



Family Ministry Policy Manual

Article One, Family Ministry Overview	2
Section 1. Ministry Divisions	2
Section 2. Mission & Biblical Foundations	2
Section 3. Vision for Ministry to Children & Families	3
Article Two, Child and Youth Volunteer Protection Policy Overview	4
Section 1. Terms Defined	4
Section 2. General Guidelines	4
Article Three, Protecting Children Before They Arrive	5
Section 1. Teacher & Volunteer Requirements	5
Section 2. Teacher & Volunteer Responsibilities	6
Article Four, Protecting Children As They Arrive and Depart	7
Section 1. Sign In	7
Section 2. Medical Services/Allergies	7
Section 3. Staffing	7
Section 4. Departure	7
Section 5. Divorce/Separation/Custody/Visitation	8
Article Five, Protecting Children While They Are In Our Care	8
Section 1. Reducing Isolation	8
Section 2. Child-to-Caregiver Ratios	9
Section 3. Restroom Procedures	9
Section 4. Appropriate Discipline	9

Section 5. Physical Touch Policy (Caregiver to Child)	11
Section 6. Physical Touch Policy (Child to Child)	12
Section 7. Nudity	12
Section 8. Sexually Oriented Conversations	12
Section 10. Intoxicants	12
Section 11. Privacy	13
Article Six, Food/Drink Policy	13
Section 1. Food Allergies	13
Section 2. Church Provided Snacks & Allergies	13
Article Seven, Well Child Policy and Universal Precautions	13
Section 1. Well Child Policy	13
Section 2. Sick Children/Response	14
Article Eight, Child Abuse Response Plan	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Section 1. Reporting Abuse	15
Section 2. Caring Response	16
Section 3. Documentation	17
Section 4. Confidentiality	17
Section 5. Suspension of Duties	17
Section 6. Church Discipline	17
Article Nine, Emergencies	18
Section 1. Calling 911	18
Section 2. Accidents and First Aid	18
Section 3. Weather-Related Emergencies	18
Section 4. Fire/Emergency Evacuation	18
Section 5. Lock-Down Procedures	19
Article Ten, Other Important Policies	20
Section 1. Field Trips and Transportation Guidelines (Staff and Volunteers)	20
Section 2. Play Areas	20
Section 3. Childcare for Special Events	21
Acknowledgements	21

Article One, Family Ministry Overview

Section 1. Ministry Divisions

Clause 1. The Children's Ministry of Holly Grove Baptist Church of Spring Hope (hereby the church) consists of two departments with one mission, one vision, and a unified curriculum scope and sequence:

- a. Preschool Ministry (newborn to 4 year old)
- b. Elementary Ministry (Kindergarten through 5th grade)

Section 2. Mission & Biblical Foundations

Ultimately, we want to glorify God in everything we do. Our mission explains how we seek to reach that end. This mission can be expressed in five core values. Each value is integral to what we are striving to accomplish.

Clause 1. Partnering with Parents

We recognize that parents are primarily responsible for teaching biblical truths to their children. Therefore we partner with parents by providing support and encouragement (Ephesians 6:4).

Clause 2. Teaching the Whole Bible

All Scripture has been inspired by God (2 Tim 1:16-17). Therefore we will make the whole counsel of Scripture known to children (Deuteronomy 6:6-9). To teach the whole Bible is to teach Christ because he is the focus of the Bible's teaching (Luke 24:27; Romans 1:16-17; Colossians 1:28). In addition we shall teach them that the glory of God is the chief end of their lives (Isaiah 43:7; Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Peter 2:12).

Clause 3. Relying on the Holy Spirit

Our children need our prayers. God works through His Word and His Spirit. Therefore we plead with God to regenerate the hearts of our children at a young age through our prayers and the faithful teaching of His Word (Romans 10:17; Ephesians 2:4-10).

Clause 4. Modeling the Christian Life

Our children are best served when they see models of Christian living. We aim to live faithfully before them, modeling how Christians are called to respond to God,

love one another, and minister to the world around us (Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 11:1).

