Developing Preschool Safety Policies Packet

DEVELOPING POLICIES

DEVELOPING INFECTIOUS DISEASE POLICIES

LEGAL ISSUES CONFRONTING PRESCHOOL MINISTRIES

PRESCHOOL SAFETY GUIDELINES

SAFETY CHECKLIST BABY DEPARTMENT

SAFETY CHECKLIST ONES DEPARTMENT

SECURITY SYSTEM: A TOP PRIORITY FOR YOUR PRESCHOOL MINISTRY

SAMPLE PRESCHOOL DIVISION INFORMATION AND POLICIES

SAMPLE FORMS: POLICIES FOR LEADERS WITH MINORS

****

For criminal background checks, call “LexisNexis” at 800.590.8535.

Identify your church as being affiliated with the Virginia Baptist Mission Board (VBMB).

For more information contact:
Emerging Leaders Team
800.ALL.BGAV, Ext. 2243

Made possible by the generous Cooperative Missions gifts of Virginia Baptist Churches affiliated with the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

www.vbmb.org
The forming of preschool policies is an individual church project. That is, each church is autonomous. Therefore, each church will need to develop policies to meet its own needs. Developing preschool policies is an important step in improving the ministry and effectiveness of the preschool division of a church. Policies can enhance the work of the division. They give credibility, as well as support, to those persons who serve faithfully in this area. Policies can clarify the work in the division and the guidelines for use of the facilities.

Steps to Begin
The development of preschool policies is an important and serious task. It should be done slowly, carefully, and with much care. The obvious time for a church to develop policies is if there are none, regardless of the size of the church.

Promoting the need for policies or the beginning of forming policies may come from several different people. It may come from a Preschool Committee. The Pastor or Minister of Education may feel the need to have a set of policies for the preschool division. A Minister of Childhood Education or preschool division director will want there to be a set of policies. The need for policies may come from a question or concern that arises among teachers or parents. Hopefully, there will be a consensus of opinion by several interested persons that policies are needed.

Who Will be Involved?
As the committee or work group forms, they will be aware of their assignment and some may come to the first meeting with information and ideas. Determining goals and possible deadlines may be helpful. Discussing ideas, suggestions, and needs to be considered will be important. One or more in the group will need to be designated to gather information and, perhaps, copies of policies from other churches. Choose the best ideas from these, keeping in mind the specific needs of your church. Some areas covered in another policy may not be applicable to your situation.

Formulating the Policies
After much study, discussion, and several meetings, put the policies into written form. These may need to be brought before the group more than once. Share them with others who work with preschoolers to get their input and response. Strive for 100 percent satisfaction with the policies from the work group. The approval of the Pastor and Minister of Education, before final completion, will be valuable.

It is important to carry the policies through the proper channels for church approval during a regular business meeting. Copies should be printed and available to those who show interest in them. Being able to refer to a date of church approval will add credibility to the policies and support to those whose responsibility it will be to follow (and help others abide by) them. When the policies have been approved and accepted by the church, print enough copies for each family of preschoolers to have a copy. See that each preschool family coming into church receives a copy. Be sure that all program leaders and church staff have a copy. See that the policies are well understood by all those who use the preschool facilities. They should be the first ones to follow the policy guidelines.
An outline of the policies’ manual may include some or all of the following:

I. Greeting to Parents
   (from Pastor, Minister or Education, or Minister of Childhood Education)

II. Purpose of the Preschool Policies

III. Preschool Objectives

IV. General Policies
   1. Age of children
   2. Hours open for regular church programming
   3. Availability of facilities for childcare
   4. Pupil-teacher ratio
   5. Opening and closing time statement
   6. Directions for making child-care requests
   7. Statement about hygiene and safety guidelines
      (either included in manual or posted in rooms)
   8. Other items to meet your church needs

V. Ministry Opportunities
   (a listing of regularly scheduled ministries for preschoolers, including time of each)

VI. Receiving and Dismissal
   1. Explanation of security system
   2. Instructions about how to leave and pick up a child
   3. Instructions if someone other than parent is picking up a child
   4. Explanation about checking on a child
   5. Directions to parents to leave a child only if a teacher is present
   6. Suggestion about contact person if there is a question, need, or complaint

VII. Feeding
   1. Encouragement to feed children before bringing them
   2. Amount of feeding that can be done
      (some churches do not have enough help to spoon feed, and so forth)
   3. Information about when snack is provided and what it will be
   4. Request for labeling all food, bottles, and so forth
   5. Caution for providing food allergy information

