



Volunteer Policies and Procedures

Welcome

We are so glad that you chose to serve the Lord by partnering with us in ministry at Seeker Springs. We hope that your experience will be life changing. In order to make camp/ministry run safely and smoothly we have developed this guide. We welcome feedback and will try to remain as flexible as possible in order to respond to the Holy Spirit's leading, but we request that you please follow these guidelines.

Our Mission

Seeker Springs is a Christ-centered ministry, set apart in God's creation to provide life changing opportunities for people to seek God and serve others.

Our Vision

We envision a world where children grow up in homes full of love, where their physical, emotional, spiritual, and social needs are met. These families will teach commitment to one another, as well as care and compassion for others. If one or more family members have an experience that leads them to an encounter with God, it can change the direction of their lives and their family for generations to come. We seek to be used by God to create those experiences.

Risk Management

In order to insure that Seeker Springs is a safe place for all our campers, volunteers and staff, please follow all safety guidelines!

Pool Safety

- Everyone at the pool area must follow the directions given by the lifeguards.
- Safety rules are posted in the swim area, please assist the lifeguards in helping kids follow these rules.
- Children will only be in the pool area when lifeguard is on duty
- Children are given a swim test before entering the deep end
- Please listen to any other safety guidelines given by the lifeguards and help the children to follow them with gentle reminders.

Avoiding Child Abuse and Allegations

- **You may not be alone with a child at anytime.** If you are talking one on one with a child make sure you are out in the open where you can be seen by other youth/adults. Some good places to talk are under the well, on the wrap around porch facing the play ground, campfire area, sitting on the grass in the field, and on the steps of the gym.
- You must sign a release allowing us to conduct background checks to be a volunteer at Seeker Springs.
- If you have been convicted of child abuse in the past, please let us know.
- Do not flirt or say sexual things to the children. Do not comment or joke with them about their body parts or intimate relationships.
- If you see any youth/adult on campus that you do not know, please introduce yourself and find out why they are on campus.

Boundaries and THE ROAD

- Okaloosa Road is probably **our greatest risk management issue** at Seeker Springs. **NO CHILD** may cross the road during camp without youth/adult supervision. This includes children of volunteers and staff.
- Children need to stay out of the woods unless accompanied by an adult
- No one is allowed in the pool area without a lifeguard on duty
- Everyone needs to stay off the Ropes Course elements that are in the woods unless a trained facilitator is with them.

Staying with groups

- Children should never be unsupervised anywhere on campus at Seeker Springs.
- When volunteers take breaks make sure that someone is watching your group. Because camp is so busy it works well for volunteers/staff in a group to take turn taking bathroom breaks on your own.

Discipline

- Discipline is defined as TEACHING. It is not punishment. If a child disobeys, speak to them firmly, but in a teaching tone of voice. *Example: "When we are in bible study we sit facing forward and watch the leader. When we are talking to Jesus we need to bow our heads and close our eyes so that we can focus."*
- Engage them by starting a respectful conversation with them and listen to them. Example: "Hey buddy, is what's going on?"
- If one of them misbehaves ask them what they did wrong and what they need to do differently?
- If you are having a difficult time getting a child to behave, please find a Seeker Springs Staff person to assist you.
- We do not use corporal punishment at Seeker Springs. Never spank or hit a child even playing with them. Many of these children we reach have been physically abused in the past.

Mandated Reporting

- As a volunteer or staff at Seeker Springs you are mandated to report any suspicion of child abuse to Office of Protective Services or law enforcement.
- You are also required to report suicide threats, homicide threats, and elder abuse.
- When you are talking with a child never promise to keep secrets about such things. Let them know that you have to report.
- **If a child does report child abuse, suicidal ideation, homicide threats or elder abuse or you suspect any of these things, please make sure that you tell our director, and we will help you through this process.**

Ministering to Children with difficult life circumstances

- Allow the Lord to lead
- LISTEN!
- Be an example. You are their hero, don't let them see you do anything that you would not want them to imitate; BECAUSE THEY WILL!
- Our purpose is not for us to find out their life story or provide therapy for them, but for us to share the love of the Lord and to help them have an enjoyable, safe, peace time.