Clause 5. Stewarding Children and Families

It is a great privilege to minister to children and families. God has, for a season, put them in our care. We see this as a stewardship that must not be taken lightly (1 Corinthians 4:1-2; Acts 20:35).

Section 3. Vision for Ministry to Children & Families

The following Old and New Testament passages are foundational in our desire to see the next generation raised to understand and follow Jesus Christ. It is instructive that the Hebrew saints thought not merely in terms of individuals, but in terms of generations. We are aiming, therefore, for “Generations of Godliness.” Not only that, but these texts emphasize the need for parents to pass along what they have learned to the next generation. Our vision is to see entire families equipped to do just that.

*Clause 1. One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts. On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds, and I will declare your greatness. They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.
(Psalm 145:4-7 ESV)*

Clause 2. He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments. (Psalm 78:5-7 ESV)

Clause 3. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9 ESV)

Clause 4. *And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me..." (Matthew 18:2-5 ESV)*

Article Two, Child and Youth Volunteer Protection Policy Overview

Section 1. Terms Defined

Clause 1. *Volunteers*: those assigned responsibility for children or youth during any regularly scheduled service time, or any church sponsored ministry event, including chaperones for off campus events.

Clause 2. *Teachers*: carry the same responsibility as a volunteer but additionally are responsible to teach from an assigned curriculum.

Clause 3. *Caregivers*: a general title that applies to all who are supervising children or youth at any given time. This may include, but is not limited to, volunteers, teachers, coordinators, and other staff positions.

Clause 4. *Children's Ministry Coordinator*: Person(s) who provides direct oversight for the Preschool and Elementary Ministries.

Clause 5. *Pastoral Supervisors*: Pastors who provide oversight to the Children's Ministry Coordinator(s) and attends to pastoral issues in the Preschool and Elementary Ministries.

Section 2. General Guidelines

Unless otherwise noted, these policies apply to the entire Family Ministry (0-5th grade). The children's physical safety and well-being are of utmost concern, therefore we shall:

Clause 1. Screen all volunteers.

Clause 2. Require initial training for all volunteers, and additional training as needed when policies and procedures are updated.

Clause 3. Utilize child check-in/check-out policies for Preschool and Elementary Ministry.

Clause 4. Schedule volunteer:child ratios that optimize safety (see [Article 6, Section 2](#)).

Clause 5. Equip each area with a first aid kit and inform parents/guardians of any injury or problems related to their child or youth.

Clause 6. Adhere to a "well child" health policy for admittance to preschool and elementary classes and routinely sanitize toys, tables, etc. in preschool areas.

Clause 7. Adhere to a policy of at least two volunteers per room, one of whom shall be an adult female; and ensure that volunteers are not in isolated settings with children.

Article Three, Protecting Children Before They Arrive

Section 1. Teacher & Volunteer Requirements

To ensure safe and quality care, all volunteers shall meet the following criteria in order to work with our children:

Clause 1. Be a member in good standing of the church and approved by the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator.

Clause 2. Have successfully completed a background check and have been approved by the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator. If there are any reservations at any time about a volunteer's suitability to work with children, other pastors shall be consulted. The privilege to work with children may be denied/modified if it is in the best interest of the congregation as a whole. In such an event, the person may be encouraged to participate in a more suitable ministry of service.

Clause 3. Have reviewed the policies contained in this manual and submitted a signed form indicating that he or she has read and understood the material and agrees to comply with the policy requirements and agrees to report all violations of these policies to the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator or staff person.

Clause 4. Have completed the orientation session. Further training sessions may be required as needed.

Clause 5. Never be alone with a child or youth. For Preschool, Elementary, and Youth ministries, there must be two approved adult volunteers in each classroom at all times. One of the volunteers in the Preschool and Elementary classes must be an adult female.

