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**Definitions**

The following definitions will be used for the Policies and Procedures Manual for Working with Minors for First Baptist Church of Silverton.

**Child Abuse:** (quoted from ORS 418.760)

- Any physical injury which has been caused by other than accidental means, including any injury which appears to be at variance with the explanation given of the injury.
- Any mental injury which includes only observable and substantial impairment of the child's mental or psychological ability to function caused by cruelty to the child, with due regard to the culture of the child.
- Any sexual abuse including, but not limited to rape, sodomy, sexual penetration and incest, as those acts are defined by law.

**Child(ren):** Any person aged 0 through student in the sixth grade.

**Child(ren) Worker(s):** A person working with children aged zero through students in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Children workers must be 13 years old or entering the 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Director:** The leader of a particular ministry, including but not limited to the Youth Director, AWANA Commander, Sunday School Superintendent, the Elder Board, and the Christian Education Board.

**FBC:** First Baptist Church of Silverton, Oregon

**Youth:** Any unmarried person between and including the ages of 12 and 17, who is a student in seventh through twelfth grade.

**Youth Worker(s):** A person working with minors in seventh through twelfth grade.

### ***Policy And Procedures For All Children & Youth Workers***

Based upon concern for children, parents, and First Baptist Church of Silverton staff and volunteers, the following policies and guidelines have been developed.

#### ***Child Protection Policy***

##### *Policy Standards and General Christian Moral Standards*

Workers in children and youth ministries are expected to observe these policies and guidelines as well as the Biblical standards of moral behavior. Workers who disobey these guidelines may be reassigned or relieved from duty at the sole discretion of the church's leadership. Directors and children workers who suspect any unhealthy or abusive activity must discuss their suspicions with the pastoral staff or elders.

#### ***Worker Selection***

All children and youth workers will be required to fill out the Application for Child & Youth Workers. A criminal background check/screening will be required for all adult paid and volunteer positions and is part of the application process.

#### ***Personal History***

We recognize that some life events are life changing, like being a victim of sexual abuse. If a prospective adult youth worker has been sexually abused, he/she is required to let a pastoral staff member or elder know before beginning to work with children or youth of our church. Each individual will receive biblical counsel and help to determine their best place of service in the church.

#### ***Six-Month Rule***

All workers must be members or regular attendees of First Baptist Church of Silverton for at least six months before working in any children's ministry. Child Workers in AW ANA must be members or regular attendees of a local church, not necessarily First Baptist Church, but one that is in agreement with FBC policies and procedures. An approval by the Elder Board for the anticipated role of the worker must be on file for said worker that is not a member of FBC.

#### ***Two-Person Rule***

It is our goal that two workers be present at all times when children are present. Teams of adults (preferably male and female) will supervise activities. When counseling/disciplining a child, the worker is never to be out of sight of another adult, and doors **must** remain open. It is recommended that the second person be of the opposite sex. This policy has three purposes:

1. It reduces the risk of child abuse.
2. It helps to protect adults from unfounded allegations.
3. It provides for more than one adult to help ensure appropriate levels of supervision.

### ***Worker to Child Ratios***

FBC has as its goal low ratios of children to workers. These ratios will be based on children's age and church activities.

### ***Touching Policy***

FBC has implemented a touching policy that will safeguard our children while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. The guidelines below are to be carefully followed by anyone working with children and youth.

1. Hugging and other forms of appropriate physical affection between workers and children are important for a child's development and are generally suitable in our church setting. If possible, the two-person rule should always be followed to prevent any wrong appearance.
2. Physical affection should be appropriate to the age of the child or youth. (For example, it is generally appropriate for a four-year-old to sit on a worker's lap and give a kiss on the cheek. It is not appropriate for a teenager and youth leader to behave this way.)
3. Touching behavior should never give the appearance of wrongdoing. As ministry workers, our behavior should be above reproach at all times.
4. Children and youth workers must promptly discuss and report inappropriate touching or other questionable behavior by other workers with their director, pastor, or elders.

### ***Corporal Punishment***

Hitting, spanking, and other forms of punishment involving physical pain are **never** appropriate in FBC activities. Workers should consult a superintendent, director or other church leader if they need help with discipline techniques. They may call in the parent to administer discipline when necessary.

### ***First Aid Training***

Church employees and volunteers who supervise children and youth will be encouraged to maintain current certification in basic first aid and CPR.

### ***Accidents & Injuries***

Occasionally, children will get hurt as a natural part of activities, or through accidents. For any and all injuries sustained on FBC property, while participating in a church sponsored event, or while being transported to or from a church sponsored event, documentation must be promptly given to the Administrator using the "Accident & Injury Report" form.

### ***Transportation of Youth as a part of Church Program***

FBC may from time to time provide transportation as an official part of church activities. For example, FBC may provide transportation to out-of-town events or field trips. When children are transported as part of church activities, all guidelines will apply. Following the two-person rule and having all drivers approved by FBC are especially important.