VIII. Illnesses and Medication
   1. When a child can and cannot be accepted
   2. Statements of common symptoms when a child will not be accepted
      (an official one may be obtained form the American Academy of Pediatrics)
   3. What to do if a child develops a communicable disease following a
      preschool session
   4. Statement about policy on giving medication

IX. Things to Bring and Not to Bring to Church

X. Suggestions for Parents
The world we live in today has caused the church to look at many of our ministries in a new and different way. One of those ministries is the work we do with preschoolers and their families. In addition to the usual preschool policies, churches today are becoming aware of the need to formulate policies referring to hygiene and infectious diseases, child safety, and the preventing of child sexual abuse.

Each of these is very serious and must be dealt with carefully. Several factors to remember when developing policies are the health and safety of each child, the legal issues involved, and the reputation of the church.

What is the church to do? Begin by having concerned, knowledgeable, and committed people in the preschool division. A preschool division director may become concerned about issues involved in preventing infectious diseases. A minister of preschool education may lead out in investigating the need for an infectious disease policy. Or, a parent may raise concerns leading to policies.

How do we accomplish the task? A work team or task force should be formed with the responsibility of developing policies to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, and to improve and maintain safety and hygiene for preschoolers in the church. The work team could include a preschool parent, a preschool leader, a doctor (and other medical persons in the church), as well as preschool division director, and preschool minister or another staff member.

As the work team comes together:

1. Determine goals and deadlines for your work. Set dates for future meetings.

2. Assign members to gather specific information, such as contacting other churches for samples of their hygiene and safety policies.

3. Invite a doctor to speak to the task force on this subject, notifying all members and ask them to be present. One doctor, when asked to do this in his church, gathered information from other doctors as well. One statement he made was invaluable to preschool leaders. He said, “We should treat every germ as a potentially dangerous one.”

4. After much discussion, sharing of ideas, study, and several meetings, put the policies into written form.

5. Share them with others who work with preschoolers. The policies may need to be revised by the group several times. Remember that the more people involved in a project like this, the more they will feel an ownership in the final decision. Following guidelines is easier when people feel they have had a part in determining them.

6. It is important to carry the policies through the proper channels for church approval. Print copies and have them available. Being able to refer to church approval will add credibility to the policies and support to those who will be responsible for helping everyone abide by them.

7. When approved by the church, print enough copies for every preschool leader, every preschool family, and for future leaders and families. See that all ministry leaders and church staff have a copy.

8. See that the policies are well understood by all who will use the preschool facilities. Be sure that necessary supplies (soap, rubber gloves, proper changing materials, etc.) are available. Preschool leaders will want to be the first ones to follow all guidelines of the church policies.
The policies could include the following:

1. When a child (appearing ill) can and cannot be accepted.
2. Procedures when a child becomes ill during a session.
3. Giving of medication (prescription, over-the-counter).
4. When and how toys, equipment, and teaching materials will be sanitized.
5. Hand washing by all those leading with preschoolers.
6. Procedures for diapering and disposal of soiled diapers.
7. When rubber gloves are to be used.
8. A listing of what constitutes illness or when a child cannot be accepted into the preschool area. A list may be obtained from the Committee on Control of Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics, or other sources.
Hundreds of churches have been sued during the past decade for injuries to children or for improper selection and supervision of workers. Our society has become increasingly litigious, with over 93 million suits filed in state courts in one recent year. In addition, most states no longer recognize the doctrine of “charitable immunity,” and churches now face the same liability as private businesses.

The courts have ruled that churches are not “issuers” of the safety of children and are not automatically legally liable when a child suffers injury at church. However, the courts have found churches liable and awarded damages when church workers have been negligent.

In fact, churches and other organizations entrusted with the care of children are held to a “high standard of care.” Diligence in loving and teaching young children has been a longtime hallmark of churches. Today’s churches, however, must define and document their diligence on behalf of children. In today’s legal climate, carefully formulated and implemented policies are needed to meet the legal duty of a “higher standard of care.”

Establishing Appropriate Policies
In providing and implementing appropriate policies, a church should:

- Research recommended standards of care. Request information from the state day care licensing agency; the state child protective services (for child abuse reporting procedures); and other agencies governing fire, electrical, and building codes.


- Review policies from other churches. The kit, *Effective Church Committee Work* (#5291-27), provides suggestions on preschool and weekday education committees and policy formation.