Clause 6. Never serve exclusively with a spouse or relative. When there are only two volunteers in a class, they may not be husband-wife pairs or other family relations (father, daughter, etc.).

Clause 7. Be eighteen years of age or older. The Children's Ministry Coordinator may approve children ages thirteen to seventeen (13-17) to help in the preschool with two authorized adult volunteers. Youth volunteers are to assist in the care of the children under the authority of the adult volunteers. Youth may not pick up or carry children that are in any nursery or preschool classroom. Also, youth volunteers may not assist children in the restroom or change diapers. Youth ages 11-12 may assist, but only when working with two authorized adults, one of whom is the child's parent/guardian. These approved youth are not considered as adult volunteers when calculating the volunteer/child ratio.

Section 2. Teacher & Volunteer Responsibilities

Clause 1. Know the dates on which they are to serve (see nursery schedules).

Clause 2. Find a replacement if unable to serve on their scheduled date.

- a. Children's Ministry Coordinator must be notified of shift changes.
- b. All shift changes must adhere to children's ministry policies.

Clause 3. Arrive at the assigned location no less than 15 minutes prior to the scheduled service time.

Clause 4. Store any personal items out of reach of children.

Clause 5. Wash hands with warm water and soap in preparation to receive and care for the children.

Clause 6. Put on volunteer name tag.

Clause 7. Make sure each parent signs in their child(ren) for preschool through fifth grade.

Clause 8. Make sure each child from preschool through fifth grade is wearing an appropriate name tag.

Clause 9. Caregivers are expected to interact with the children in their care in an age-appropriate way. For example:

- a. Rock, play with, sing to, play music for and show/read books to preschool children.
- b. Teach, sing songs, pray, or otherwise converse with elementary children.

Article Four, Protecting Children As They Arrive and Depart

Section 1. Sign In

Any parent/guardian who would like his/her child to participate in a Preschool or Elementary Ministry activity shall sign the child into the appropriate classroom when he/she arrives, granting permission for the child to participate. Volunteers shall be ready to receive children 15 minutes prior to the start of any class/service. Once signed in, children may not be received unless there are two approved adult volunteers present in the classroom, one of whom must be an adult female.

Section 2. Medical Services/Allergies

The sign in process shall authorize the church to secure medical services for the child in the event of accident or injury if the parents or legal guardians are unavailable. The parent should also use this opportunity to note any allergies or special needs the child may have.

Section 3. Staffing

For the safety and protection of our children it is important for classrooms to be properly staffed at all times in accordance with volunteer:child ratios (see [Article 6, Section 2](#)).

Section 4. Departure

Clause 1. Parents/Guardians shall pick up their children, sixth grade and younger, no later than ten minutes after the conclusion of the class/service.

Clause 2. Volunteers cannot leave a classroom until all children have been picked up if doing so would leave that class with less than two adults.

Clause 3. Make sure children are released only to those with authorization granted at sign-in to pick up their child(ren).

Section 5. Divorce/Separation/Custody/Visitation

Clause 1. In a situation with divorced or separated parents/guardians, the volunteer, unless otherwise notified, shall release the child(ren) to the parent who signed in the child(ren). If the unauthorized divorced parent attempts to check the child(ren) out, the caregiver shall not release the child to the unauthorized parent. If at any point the caregiver perceives hostility or any threat to the wellbeing of the child(ren), the caregiver shall contact the police immediately and ask for their presence. The caregiver shall ask the police to wait until all necessary parties are present before releasing the child(ren) to the police, or to the parent/guardian approved by the police.

Clause 2. Should a parent come in with a court order for visitation/custody demanding that we release the child(ren) to him/her, the police must also be present and we shall still release the child(ren) into police custody.

Clause 3. In either circumstance, the volunteers shall also immediately contact the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator who will in turn contact the Pastor Supervisor as well as the parent/guardian who first brought the child(ren) to church.

