



Safety Policy

for Next Gen Ministries

**(Children's & Student Ministry Staff
and Volunteers)**



GRACE CHAPEL

December 2024

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I. Purpose:

Grace Chapel, Inc. is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children and students who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following policy reflects our commitment to creating and preserving a safe place where all who come are protected so they can experience the love of God through healthy relationships with others.

These procedures must be adhered to by all pastors, staff, ministry leaders, teachers, assistants and volunteers. Before anyone serves at Grace Chapel with children or students, he or she must agree to uphold these procedures by completing a CORI background check and signing the Safety Policy Release Form.

II. Screening Procedures:

Screening procedures are to be used for all persons who work with children or students in the church on a regular basis (at least monthly), either in a paid or volunteer position. Others who have direct or unmonitored contact with children will also be screened*. This screening includes:

A. Three-month rule: In order to be eligible to serve in children or students ministry, individuals must have been attending Grace Chapel for a minimum of three months. This gives a threshold of time for individuals to become better known and an opportunity to evaluate suitability for service. In some cases, length of time may be reduced based on a person's ability to provide positive character references from other students'-serving organizations and/or from Grace Chapel's ministry leaders.

B. Volunteer Service Agreement and Interview: A written volunteer service agreement must be completed for any individual who regularly volunteers with children and student ministries. Along with this agreement, an interview is required with a Grace Chapel staff member or ministry leader. This is a time to review our church's policies and procedures regarding the supervision of children and students. Please see the director of kids town or student ministries at your campus to complete this process.

C. Reference Checks: Once the written agreement is completed and submitted, the Church will conduct reference checks as deemed necessary by the Grace Chapel staff. Volunteers should list prior service (preferably with children or students) and references from church members.

D. Background Checks: Staff will take reasonable steps, where applicable, to inquire into the background of potential employees, ministry leaders and volunteers. CORI/SORI checks will be conducted as authorized by the Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB). All employment applicants or volunteers who would have the potential for "direct and unmonitored contact with children" while serving at or with Grace Chapel will be notified that a CORI/SORI check will be conducted. If requested, the applicant will be provided with a copy of the CORI/SORI policy.

**"Direct and unmonitored contact with children" means contact with a child when no other CORI cleared individual is present. A person having only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact with children in commonly used areas, such as hallways, when other adults are present shall not be considered to have the potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children.*

These excluded areas do not include bathrooms and other isolated areas (not commonly utilized and separated by sight or sound from other CORI cleared adults that are accessible to children." (M/G/L/ c 71. 38R)

Examples of individuals who may have the potential for such contact include:

- Children’s Ministry staff and volunteers
- Student Ministry staff and volunteers
- Individuals authorized to be present alone at Grace Chapel for the purpose of ministry(i.e. facility team members, office volunteers, hospitality team members, etc.)
- Individuals who have been issued keys for the facility
- Volunteer drivers of children and students for Grace Chapel sponsored events.

Church staff will endeavor to keep confidential all information obtained through the inquiries referred to in the Screening Procedures section B-D above including but not limited to information received in response to CORI and SORI checks, except where otherwise required by law. If the Church determines in good faith that it is required by law to report information obtained through such inquiries, then the Church will comply with such law.

III. Reporting of Suspected Abuse/Unauthorized Engagement

Anyone using the church facilities for any activity (whether sponsored by Grace Chapel or by an outside organization) must report to the Pastor or departmental contact (see chart below) or, if during Sunday morning, to the campus pastor and in-house security, if it is suspected that a minor has been abused, neglected, or a target of unauthorized engagement on Grace Chapel properties or as a part of the ministry of Grace Chapel. Suspected incidences of self-harm are also cause for concern around abuse and should be reported. A written Abuse Incident Report should be submitted as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours. Please see your student ministry director for a copy of the form. A child welfare definition of abuse is included in [Appendix C](#).

People to Contact if Abuse of a Minor Incident occurs or is suspected:

Role by Campus	Name	Phone Number
Central Office Emergency Phone (after reg. office hours) Executive Pastor Director of Human Resources	Pastoral Staff Mark MacDonald Sharon Whitehead	m: 781-862-6499 o: 781-862-6499 x102 o: 781-325-4748
Lexington Campus Lexington Campus Pastor Kidstown Director Middle School Ministry Director High School Ministry Director Director of SHINE Ministry	Rachel Keeler Patti Lake Jenna Vance-Martin Akash Ahuja Matt Ataya	o: 781-862-6499 x2238 o: 339-970-2304 o: 937-475-0327 o: 203-300-9835 o: 781-862-6499 x 214
Wilmington Campus Wilmington Campus Pastor Kidstown Director Student Ministry Director	Tom VanAntwerp Angela Rogers Victor Matos	o: 3399702298 O: 781-325-4418 o: 781-862-6499 x9005
Watertown Campus Watertown Campus Pastor NextGen Director	Stephen Nyakairu Brad Fuller	o: 781-862-6499 x: 157 o: 781-862-6499 x:170
Foxboro Campus Foxboro Campus Pastor Kidstown Director Student Ministry Director	David Morreale Meg Nelson Blair Jenkins	o: 781-862-6499 x:138 o: 781-862-6499 x:178 o: 781-862-6499 x:179