### ***Suspected or Observed Child Abuse***

Workers must report suspicious behavior or abuse to a superintendent, director, pastor, or elder, **immediately**, following the guidelines established in this policy below.

**Workers must avoid even the appearance of misconduct in order to maintain parental confidence and avoid mistaken allegations.**

### ***Workers Who Disobey These Guidelines***

Workers who disobey these guidelines may be reassigned or relieved of their duties. This will be the sole discretion of the church leaders.

### ***Annual Review***

Each year, this policy will be reviewed and revised as needed by the CE and Elder Boards, with input from the various ministry leaders.

Each year, the most current policy will be issued to *all* workers. The workers will be required to sign the Annual Verification of Child & Youth Worker Policy in order to continue ministering to children and youth. August/September is the preferable time for this to occur.

### ***Storage & Access of Documents***

All documents relating to working with minors, including the Application for Child & Youth Workers, background checks, Annual Verification of Child & Youth Worker Policy, Accident & Injury Reports, and the Suspected Child Abuse Report will be kept in a locked file in the Admin Office. Access to these documents is limited to the Elder Board, the Christian Education Board, the Church Administrator, and the Youth Director.

## Procedures for Reporting Suspected or Observed Child Abuse

**If abuse is in progress, call 911 immediately, protect the child, and notify your director or an Elder.**

### **Who Must Report?**

- When a worker or FBC staff member has witnessed child abuse, or is told of child abuse by a party involved, that person must immediately notify their director or one of the Elders. They must also either make a report, or ensure that a report is made to the appropriate authorities. Contact information is located on the Suspected Child Abuse Report Form.

***This is not to be discussed with the child in question.***

- When a worker or FBC staff member has not directly witnessed child abuse, but has reason to believe that abuse has occurred, such as abuse by a parent, that person must report the information to their director or one of the Elders. If the director or Elder believes the situation warrants a report, the Child Abuse Report Form will be utilized by the director/Elder and the worker. The authorities must also be notified.

***Discussion with the child should be kept to a minimum; suspected individuals—parents or otherwise—should not be contacted at this time.***

- The director must notify the Elder Board of all relevant information concerning suspected or observed abuse.

### **How is the Report to be made?**

- Witnessed or suspected child abuse must be reported on the Child Abuse Report Form, located at the back of this packet.
- The report must be completed as soon as possible after the verbal report, and with as much detail as possible. Include time, place, what was witnessed or suspected, indicators of abuse, visible signs of injury, what was said by the child, etc.
- All aspects of the report are to be kept confidential, except as required for the purposes of making the report(s).
- The written report will be kept in the Church office under the guidelines established in the Policy & Procedures Manual for Working with Minors.

## **Procedures for Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse**

It is the goal of FBC to adequately care for both the alleged victim as well as the accused. Therefore, FBC will respond to allegations in a manner that respects to the highest degree the rights of privacy and confidentiality, in order to minimize the pain and liability for all involved.

In case of an allegation of abuse against a staff member, Child worker, youth worker or other person serving in a ministry of the church, the following steps shall be taken:

- Proper and thorough documentation of all efforts used in dealing with the allegation will be maintained by the director or Elder Board.
- The allegation will be reported as soon as possible to the director or Elder Board.
- The allegation will be reported as soon as possible to the insurance company of FBC.
- The allegation will be reported as soon as possible to an attorney selected by the Elder Board.
- The counsel of the attorney and/or insurance company will be followed in reporting the allegation to the Marion County Services for Children and Families.
- The accused will be relieved of all duties until prompt investigation of the accusation occurs.
  - If the accused is a staff member of FBC, salary & wages may be suspended during the investigation process. This is at the sole discretion of the Elder Board. If allegations are later shown to be unfounded, the Elder Board may, at their discretion, release the suspended wages to the staff member.
- The Elder Board will notify the parents of the alleged victim as soon as possible.
- If the accused is under the age of eighteen, his/her parents must be notified as soon as possible by the Elder Board.
- The alleged victim must be supported with all the love, care, and prayer that is reasonably possible.
- The accused must be treated with dignity, support, love and prayer.
- All means must be taken to ensure confidentiality at all levels of this process. Disclosure of information regarding the abuse or suspected abuse is prohibited, except as required for reporting purposes.

## **Policy Guidelines Specific to Children Workers (Zero through Sixth Grade)**

### ***Two-Person Rule***

When escorting a young child to the restroom, the two person rule applies. If that is impossible, the door will remain open. Children aged six or older should take care of their own restroom needs as much as possible.

Only female workers may take a child aged 5 or younger to the toilet or change diapers.

We understand that for grades three through six this may be difficult, but these guidelines should be followed when possible.

One of the workers must be over the age of eighteen; the other worker may be a teen.

### ***Assigned Workers in the Nursery***

Other than the infants, the only persons to be in the Nursery during times of operation are the Nursery Committee and assigned workers.

