

SYDENSTRICKER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Nursery Policy

The mission of the Nursery at Sydenstricker United Methodist Church is to create a loving, clean, enjoyable place for young children to be while their parents are participating in church services. The Nursery may be available during other church functions, such as adult Bible study classes, Vacation Bible School and Sweetheart Dinner, provided the activity is designated for Nursery service or following the approved request policy. Refer to section titled **NURSERY AVAILABILITY** for Nursery scheduling.

The following policies are intended for everyone's safety and apply to everyone using the nursery.

AGES OF CHILDREN

Children left in the nursery during Sunday worship services shall be age 3 or younger. Older children may attend Children's Church or regular services with their parents. The Nursery will serve pre-school children during other church-related functions. Other children will be reviewed for accommodation on a case-by-case basis.

REGISTRATION

All children are to be signed in by the parent dropping them off each time they arrive at the Nursery. Information needed include the child's name, parents' name and whereabouts, and any notes the parents feel is appropriate (color of backpack or diaper bag, allergies, etc.)

Parents must also fill out a registration card the first time the child uses the Nursery. Registration information includes the child's name, parents' names, siblings names, names of those authorized to pick up the child and any health or behavioral information (allergies, chronic illnesses, disabilities) the parents feel is pertinent for the nursery staff to know. **The nursery staff is directed to keep any sensitive information confidential.**

Traffic and chaos are to be kept to a minimum during registration, sign-in and pick-up. Therefore, please DO NOT bring several people in with you and please do not use the Nursery to visit with other parents. **The stroller door should be used when dropping off or picking up your child using a stroller.** You should pick up your child in a timely fashion, as the nursery workers need time to straighten up the rooms before they leave.

PAGERS

Vibrating pagers are available in the nursery. Parents are asked to wear one while their children are in the care of the nursery staff, so that they may be reached if necessary. Please remember to note on the registration sheet the number of your pager.

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NURSERY AVAILABILITY

The Nursery will be available to parents during scheduled worship services and concurrent with designated church activities as noted in the introductory paragraph. Availability at other times is not guaranteed and is predicated on the need of a minimum of 4 children.

Requests for unscheduled Nursery services are to be made through the Nursery Coordinator or the SPR Advocate. Please contact the church office for the name and contact information of this through which the request is to be made. **Such requests must be made at least 2 weeks in advance and availability is not guaranteed. Estimated child count is required at the time of the initial request and an updated number at least 24 hours in advance of the activity to ensure the proper adult/child ration is maintained. A minimum of 4 children is required for scheduling Nursery service.**

Parents are required to remain on the church campus while their children are in the nursery. Circumstances that arise which require the parents to be off-campus will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and would require the signing of a liability waiver.

ILLNESS

For everyone's protection, children who are ill will not be allowed to stay in the Nursery. Children who have obvious signs of illness, such as fever, cough, or a runny nose (thick green or yellow mucus) will not be admitted. If a child becomes ill during his/her stay in the Nursery, the parents will be paged to pick the child up. This determination will be at the discretion of the Nursery staff. Any chronic illness should be brought to the attention of the Nursery staff.

Medication will not be administered by the Nursery staff. Medications should not be left in diaper bags or backpacks in the Nursery. The church cannot be held liable for incidents involving medications left in the Nursery.

HYGIENE

Nursery staff workers must wash their hand thoroughly after changing diapers or soiled clothing and after helping toddlers with using the toilet. Children will be directed to wash their hands after using the toilet as well.

Gloves are recommended for diaper changes.

If your child is being potty trained or is recently potty trained, bring a change of clothes for him/her.

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Any toys that have been placed in the mouth will be put into the laundry hamper to be sanitized.

All toys are to be cleaned once a month and crib sheets will be changed with every child.

Parents using the nursery are asked to volunteer to take toys needing to be cleaned/ sanitized and any soiled crib sheets needed to be laundered, home to clean and launder them and return them to the nursery on an "as needed" basis. Please sign up to clean these items at least twice per year.

CRYING

The nursery staff will do everything possible to comfort a crying child. If a child becomes inconsolable for a length of time, the parents will be paged. This determination will be at the discretion of the Nursery staff.

BEHAVIOR

All children are expected to behave appropriately, within the limits of their understanding. Hitting, pushing, grabbing, biting, and the like will not be permitted. If any child's behavior becomes problematic and cannot be corrected by a firm tone of voice or a "time out", that child's parents will be paged. This determination will be at the discretion of the nursery staff.

Physical punishment of any child is never permitted.

SNACKS

Children will be allowed to bring water or clear juice in a spill-proof cup to the Nursery. Finger snacks such as animal crackers or Cheerios are also permissible.

The nursery usually has crackers (graham, Ritz, animal) on hand for the children. Please let the staff know if your child is not permitted these kinds of snacks and also of any food allergies that your child may have.

Any foods that could be choking hazards (carrots, nuts, popcorn) or foods that are inordinately messy will not be allowed. In order to avoid allergic reactions or the spread of any illness, children will not be permitted to share their snacks.

Hand washing or use of hand sanitizing lotion are encouraged both before and after snacks.

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PERSONAL ITEMS

Label all baby bags, bottles, and cups with names of the child. If you have diapers for two children in one bag, label which goes to which child.

All personal belongings left in the Nursery should be clearly marked with the child's name to avoid any confusion.

SAFETY

Any incident or accident involving a child in care of the Nursery will be reported immediately to the Pastor, Associate Pastor or SPRC Nursery Advocate.

AT NO TIME WILL CHILDREN BE ALLOWED IN THE NURSERY WITHOUT APPROPRIATE ADULT SUPERVISION.

ADULT/CHILD RATIOS

The Nursery will use a combination of staff and volunteers to provide care for our youngest children. At least one staff member and one volunteer will be working in the Nursery whenever the Nursery is supervising children. The following adult/child ratios will ensure adequate supervision:

- Age 0 – 12 months – one adult / 3 children
- Age 12 – 24 months – one adult / 4 children
- Age 24 – 36 months – one adult / 6 children
- Age 36 months – pre-K – one adult / 8 children

VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers must be 16 years or older and will be subject to the same screening and Child Protection training as paid staff. Volunteers who have not been qualified will be permitted to work in the Nursery under the supervision of a screened staff member.

TRAINING

Nursery staff have current CPR certification and, as such, are qualified to provide immediate assessment and intervention when needed, while calling for medical services if deemed appropriate. The child's parents will be contacted immediately as well.