Article Five, Protecting Children While They Are In Our Care

Section 1. Reducing Isolation

Clause 1. For the Preschool and Elementary Ministry, two qualified volunteers (two adults 18 or older) shall be present in each classroom at all times. One caregiver shall be an adult female. When given permission by the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator, children ages 13-17 may assist, but only when working with two authorized adults. Children ages 11-12 may assist, but only when working with two authorized adults, one of whom is the child's parent/guardian.

Clause 2. Parents shall not leave children if there is only one approved volunteer in the classroom.

Clause 3. All rooms shall have open doors (full or half) or windows in doors to ensure visibility.

Clause 4. For Youth Ministry, no volunteer shall be alone with an individual youth, either on church property or at offsite events, unless prior approval is obtained from the youth's parent/guardian and the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator or the Elder Supervisor.

Section 2. Child-to-Caregiver Ratios

In addition to having a minimum of two volunteers present, the following ratios are maintained during the regularly-scheduled weekly meetings of the church:

Clause 1. Children ages birth-1: no fewer than 1 volunteer for every 4 children.

Clause 2. Children ages 2-4: no fewer than 1 volunteer for every 4 children.

Clause 3. Children age 5 and up: no fewer than 1 volunteer for every 12 children.

Section 3. Restroom Procedures

Clause 1. Preschool: Parents/guardians are asked to take their children to the restroom prior to class.

Clause 2. All children and volunteers using or assisting in the restroom shall wash hands with soap and water when finished.

Clause 3. Volunteers shall wear gloves when diapering children.

Clause 4. When assistance is needed in the restroom, children shall be assisted by adult females only.

Clause 5. Elementary children shall be sent to the appropriate restroom on their own. The caregiver shall monitor the children walking to and from the restroom.

Clause 6. Youth shall use the appropriate restroom on their own. No volunteer or other youth shall accompany him/her.

Section 4. Appropriate Discipline

Clause 1. All volunteers are responsible for providing a loving, respectful, and orderly atmosphere in which children can learn, play, and interact with others. Volunteers shall set and maintain high standards, thus modeling the goodness of

God and godly authority. We expect children (beginning with the 1's) to begin learning to listen during story time, to share with each other, to take turns and to treat others with respect. We expect volunteers to be obeyed.

Clause 2. For Preschool and Elementary Ministry specifically, this atmosphere shall be maintained by the following guidelines:

- a. Be well-prepared and pray for the children.
- b. Give brief yet firm directions.
- c. Direct children, proactively and positively, towards acceptable activities.
- d. Remind the children of appropriate biblical truths that will direct them, teaching honor and respect for authorities.
- e. Classroom consequences for behavior may include:
 - i. Verbally correcting and admonishing the child.
 - ii. Removing the child from other children for a given period of time.
 - iii. Requiring the child to sit next to a caregiver.In addition, appropriate consequences for behavior may be discussed with parents as caregivers partner to direct the child.
- f. Volunteers shall report significant and/or ongoing behavioral issues to the child's parent/guardian and the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator.

Clause 3. Volunteers shall never yell at, spank, or hit a child. If behavior is uncontrollable or the child does not respond to the discipline measures above, the parent/guardian and appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator shall be notified. In addition, parents/guardians shall be informed of any significant or ongoing incidents.

Clause 4. Youth are expected to show respect toward their peers and those in authority over them. Any youth who displays rude or disrespectful behavior shall be given a verbal warning/admonition. If the behavior continues, the youth shall be asked to leave and the parent/guardian and the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator shall be notified. A pastor will be called if necessary.

Clause 5. At no time shall weapons, alcohol, illegal or unauthorized drugs, tobacco products, or inappropriate literature, pictures, music or videos be allowed (this includes digital literature and images). Any child or youth possessing such items shall be removed from the room and the parent/guardian and the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator shall be notified. A pastor shall be called if necessary. Any volunteer possessing such items shall be immediately removed from the room and the appropriate coordinator, staff, and elder will be notified.