There are two exceptions to this rule:

1. Nursing mothers
2. Parents/ Guardians called to the nursery to calm an upset child

### ***Authorized Individuals to Receive Children from the Nursery***

1. Parents
2. Other adults if authorized by the parents in writing. Nursery workers should not release children to other adults unless authorized by the parent. The Nursery will employ a system for checking children in and out.

## **Policy Guidelines - Specific to Youth Workers (7th Grade through 12th Grade)**

### ***Overnight Activities***

At least two adults must supervise overnight activities. If the participants are male and female, then male and female chaperones must be present. If these conditions cannot be met, then the event should be postponed. It is never appropriate for an adult chaperone who is not a family member to share a bed with a youth. Males and females attending events must not share the same sleeping quarters, and should have separate access to bathroom facilities. Experienced adult workers should be included with adults who are newcomers to youth ministry.

### ***Individual Counseling***

Team counseling is preferable whenever possible. When team counseling sessions are not feasible, notify another adult of the location and with whom you are meeting. Counseling should be done in a public place where a private conversation is possible but occurs in full view of others. Guard carefully to avoid seclusion. If possible, have a female adult counsel female youth and a male adult counsel male youth. A male/female team is generally appropriate for counseling either gender. Counseling of an individual will never occur behind a closed door. **No exceptions.**

### ***Long-Term Counseling***

Youth workers should not meet with youth more than three times to discuss the same issue. Most youth workers are not prepared or supported for long-term counseling or formal therapy. Adult youth workers are to refer youth whom they suspect have a serious need for counseling to the youth director(s) or the pastoral staff.

### ***Informal Contact (Independent of Church Activities)***

Informal contact refers to phone calls, letters, all forms of digital social media (text messages, twitter, tweets, snapchats, instagrams) or face-to-face contact between an adult worker and a youth that is not connected to official church activities. The church recognizes that informal contact between workers and youth frequently occurs. For example, workers may hire teens as babysitters for their own children, or may see the youth during social events with the youth's family. This interaction is usually legitimate and beneficial. However, workers must seek permission of parents before having informal contact with their child. The worker should clearly let the parent know the nature of the contact and that it is not part of a church activity. Parents are responsible for monitoring this informal contact.

### ***Transportation to and from Meetings***

Transportation to and from meetings is not part of church or youth group activities. Parents are responsible for providing or arranging for this transportation. Parents are discouraged from asking leaders to transport children. However, if a leader does transport a child at the parent's request, this should be recognized as informal contact (not a part of church activities), and the guidelines for informal contact should be followed (see paragraph above). A leader should not transport a single male or female.

### ***Confidentiality***

There are limits to confidentiality when working with youth. Youth workers must report to a director, the pastoral staff or an elder if a minor discusses harming themselves or others, committing a crime, or being abused. Questions about such cases or other issues of confidentiality must be discussed promptly with the director, pastoral staff or an elder. Any serious issues discussed in confidence should be reviewed with one of the directors, pastoral staff, or an elder, who will protect the confidential nature of the discussion. Conferring with a director, pastor, or elder on sensitive issues is not considered breaking a confidence.

### ***Youth Supervising Youth***

Minors may help adults lead youth activities only under the direct leadership of adults. A minor may not be used to meet the team leadership or team counseling guidelines discussed above.

### ***Gifts***

Youth workers are generally discouraged from giving personal gifts or money to youth. When giving of personal gifts is desired, the youth worker must first notify parents and the Youth Pastor/Director. Gifts can easily be misinterpreted. Gifts given to groups of young people are appropriate, such as graduation presents or awards for participation.

### ***Open Door Policy***

All youth events should be open door. This means that workers, parents, and church members have a right to observe any youth activity.

### ***Dating or Sexual Involvement***

No adult youth worker is to date a youth or be romantically or sexually involved with a youth. Any adult with prior incidents of sexual misconduct with youth may not be a youth worker or serve in any capacity of youth ministry at FBC. There are no exceptions to this guideline.

### ***Reporting Misconduct***

Workers must report suspected or observed misconduct to a member of the pastoral staff or an elder. Violations of these guidelines or **suspect** behavior by other workers must be reported in the same manner.

### ***Supervision and Communication***

Youth workers must meet on a regular basis with the youth pastor/director. The youth pastor/director must meet with the senior pastor periodically to discuss any issues regarding these guidelines. Appropriate topics that must be discussed include problems, accountability, policy clarifications, personal feelings or other issues that may interfere with youth ministry efforts.

### ***Permission Slips***

Permission slips and a medical consent form must be signed for each youth prior to their participation in special activities. The youth worker must have the medical release forms with them while at any youth activity that is off the church grounds.

### ***High Adventure Activities***

Special precautions must be taken on high adventure activities, such as rock climbing, hiking, overnight camps, rafting trips, or the like. Both physical safety and safety from abuse are at risk in high adventure situations. A high ratio of adults to youth is recommended. *High adventure camping often raises unique circumstance involving individual privacy, sleeping arrangements, bathroom facilities, and so on. Adult leaders must be vigilant to avoid suspicious or misinterpreted behavior in these circumstances.*