- Consult your insurance agent and a competent attorney for their legal advice.

- With church approval, implement policies. Diligent care should be exercised in the following areas: screening and supervising teachers, implementing security procedures, and providing a safe environment.

Screening and Supervising Teachers
All teachers, volunteer and employed, must be properly screened. Recommended steps for this process are outlined in the book, *When Child Abuse Comes to Church*, and the kit, *Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church*. These steps include screening forms, personal interviews, and background checks.

Screening forms should ask for information such as name and address; prior church membership and volunteer work; photo ID and driver’s license number; two or more references; and a statement of any prior convictions for abuse, molestation, or crimes against minors.

You also will need a signed release for conducting reference and background checks. Churches should document their contacts with references. In discussing the screening form with prospective teachers, church leaders also should document information received during the personal interview. All of this information must be kept confidential and filed in a secure area.
Forms for these various procedures may be found in the kit, *Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church*. The authors discuss the need to ask the question, “Were you a victim of abuse or molestation while a minor?” They also suggest ways to approach this in a confidential, non-intrusive manner. The kit video and other materials provide help for building church awareness and support for these procedures.

A less complicated screening approach is suggested by kit authors for “occasional” leaders. However, the following qualifications are essential for all teachers, even occasional workers: a committed Christian; at least 18 years old; a church member for six or more months; good physical, mental, and emotional health; and a pleasant manner with children.

Also needed for appropriate supervision are two or more teachers with each group of preschoolers, a small window in classroom doors, and protective procedures for changing diapers and assisting in rest rooms. Supervision of teachers should be ongoing, with designated staff members or division directors available to teachers, as needed.

Churches should provide periodic equipping for all teachers and specify procedures for immediate reporting of any suspected child abuse. Check with your state’s child protective services or other appropriate agency for the legal requirements on reporting procedures.

**Implementing Security Procedures**

Consider which security procedures to outline in your preschool policies, including those for hygiene, infectious diseases, release of children to adults, and permission forms.

Policies should specify procedures for changing diapers, washing hands, laundering linens, disinfecting toys and equipment, and cleaning rooms and floors. Use of disposable latex gloves and disinfecting procedures are a part of the “universal precautions” to protect children and teachers. Consult local and state health officials for recommended hygiene guidelines.

Policies regarding communicable disease such as active tuberculosis, AIDS, and hepatitis B also are needed. These policies need to be determined with the aid of legal counsel since confidentiality of medical records may be an issue.

In releasing children at the end of sessions, all churches, regardless of size, should have a clear policy. Children should be released only to authorized adults. Security procedures to ensure this might include child information sheets, sign-in sheets, presentation of an ID card or a claim check by adults picking up children, and name labels for children.

Parental permission forms are needed anytime children participate in an activity away from the church. Provide parents with details of the specific activities and require their signature of consent for their child to participate. A signed emergency medical treatment release form also is needed. When you serve food to preschoolers at church, inform parents so they can alert you to possible allergy concerns.

**Providing a Safe Environment**

Rooms at church for preschoolers must be safe. Review the building, electrical, and fire codes in your area. Post in each room fire-escape routes and disaster procedures.

**LEGAL ISSUES CONFRONTING PRESCHOOL MINISTRIES**
Consult your insurance agent and local fire officials in implementing effective practices.

Provide a first-aid kit and maintain a list of individuals in your church who are trained in first aid and CPR. Inform teachers of the location of the first-aid kit, telephone and emergency phone numbers, and emergency procedures.

Furnish preschool rooms with the age-appropriate equipment and supplies recommended in “Toward 2000: Leading Preschoolers in Sunday School and Teaching in Church Weekday Education”. Outdoor playground equipment should be age-appropriate and firmly mounted. Care should be given to the space between equipment, use of recessed bolts, cushioning material under equipment, and fencing.

Check with your day-care licensing agency or insurance agent for an evaluation of your playground. In addition, make sure your policies indicate the number of adults needed outdoors to supervise children. Consult the book “Church Weekday Early Education Administrative Guide” for other safety suggestions.

When appropriate policies are consistently followed for all preschool ministries, your church is in the best position to protect preschoolers, safeguard teachers, and reduce the legal liability of your church. Moral, spiritual, and legal responsibilities require that churches continue to meet the needs of preschoolers with loving, informed diligence.