Disciplinary action will proceed based on the nature of the violation, which may include following the procedures defined in Article 10 of this policy manual. While cell phones are allowed, youth may only use them for emergency purposes or Bible access during class. All other electronic devices are prohibited during class time.

Section 5. Physical Touch Policy (Caregiver to Child)

While appropriate physical contact with children can be an effective means of aiding in communication, redirecting attention, calming restlessness, or of showing godly love and care, it can also be easily misinterpreted. The following policy is therefore in place, because we would afford no opportunity for the Gospel or our volunteers to be compromised in this area:

Clause 1. Always remain in open sight of other adults.

Clause 2. Appropriate physical contact will vary according to the age of the child. What is appropriate for nursery children (holding, rocking, sitting in laps, diapering, assisting in the restroom, etc.) will not be appropriate for grade school children.

Clause 3. In the preschool, men may not change diapers except for their own children, and only adult female volunteers shall take children to the restroom and/or assist in the restroom.

Clause 4. Sitting on laps is only appropriate for ages 0 through pre-K. In some situations, a man will need to limit physical contact more than an adult female in the same situation, especially when working with older children.

Clause 5. All volunteers shall refrain from the following activities: roughhousing, wrestling, or giving shoulder or piggyback rides.

Clause 6. All volunteers shall use care and discernment when hugging a child. Brief side-hugs when greeting or comforting a child are generally appropriate. Prolonged, frequent, or frontal hugs are not appropriate. In older classes, volunteers shall not initiate hugs, particularly towards children of the opposite sex; if an older child initiates a hug, the volunteer shall redirect them to a more appropriate contact, such as a brief side hug or a gentle "high-five," etc.

Clause 7. All volunteers shall only touch children in "safe" areas and for brief times, with no rubbing or massaging. "Safe" areas generally include hands, arms, shoulders, upper back, or gentle pats on the top of a child's head. A volunteer shall

never touch a child on or near any region that is considered private or personal, unless changing diapers or assisting nursery children in the restroom. A volunteer shall never touch a child out of frustration or anger.

Section 6. Physical Touch Policy (Child to Child)

Clause 1. No male and female under 18 shall ever be alone together.

Clause 2. No inappropriate touching of any kind shall be accepted (i.e., no physical display of affection.).

Clause 3. Fighting shall not be tolerated and any child participating in violent action shall be dismissed from class and placed into his or her parent's care. A pastor will be called if necessary.

Section 7. Nudity

Staff and volunteers should never be nude in the presence of the students or children in their care.

Section 8. Sexually Oriented Conversations

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with children or youth and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating, or sexual activities with any child or youth. From time to time, Youth Ministry discussions and lessons may address issues related to purity, dating, sex, and human sexuality. These lessons will convey the church's views on these topics.

Section 9. Electronic Communication

Volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any private electronic communication with youth without obtaining written permission from the youth's parent or legal guardian. This includes but is not limited to email, social media, etc.

Section 10. Intoxicants

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while on church grounds, while traveling with children or youth, or while working with or supervising children or youth.

Section 11. Privacy

Volunteers shall not take photographs of children at any time without prior written approval of the child's parents. Volunteers may not use personal cell phones or other electronic devices to take, save, or share photos of children. If the church needs to take photos for any reason, parents will be informed on that day and asked to sign a consent form.

Article Six, Food/Drink Policy

Section 1. Food Allergies

Parents/guardians of children and youth shall notify the appropriate caregiver(s) and Children's Ministry Coordinator concerning any allergy conditions their child(ren) may have and shall provide immediate notice regarding any changes in these allergies.

Section 2. Church Provided Snacks & Allergies

Clause 1. The only snacks/drinks that may be served in the preschool are those provided by the preschool or those brought by parents/guardians for children with allergies.

Clause 2. Teachers in Preschool and Elementary Ministries shall check with the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator prior to giving any non-church provided snacks/treats/drinks to the children (special occasions, celebrations, teacher treats, etc.).

Clause 3. All snacks provided by the church will be peanut free.

