



**SMALL GROUP
& OFF-SITE
CHILD CARE**

≡ SAFETY & SECURITY N.C. ≡

Consideration for Churches Offering Small Groups and Off-site Child Care

Many churches offer adult small groups throughout the week. These usually occur off campus and are gatherings for fellowship and discipleship, providing the opportunity for both relationship building and more in-depth study. An important area to address when planning small groups is the expectation of childcare for the parents who attend.

Options for childcare are:

Parents hire and pay for childcare in their own home. Some churches may reimburse parents for this expense.

Parents pool their financial resources and childcare providers to serve on-site or at the church.

Another option is for churches to hire childcare providers who are available at the church at a set time each week for drop-off.

Churches can provide a list of approved providers and parents may choose from this list. Churches or parents may be responsible for payment to the provider.

Parents take turns providing childcare at the meeting site.

Parents allow younger children to be supervised by older teens.

These are not endorsements of any particular option of another, but options for consideration.

Considerations for childcare at off-site meetings:

1. Is the childcare space safe for children?
2. Are there guns, knives, medicines, sharp objects or other dangerous items within easy reach of children?
3. Are parents comfortable with the childcare plan or provider?
4. Has the provider been trained in standard safety procedures?
5. Have steps been taken to vet the provider?
6. Is there a plan to periodically check on the children?
7. If the children are in diapers, are there items available to ensure sanitary diaper changes?
8. If a child needs to go to the bathroom, is there one near where care is taking place?
9. Are parents expected to attend to their own child's need for diapering or toileting?
10. Is this a church-authorized event?
11. Does the church need to be notified of the meeting?
12. Whose insurance will cover financial costs if injury occurs?
13. Is there an expectation that the church's child protection policy will be enforced?

Each church should consider a parent's expectation for childcare and develop policies that provide consistency between sites.