1 Richard Hammar, presenter of the Baptist Sunday School Board seminar, “Legal Issues in the Church,” held on April 26, 1994, in Nashville, TN
3 Negligence means a breech of duty or failure to exercise reasonable care.
5 James Ryan and Linda Barr, compilers, Effective Church Committee Work (Nashville, TN: Convention Press, 1993).
7 Richard Hammar and others, Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church (prevention kit) (Matthews, NC: Church Ministry Resources, 1993).
8 In addition, some churches are taking steps to fingerprint individuals based on the National Child Care Act of 1993. The new law, signed by the president on December 20, 1993, asks states to adopt laws requiring background checks for child-care providers through the FBI “national criminal history record system.” These FBI records are accessed through fingerprints. States are to specify which child care positions require criminal history checks and to develop criminal history checks and to develop background check procedures; thus, application of the law may vary from state to state. For further information, consult: Richard Hammar, ed., Church Law & Tax Report, vol. VIII, no. 2, March/April, 1994, 1-10.

This article prepared by Kay Henry, Contract Consultant, Claremore, OK.
Preschool teachers have many important responsibilities. One of those is to provide a safe environment in which preschoolers may learn. The preschool room must be both safe and clean, in addition to providing a positive learning environment. This article will focus on the safety aspect.

It is possible that the room in which you teach is used by several organizations. You may wish to involve people from each of those organizations in a “safety check” of the room or of the entire preschool area, including the playground. This important action should be taken on a regular basis. Following are some questions and/or suggestions about making your preschool room or area more safe for preschoolers.

**Security**
- Do you have a system of child identification so a child may be picked up by an approved person? These systems have been simplified and are easy to use.
- Do you keep information cards available for parents or guardians to leave emergency information (including allergies) on each child?

**First Aid and Emergencies**
- Is a first-aid kit available to the preschool area?
- Is a telephone in or near the preschool area?
- Are emergency telephone numbers (police, fire, hospital, poison control) posted nearby? A list of medical personnel within the church who may be called in an emergency is helpful.
- List teachers who have been trained in first aid and CPR.
- Are fire escape routes posted in each room in the Preschool Division?
- Have preschool leaders been instructed in the use of fire extinguishers and evaluation procedures for fires, tornadoes, or other disasters?

**The Room**
- Is the room too cluttered? Are there too many tables and chairs?
- Avoid rocking chairs in rooms where younger preschoolers are on the floor.
- Crib slats should be no more than 2 3/8 inches apart with mattress fitting snugly.
- Caution workers never to leave a side of the crib down if a child is in the crib.
- Place safety covers on all electrical outlets not in use.
- Toys should be in good repair or should be removed from the room. Check for sharp edges, missing or loose wheels, cracks in plastic, and splinters in wooden toys.
- Avoid stuffed animals and other stuffed toys, especially animals with beads or button eyes. Stuffed animals/toys can’t be sanitized easily and regularly.
- See that all first-aid and cleaning supplies, sharp objects, and other teacher tools are out of reach of young children.
- Check all activity area materials in rooms for middle and older preschoolers. Remove cracked plastic pans, plates, and so forth; provide blunt tip scissors; check wooden blocks and puzzles for splinters.
- Toys for younger preschoolers should be large enough to be safe from swallowing and have no sharp edges or loose parts.
Preschool Safety Guidelines

- Avoid bringing coffee and other hot drinks into rooms with preschoolers.
- Heating bottles in a microwave oven is a dangerous practice. The liquid will heat from the inside, and a baby can be badly burned. Consider using a slow cooker which can warm more than one bottle at a time.
- There should be at least two adult teachers in a room with preschoolers at all times.
- It is advisable to set an age limit on persons allowed to pick up a preschooler (even if the child is a brother or sister).

Resources or Storage Room
- See that the door is locked except when in use.
- Request that children not be allowed in the resource room.
- Keep out of reach disinfecting solutions, cleaning materials, soaps, and so forth.
- Keep out of reach sharp objects, such as pencils, pens, scissors, knives, and staples.

Rest Room
- Check the temperature of the hot water and adjust to avoid burns.
- If a rest room is on the hall, a teacher should accompany preschoolers to the rest room. More than one child at a time may be taken so the task may be accomplished in a few trips.
- Avoid storing items in bathrooms connected to preschool rooms. Store cleaning and disinfecting materials in another place or on a high shelf.

