs of the church.

This open door policy is important to increasing the quality of the church's ministries, as well as for correcting problems that may exist in processes or relationships within areas of ministry. The church welcomes all input by volunteers who should voice any comments or concerns without fear of retribution or reprisal. We know it can seem difficult to initiate such conversations, but Jesus commands us in Matthew 18:15 to take the initiative to resolve such things.

Volunteer Agreement

I, _____, have received a copy of Soma Kids Ministry Handbook and Policies and Procedures Manual. I have read it and promise to abide by and comply with all the policies and procedures therein. I understand the information included in the manual and will be held responsible to the policies and procedures as stated.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Ouch Report

Parent/Guardian: _____

Child: _____

This is what happened:

We treated it by:

We feel your child is
O.K. now () OR Further treatment may be needed ()

Teacher's Signature: _____

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