

3.24.22

Taking Ownership || An encouragement for J-High and High School Kids Min Volunteers

You are more than capable! if you were not qualified we would not have you in a classroom, you bring so much added value to kids ministry. With that, in these classrooms, you are not a kid, you are the “adult”. You have been placed in a leadership position (assistants are still in a leadership role) There are not different standards for you because you are under 18, all kids ministry volunteers go through the same interview process, the same training, and have the same expectations. I don't say this as something to be scared about or sound like i'm disciplining you, instead this is meant to be encouraging and liberating! I think most people look down on teenagers and young people in general, most of the time we aren't trusted with much if not anything. Instead, here, we want to tell you that we trust you, we value you, and we want to see kids ministry grow in fruitfulness BECAUSE we have teenagers working alongside God in his mission for Kids!

Practical ways you can take ownership of your role and classroom:

- Read the lesson plan before Sunday - you guys are doing child care, you are participating in Kids Ministry. Which means you are coming alongside God, and their parents, to show the love of God to these kids and teach them what it means to live for and with Jesus. When you come to Sunday having already read the lesson plan, you know WHAT is being taught, HOW to apply it, and WHY it is important. Reading the story also gives you the chance to spend some intimate time with Jesus, which is essential to our lives with Christ, but SO SO necessary for anyone doing ministry.
- Be Proactive, not Reactive: be attentive and notice how the class is flowing and how you can be of assistance. Don't wait for the adult in your class to ask you to do something, take initiative and know that you are fully capable of making wise decisions for your class and for the kids.
 - examples: greet each kid as they walk into the class if you aren't already playing with a few kids, introduce yourself to the parent and to the kid and invite them to play with you or assure them they are going to have a great

time.

- If a kid starts crying, don't avoid him or her thinking that the adult in the class is the one who should handle that, instead move away from what you are currently doing (if you are able) and do what you need to to comfort the child.
- Think of fun ways to engage the kids during free time, start a spontaneous game of simeon says or duck, duck, goose, especially if you can tell that the kids seem like they don't know what to do or if they are all in their own little world. We want to help them cultivate community with one another just like we do at youth group.
- if you notice a kid doing the potty dance, ask them if they need to go. if so, offer to take a few kids to the bathroom together. OR if you are taking care of another kid that needs your attention but you notice the potty dance from another kid, speak up and ask the other leader or assistant in the class to take the kids to the bathroom.
- Speak up: when there are 15 kids and only 2-3 teachers/assistants in the class, chances are that not everyone is going to see everything. Meaning, you might see a kid that is getting pushed around or a kid starting to get sad, don't wait for the leader to say something know that you have the authority to act before things get worse, or if you aren't comfortable intervening, tell the leader in the class what you see so that they can support you and the kids.

Communication is critical!

- If you have questions or concerns, don't hesitate to ask the leader in your class, or approach Anna or Karina. They love feedback and get excited about new questions that you may have!

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- And as always, communicating about scheduling is key! If the week you serve isn't working out for some reason, tell karina! If you know you are going to be gone for the next month, tell karina!
- If you need to have a conversation about where you serve, don't wait! I know that kind of conversation can be intimidating, but it is always better to have the conversation than to let it build up and fester in your brain. If you'd rather serve with older kids, talk to Karina or Anna, if you'd rather serve with younger kids, talk to Anna or Karina, if you need to step down from serving, talk to Anna or Karina. Take it from me, someone who avoided hard conversation MOST of my life... it is never worth stressing over. Taking the time to think and pray and use wisdom, so important, but letting it stress you out because you are afraid of what their response may be, that is not healthy! The conversation will almost always go better than you think it's going to!

Gratitude:

- YOU! (Jr. high and high school students) play a key role in Kid's ministry. We wouldn't be able to offer such an impactful experience on Sundays without our volunteers. We wanted to take this time to say thank you and let you know how appreciated you are. Your age is not related to your ability to lead children and share the gospel. Wiping noses and playing dinosaurs is not "lesser" than other positions or serve areas.
- Thank you for being a servant leader and bringing the joy and playfulness that is so needed in Kids ministry.
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