Article Seven, Well Child Policy and Universal Precautions

Section 1. Well Child Policy

The church is dedicated to the health and wellness of all children and volunteers.

Clause 1. Parents/guardians and volunteers shall, therefore, be familiar with and abide by this Well Child Policy and Universal Precautions.

Clause 2. Volunteers have the right to refuse a child on the basis of symptoms as listed in this policy. In addition, the church reserves the right to request clearance by a family physician before allowing a child to return to care.

Clause 3. A child shall not be placed in care when any of the following exist:

- a. Fever higher than 100.4 degrees (orally or temporally) or 99 degrees (axillary). Children must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication before acceptance into child care.
- b. Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- c. Any colored nasal discharge
- d. Sore throat
- e. Productive (wet) cough or croupy (barking) cough
- f. Any unexplained rash, or open skin lesion
- g. Any skin infection--boils, ringworm, impetigo, etc.
- h. Any eye infection or drainage
- i. Any communicable disease or infestation (such as lice)
- j. Looks or acts unusually tired, pale, irritable or restless

Section 2. Sick Children/Response

Clause 1. Children who appear ill while in care shall be removed from class and placed with a caregiver while the parent/guardian is located.

Clause 2. If a child contracts a serious communicable illness (such as meningitis) or an infestation (such as lice) and has been in contact with other children while at the church, parents/guardians have the responsibility to notify the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator, so that other parents/guardians may be notified as necessary.

Clause 3. Neither volunteers nor church staff shall give any medication to any child, with the exception of caregivers who have been instructed by a parent of a highly allergic child in the need for and use of an Epi-pen.

Clause 4. Because there is no foolproof way to determine who may be a carrier of an infectious disease, we shall employ Universal Precautions in dealing with all human body fluids and items coming into contact with them. By treating all bodily fluids as if they are infected, any infections or contaminants can be avoided at all times, providing a safer and healthier environment for volunteers and children alike. In order to comply with Universal Precautions, volunteers shall:

- a. Always wear disposable gloves (latex or vinyl) when dealing with any bodily fluids, including but not limited to diaper changing and cleaning vomit.
- b. Use Body Fluid Kits for any accidents involving bodily fluids (e.g., vomit, blood spills, large urine accidents, etc.) Kits shall be located on each floor; instructions are included in kits. Gloves must be used.
- c. Blot urine with paper towels, and spray the area thoroughly with bleach solution or approved sanitizer, and dispose of paper towels in covered garbage can. Gloves must be used.
- d. Wash/sanitize hands before and after any contact with bodily fluids, including wiping noses, changing diapers, cleaning vomit or restroom accidents, and treating blood spills.
- e. Treat all soiled linens (i.e. sheets, clothing, burp cloths) as potential infectious agents.
- f. Remove toys that children have mouthed from the general play area, until washed in hot soapy water and disinfected with bleach solution or approved sanitizer.
- g. At the end of the session, disinfect the room (toys, changing tables, tables, high chairs, etc.) with sanitizer solution and allow it to air dry. Disinfected toys may be placed back on shelves.

Article Eight, Child Abuse Response Plan

Section 1. Reporting Abuse

Clause 1. In accordance with North Carolina state law, if either abuse or neglect is suspected, these suspicions must be reported to the appropriate department of social services. As such, volunteers are to report to the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator and a Pastor any instances in which the caregiver suspects that abuse has occurred. Therefore, in the event of suspected child abuse (sexual, physical, or emotional) and neglect, church volunteers shall adhere to the following policies:

- a. The volunteer shall verbally report the incident to the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator and a Pastor as soon as possible after the incident;
- b. The Children's Ministry Coordinator or Pastor shall notify child protective services (DSS report line in Nash County at 252-459-9818).
- c. The Pastor shall notify the church's insurance carrier or delegate to a Deacon to notify the church's insurance carrier and seek legal counsel.

