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09/19/12 at 9:15 AM

To

• Micah Carter

Sep 19, 2012 at 9:15 AM

Hey Micah,

Hope your week is going well. Sorry for taking so long in getting this out to you. Just wanted to start by saying that overall, we've had a good experience in the preschool dept both as teachers and parents. The teachers have been warm, and we've enjoyed serving the parents and children. So, even if some things I am sharing have been less than ideal, they do not dominate our experience. If there is any way we can be part of improving an area at church, we are happy to help. We also appreciate your commitment to keeping our concerns in this area and others anonymous.

When our daughter, (daughter), was in the 3 yr old classroom, there was often just one male teacher in her room. We brought this concern to Connie's attention several times. However, the room was repeatedly staffed with a male teacher alone. Eventually, we decided to just pull (daughter) from the class. The Sunday we did this, I was on my way up to get (husband) and ran into John Duvall. I explained my concern. He said that what was happening was against church policy. (husband) went down to get (daughter). Connie was in the hall at the time when (husband) pulled (daughter) out of the class. (husband) said he felt that a male teacher alone was bad policy and not consistent with generally accepted childcare norms. Connie said she felt that this male teacher was harmless, and it was okay. John overheard the conversation. After this incident, we had some communication with John about this incident and other concerns we had. From this time on, there has been a strong emphasis on two teachers per room. Plus, a policy manual was written up, and there have been annual training meetings. In the meetings we've attended, only a small number of teachers have attended. (Former Staff person) has emailed reminders about the manuals. I am not sure if teachers who don't attend are reading the manual.

Another incident prior to this occurred one semester we taught Wed nights in preschool. There was a high needs (medical issue – I think history of seizures and adhd) little boy who was continually throwing objects and jumping on other children. It was a large class, and there was just the two of us teaching. We basically were begging for help. (husband) finally emailed Connie stating that we couldn't put ourselves in a situation anymore where kids would be in danger in our class. We needed an extra helper, or we couldn't teach any longer. She recruited another helper the next week.

I have noticed that Connie is making efforts to help with high needs kids. There is at least one current situation that I know about where she has contacted a parent for guidance with a child because the teachers don't know how to work with the child.

The reason that I've mentioned these incidents is that although they were resolved, the resolution process was difficult and upsetting in both instances. We haven't discussed these situations much with other members, but from what I have discussed with other mothers there is a lack of approachability.

One further issue we do have concerns recruitment of volunteers. I am not sure how long a person should be attending the church before they are open to recruitment. But, it seems like there has been regular recruitment of parents to teach who are fairly new to the church. We've seen several times over couples come in who are new or just returning to the church and are asked to teach in preschool. I know Connie doesn't always know people's history. But, we feel that when people are new to the faith or are just reconnecting with church, they need time to grow roots. Along the same lines, when we first were asked to teach, we were not members. Nor, were we asked for a statement of faith or a testimony. Before we could teach in the children's dept, Shane required membership. I don't know if membership is a requirement. But, that is what he asked of us. I know that parents are ultimately responsible for their children. However, from what we've seen, there appears to be only a little reaching out of members outside of preschool parents to teach preschoolers. Maybe the preschool staff cannot get out of the preschool area to ask for help or to meet other members.

We appreciate the preschool ministry. We know that Connie's position is a challenging job serving young children and their parents. Overall, things are going well. We'll pray that you can take our experiences along with others to help guide the preschool dept.

Thanks!

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