Playground
- Playground equipment should be six feet away from fences and buildings.
- Gates should have a safety latch.
- Keep fence in good repair.
- Check daily, removing poisonous plants, litter, and insects’ nests, hives, or beds.
- Check playground equipment for sharp edges, missing or loose parts, or deteriorated, splintered wood.
- Cover sand bed when not in use.
- Place shock- and water- absorbent material under equipment and extending six feet beyond.
- At least two teachers should be on the playground, ask one teacher to stand where the space may be seen.
- Take the children to and from the playground in an orderly manner. A safe method is to have one teacher lead the way and one walk behind the group.

The value of our ministry is enhanced even further when we provide (to the best of our abilities) safe learning environments for our children. Play it safe—regularly check your department or division area to make it a safe and happy place for preschoolers.

This article prepared by Zadabeth Uland, Contract Consultant, Seabrook, TX.
Safety Checklist Baby Department

- A solid one-piece door with a one-way glass (door opens into the room).
- Plexiglas is mounted by the door to hold masking tape strips for labeling each baby’s belongings.
- Rest room door opens into the room.
- Vinyl trash can with lid is in the rest room.
- Supply cabinet is located on the wall for storage.
- Liquid anti-bacterial soap is available for washing hands.
- A pan of soapy water is provided for washing toys.
- A bleach solution (1/4 cup to a gallon of water or 1 tablespoon to a quart of water) is available for sanitizing toys.
- There is a drainer for allowing toys to air dry.
- Paper towel dispenser is on the wall.
- Covered trash container is out of the reach of the children.
- Paper bags and waxed paper are provided for disposing of soiled diapers.
- A slow cooker is handy for warming bottles.
- A CD player is available for playing soft background music.
- Safety plugs cover the outlets.
- Wall shelf is used for diaper bags and other necessary diaper-changing supplies.
- Walls are painted a soft, calming color.
- Adult size rocker is placed so that all cribs and children are in view.
- Long unbreakable mirror is mounted horizontally on the wall at the baby’s eye level.
- Head of the cribs are against the wall, leaving easy access to both sides.
- All window cords are attached to the wall and out of the reach of the child.
- Cribs sides are fastened in the uppermost position, and rails are no more than 2 3/8 inches apart.
- Sides of crib remain up at all times.
- Crib mattresses fit snug against the sides, head, and foot of cribs.
- Cribs are at least 2 feet apart.
- One teaching picture, book, or a Bible is placed in each crib.
- A sturdy folding screen is placed in the corner of the room for nursing mothers. Behind the screen is one adult-size rocking chair and a table for a box of tissues.
- A large vinyl mat is placed in the center of the floor for use by babies.
- Washable safe toys, books, and pictures are easily accessible for times when babies play on the floor.
- Nature items such as a fish or a flower are made available to babies when a teacher can closely supervise the activity.
- A mobile which has objects with the designs positioned horizontally is hanging approximately 10 to 12 inches from a baby’s eye level. (The mobile is removed when the baby begins to pull up.)
Safety Checklist Ones Department

- Door is solid one piece door with a 4-by-12 inch one-way glass.
- Plexiglass is near the door to hold masking tape name strips for labeling each child’s belongings.
- A teaching picture, a book, and home-living materials are visible from the door to invite a child into the room.
- The rest room door opens into the rest room.
- A child-sized commode is 10” off the floor and sink is 20” from the floor.
- A covered wastebasket is near the sink.
- A towel dispenser and wall supply cabinet are over the sink.
- A hand washing solution is available for teachers (on countertop or shelf).
- Paper towels are available for drying hands.
- Waxed paper and brown paper bags are available for diaper changing.
- The electrical cord is wrapped around a hook on the wall to prevent it from dangling.
- A diaper bag shelf is located up high (out of the preschooler’s reach).
- Electrical outlets have safety covers.
- The steps side of the rocking boat is against the wall. The wall is smooth and painted a pastel color.
- Cardboard Blockbusters are appropriate for ones to stack and carry around the room.
- Nature items are displayed for easy touch and exploration by the one-year-old. Teachers need to be near to supervise nature activities.
- All window cords are wrapped around the hook on the wall.
- Puzzles are on the floor where ones have easy access to them. Avoid using puzzles with missing pieces.
- A variety of sturdy unbreakable toys (push, pull, and manipulative) are placed on the floor for ones to explore.
- A bleach solution (1/4 cup to a gallon of water or 1 teaspoon to a quart of water) is available for sanitizing toys.
- There is a drainer for allowing toys to air dry.
- Clean each toy as soon as it has been mouthed by another child before it is used again.
- Nature items should be supervised by a teacher. When the child has lost interest in the activity remove the items from the floor and place out of the reach of the child.
- A covered wastebasket with a bag liner is out of the children’s reach.
- A variety of sturdy unbreakable toys (push, pull, and manipulative) and placed on the floor for ones to explore.
- Remove all toys with sharp edges or missing or broken pieces.
- Supply each one-year-old department with a choke tube tester. You may purchase one by writing: “Department Safe Toy”, PO Box 17, Long Beach, CA 90801.
- Items that hang from the ceiling need to be close enough for the child to touch but not to hold on to. (Beach balls, nature items, etc.).
Identification Card System
Permanent identification cards (one for each child) may be issued to parents with information such as the child’s and parents’ names and a security card. The cards generally are about credit card size and are laminated. Parents keep the cards in their possession for use each time they pick up their child.