- d. The parent/guardian of the alleged victim of abuse shall be notified by the Pastor(s). They will be informed of steps being taken and will be kept informed of the status of the investigation.

Clause 2. If there is a "questionable behavior" offense, (e.g., flirtations, shoulder massages, private text or other electronic messages, etc.) the witness shall notify the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator and a Pastor in order to address the individual with questionable behavior.

Clause 3. In the event of a "major" offense, (e.g., the caregiver observing actual sexual or physical abuse/or noticing peculiar abrasions, lacerations, etc.) the witness shall call 911 immediately to report the abuse and to get an immediate police presence. The witness shall also contact the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator and a Pastor. The police shall be contacted in order to:

- a. Make sure any evidence is documented in order to prove abuse or clear the accused of wrongdoing.
- b. Prevent the accused from becoming hostile or violent.
- c. Contact a specialized detective if necessary.

Clause 4. The volunteer witnessing the abuse shall be present to provide a statement to the authorities as necessary.

Clause 5. A Pastor shall notify the church's insurance carrier or delegate to a Deacon to notify the church's insurance carrier and seek legal counsel.

Section 2. Caring Response

Whether the offense is "questionable" or "major," the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator and the Pastor Supervisor shall work to provide a caring response. Therefore:

Clause 1. Every allegation shall be taken seriously.

Clause 2. Proper procedures shall be diligently and exhaustively followed.

Clause 3. The victim and victim's family shall be assured that the church desires to extend care and support.

Clause 4. Situations shall be handled forthrightly with due respect for all parties' privacy and confidentiality.

Section 3. Documentation

The coordinator or staff shall document the allegation with the assistance of the volunteer who witnessed the offense. This documentation shall include:

Clause 1. The name, age, gender and address of the victim.

Clause 2. The name, age, gender and address of the alleged perpetrator.

Clause 3. The nature of the offense (e.g., physical, emotional, and/or sexual misconduct) alleged to have occurred.

Clause 4. How many times the alleged misconduct occurred. The date(s) and location(s) of the incident(s).

Clause 5. The relationship between the victim and the alleged perpetrator.

Clause 6. Other evidence, where appropriate, that supports the allegation (eyewitnesses, medical exams, confessions, etc.).

Section 4. Confidentiality

Until a legal conclusion is reached, or the accused member is found to be in a state of unrepentant sin ([Article 8, Section 6](#)), the church, as well as the witness caregiver, shall maintain strict confidentiality concerning all information, including the facts of the incident, the identity of the victim, and the identity of the alleged perpetrator.

Section 5. Suspension of Duties

The church will exercise care to treat the accused person fairly. If there are reasonable grounds to believe that the abuse occurred and that the accused might be responsible for the abuse, then the Pastors shall immediately suspend the accused from all church duties involving minors until such time as the allegations are cleared.

Section 6. Church Discipline

In the event that an accused member of the church has been found guilty by legal authorities or to be in a state of unrepentant sin, the pastors shall recommend to the congregation the appropriate church discipline measures.

Article Nine, Emergencies

Section 1. Calling 911

In an emergency situation (security, fire, medical situations needing police, fire department, doctor, ER, and/or EMS, etc.) the appropriate volunteer shall call 911.

Section 2. Accidents and First Aid

Clause 1. The Children's Ministry is equipped with basic first aid kits and a defibrillator (with illustrated instructions) is located outside the sanctuary.

Clause 2. In the event of life-threatening injury or illness, emergency medical services (911) shall be called first, then the parent/guardians shall be notified immediately.

Clause 3. Volunteers shall complete an [Incident Report Form](#) for all major injuries.

Clause 4. Neither volunteers nor church staff shall give any medication to any child, with the exception of caregivers who have been instructed by a parent of a highly allergic child in the need for, and use of, an Epi-pen.

Section 3. Weather-Related Emergencies

Clause 1. In the event of a tornado or severe weather alert, everyone in Preschool to Youth ministries shall move into the ground floor interior hallways.

Clause 2. All doors must be closed to prevent injuries from exterior window damage.

