

Children's Ministries Emergency Safety Procedures  
By Jennifer Wirt, Director of Children's Ministries

In the event of smoke or fire that requires evacuation: All students in the Ones, Twos, and Preschool Rooms and all elementary students will exit the building via the Lower Level A hallway, heading up the stairs at the end of that hallway and out the door located on the landing. We'll go directly to the Recreation Field a safe distance from the building and you can pick your child up there. The Infant Nursery will follow the same plan, heading down the stairs located just outside the nursery door, out that same side door, and going out to the Rec field to join the rest of the children.

I understand that your first instinct will be to come to your child's room to pick him or her up, but we ask that you instead plan to meet us outside. If we have a swarm of well-intentioned adults running into the children's areas, it will be very difficult to get the children out of the building in an orderly way, keep track of all of them, and not inadvertently have any children separated from the adults. If you feel that you must come to the children's areas, please plan to accompany the entire group of children out our planned escape route so that we know where all of our children are as we exit.

If for whatever reason our exit is blocked getting out of the north end of Lower Level B and the Lower Level A hallway, we will instead evacuate out the back of the children's area, up the stairs leading to the Rec lobby, and out the southwest doors to the 34th Street sidewalk. That's just a back-up plan; in the event that we evacuate, you should look for your child on the Rec field first.

In the event of a tornado warning: All children will be taken through the preschool room into the back hallway and into the stairwell that leads up to the Recreation Lobby. We'll hunker down on the ground floor of that stairwell, which is located on the southeastern corner of the building (as experts recommend) and surrounded by concrete and no ground-level glass. We'll stay there until we get the "all clear".

In the event of a disruptive intruder: If we become aware of an intruder in the building at any time during our programming, we will immediately pull the doors to Lower Level A and Lower Level B shut, which will lock them from the inside so that only a staff member with a security fob can enter. (While most of the security doors in the church are set to remain unlocked and open on Sunday mornings to accommodate the movement of members through the building, we've had our doors set to lock when they're shut 24/7.) I have a panic button in Lower Level B that I will activate, which will alert the police, and then we'll turn off the lights, move all of the students to the back of Lower Level B, and shelter in place.

In the 16 years I've worked at Tab, we've had a fire evacuation once (that ended up being smoke from an electrical malfunction, not an actual building fire) and have never had a need during children's programming to shelter from a tornado or deal with a violent intruder. I pray that we don't ever have to use any of these plans, but I wanted you to know that the Children's Ministries Committee has put a great deal of thought, conversation, and prayer into the issue of keeping our children safe while they're in our care. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call or email me, [jennifer.wirt@tabpres.org](mailto:jennifer.wirt@tabpres.org).