Another “permanent card” approach is to issue parents a family card rather than a card for each child. The family card indicates the name and security number of each child in the family.

Still another variation of the card plan is for the teacher to give the parent a simple name card each time the child comes to the room. The parent returns the card to the teacher when he comes for the child, and the card is stored in the room.

When permanent I.D. cards are issued, document the issue date and other information on an I.D. Card Information Form for your files. This form might include date, parents’ names, address, phone number, children’s names, security numbers, number of cards issued, and so forth. When security cards are lost and reissued, this information can be recorded, also.

Claim-Check or Ticket System
Many churches use a claim-check system in which a parent takes the perforated end of a form or ticket that matches the part kept by the teacher. Matching numbers, letters, or other symbols are printed on both ends of the ticket. The ticket portion kept by the teacher may provide space for the parent to jot down information about the child, including special needs and location of the parents. Once the child is picked up by the ticket bearer, both potions of the ticket are destroyed by the teachers.

The ticket method can be as simple and inexpensive as using rolls of preprinted tickets which may be purchased in bulk. Use new tickets each session and write the names of children on the appropriate ticket stubs. Then, tape these near the door until parents arrive with matching stubs.

Another method involves printing individually numbered carbon paper forms. After writing the date, child’s name, and special information on the form, the parent takes the bottom sheet and leaves the original form with the teacher. When the parent comes for the child, the teacher matches the numbers printed on both forms. All forms are destroyed after the children have left.

Identification Tag System
A third basic security method is the tag system. Matching tags are provided. The two tags display identical numbers, letters, names, or other symbols. For each session one tag is given to the parent. The parent must present the matching tag when she picks up the child. The teacher removes the tag from the child, links the matching tags together, and stores the tags in a secure place for use again with another child.

Commercial child security tags may be purchased, or tags may be made by the church by using clip-on name badges, plastic hospital-type I.D. bracelets, or inexpensive plastic key rings.
**Security Policies or Procedures**

Other security procedures usually include:
- Requiring that parents or other authorized adults (not siblings) pick up preschoolers;
- Placing masking tape name labels on preschoolers and their belongings;
- Using a sign-in sheet when parents bring and pick up their preschoolers;
- Requiring the preschool room doors be kept closed at all times;
- Providing a minimum of two or more adult teachers/leaders in each room;
- Asking preschool teachers to wear name badges; and
- Using volunteer or contracted security personnel to provide assistance in church halls, entrances, and near preschool rooms.

When adopting a security system, involve preschool teachers in determining the system which will work best for your church. Then, communicate the safety benefits at meetings for parents. Letters to parents and information provided in young married adult Sunday School/Bible study groups also may be helpful. Post sheets with simple instructions near preschool room.

**Parents, Please Help Us Protect Your Child by:**
- Showing a teacher your I.D. Card when you come for your child;
- Coming for your child yourself. Church policies state that preschoolers are to be released to parents or authorized adults only; and
- Knocking and remaining outside the room until a teacher brings your child.

**Is a Security System Really Necessary?**

Even when a church is small and parents are known by teachers, extended session and substitute teachers may not know parents. Churches of all sizes also encounter situations when a friend, relative, or noncustodial parent wants to pick up a child. With a security system in place, the church and the teachers remain accountable to the parent and release children only when security procedures are followed.

Preschoolers are precious and irreplaceable. Establishing a few simple procedures is a small price to pay for the safety of preschoolers and for the peace of mind of teachers and parents.

Commercial tags and security cards may be purchased from NLS Specialties, PO Box1897, Kennesaw, GA 30144. (Phone 404-422-7867)