Clause 3. Children shall be checked out to the care of their parent/guardian as quickly as possible, under the direction of their caregivers. Until then, volunteers shall keep children seated on the floor and as quiet as possible.

Section 4. Fire/Emergency Evacuation

Clause 1. In the event of a fire and/or fire alarm, 911 shall be called and all persons shall immediately evacuate the building.

Clause 2. Nursery volunteers will put all the children into wheeled cribs and roll them out the exit door as indicated by the evacuation plan posted inside the nursery.

Clause 3. Parents/guardians shall not report to the Children's wing in case of an immediate all-church evacuation. Volunteers & teachers shall get children to safety, and parents/guardians may claim their children once they can be checked out in an orderly fashion at the meeting point, which is the paved pathway located between the fellowship hall and sanctuary.

Clause 4. Fire evacuation signs are located in every room. All volunteers shall be familiar with evacuation routes.

Section 5. Lock-Down Procedures

Clause 1. Any person appearing suspicious or out-of-place shall be reported to the appropriate Children's Ministry Coordinator, Pastor, and any security personnel on duty.

Clause 2. A volunteer shall call 911 and give the nature of the threat.

Clause 3. If shots have been fired, the volunteer shall tell police that there is an "Active Shooter." Police nationwide are trained specifically to respond to an active shooter. The volunteer shall inform responders of the general location of the shooter within the building.

Clause 4. Wherever possible, a volunteer shall close/lock the doors of their room.

Clause 5. Children shall lie or sit on the classroom floor away from the door, or a designated area, and be kept calm and quiet. If possible, volunteers shall barricade doors with furniture and/or heavy objects. The children and volunteers shall remain in place until a security coordinator, Pastor, or police instruct them to come out.

Clause 6. Classroom lights shall be turned off.

Clause 7. The immediate security coordinator, Pastor, or police shall decide whether evacuation to an outside area or to another part of the building is necessary. Evacuation shall be executed only if the threat is far enough away for the children to safely exit. In the event that evacuation appears to be the safest option, the children

shall be directed to the appropriate fire exit and seek security away from the building.

Article Ten, Other Important Policies

Section 1. Field Trips and Transportation Guidelines (Staff and Volunteers)

Staff and volunteers may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for children or youth. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when staff and volunteers are involved in the transportation of children or youth:

Clause 1. Children and youth should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Staff and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one child or youth in transport.

Clause 2. Staff and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children or youth while in vehicles.

Clause 3. No cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving vehicles owned or rented by the church, except for emergency or navigational purposes.

Clause 4. No drivers under age 25 may drive church owned or rented vehicles carrying children or youth.

Clause 5. At least two qualified caregivers must be in each vehicle during transportation.

Section 2. Play Areas

Clause 1. When children and/or youth are playing together in the church, at the basketball courts or on the playground, when Church organized supervision is not provided, they shall be under the supervision of their parents/guardians.

Clause 2. Children and youth are not permitted to run through the church unsupervised. In order to protect the elderly in the church and reduce risk that comes from isolation, children shall be instructed to walk in the hallways and remain in supervised areas. Parents/guardians shall take responsibility for their own children during these times.

Section 3. Childcare for Special Events

Clause 1. Special events are defined as any one-time event or ongoing meeting where church facilities are used outside of the regular Sunday corporate gatherings. This includes, but is not limited to Bible studies, weddings, etc. Anyone wishing to arrange childcare for a special event shall consult with the church administrator and comply with the existing church policies in place for childcare.

Clause 2. Individual groups meeting in private homes are responsible for making their own childcare arrangements independent of formal church involvement. The church's guidelines are commended to such groups, but these groups are not bound by them. Each group bears the responsibility of overseeing the care of their own children.

Clause 3. Parties using church facilities for non-church sponsored events do so at their own risk and are responsible for maintaining a safe and healthy environment for children. The church is not liable for incidents occurring at non-church sponsored activities.

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