**“Direct and unmonitored contact with children” means contact with a child when no other CORI cleared individual is present. A person having only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact with children in commonly used areas, such as hallways, when other adults are present shall not be considered to have the potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children. These excluded areas do not include bathrooms and other isolated areas (not commonly utilized and separated by sight or sound from other CORI cleared adults) that are accessible to children.” (M.G.L. c.71, 38R)*

IV. Christian Conduct:

We expect our volunteers and staff to model behaviors consistent with the biblical truths we teach as found in our statement of faith, including speech, not abusing alcohol or drugs, sexual morality, following the law, and respect for others. We also encourage staff and volunteers to maintain a standard of personal appearance/clothing that is modest.

V. Appropriate Physical Contact:

We cannot be too careful in the area of physical contact. All staff and volunteers must be very cautious in order to avoid doing anything that could be interpreted as inappropriate touching. Physical contact should be age appropriate and generally initiated by the child or young person. As a general rule, open displays of affection, such as a high five or a pat on the shoulder, and most contact initiated by children in the presence of others are acceptable. Never touch a student on or near any region that is considered private or personal. Inappropriate and unwanted physical contact must be avoided unless changing diapers or assisting Nursery/Preschool children in the bathroom.

Violent or aggressive gameplay, roughhousing, wrestling, or other physical contact is not permitted by anyone at any time. If you observe such behavior between students and/or leaders you must make all reasonable efforts to immediately and safely stop the contact and alert the student ministry director on site or any of the above-mentioned points of contact, as appropriate. If you are unable to stop the contact safely, you must immediately notify another individual who is available to assist.

VI. Supervision of Children (up through 11 years old)

A. Two-Volunteer Rule: Except where impossible, two qualified volunteers must be present with children up through age 11. This means we avoid all situations where an adult may be alone with a child or a group of children. Our philosophy is that we work with children and students in group settings at the church/group events with multiple adults present. Here are some further clarifications:

1. A high school student can be one of the two volunteers, but should not serve alone with a second high school student. Staff may make exceptions to this guideline where they have expressly determined that particular individuals are suitable to serve as co leaders.
2. All rooms will have open doors or windows to ensure visibility. In the unlikely event that there is only one volunteer in the room, the following procedures should be followed:
 - a. If you are the only adult in a classroom with a group of children, please keep the curtains, blinds, and classroom doors open.
 - b. If you are the only adult in the classroom and there is only one child attending, please join a neighboring class.

a. Minimum Age to Serve: Volunteers shall be of sufficient age and maturity to work effectively with the children in their charge. Qualified volunteers in the nursery and other children's programs shall be at least fourteen years of age. Staff may make exceptions to this guideline where they have expressly determined that a particular individual is suitable to serve as a helper/assistant. Helpers/assistants do not count in the two-volunteer rule.

b. Children and Student to Volunteer Ratios: To ensure safe and adequate care, the following ratios are recommended for scheduling (numbers are based on expected attendance and do not preclude the two-volunteer rule):

- i. Infants (birth through 12 months): 1 volunteer for every 3 or 4 children
- ii. Toddlers (1-2-year-olds): 1 volunteer for every 4 to 6 children
- iii. Preschoolers: 1 volunteer for every 6 to 8 children
- iv. Elementary: 1 volunteer for every 8 to 10 children

B. Bathroom Safeguards:

Ages (0-4 years old): If a child needs to go to the bathroom, they must be escorted by one of the adult volunteers to the bathroom. They may never go to the bathroom alone. The bathroom door must be left open approx. 18 inches when an adult is assisting a potty-training child. If a child does not require assistance, instruct the child to leave the door slightly ajar. Children should never be taken to a closed restroom by only one adult.

Ages (Kindergarten-6th Grade*): If a child needs to go to the bathroom, they must be escorted by a volunteer to the bathroom when the child is in Kindergarten through third grade*. The volunteer should wait in the hallway and then walk back with the child. Volunteers should never enter a bathroom stall or single restroom with a child and close the door. "Group" trips to the bathroom and using the bathroom with multiple stalls is preferred.

*Fourth through sixth graders are permitted to go without an escort at the teacher's discretion.

- C. Discipline:** The purpose of discipline with children and students is to maintain order in a manner consistent with the teaching of religious responsibility, respect, and cooperation. No child or student shall be disciplined using spanking, hitting, slapping, or any form of physical punishment. Verbal reprimands shall not include destructive criticism, insult or shouting. Staff, leaders, and others helping in the classroom are encouraged to listen, communicate expectations of appropriate behavior, use time-outs or give alternate choices. If a child or student is disruptive, a leader from the class or a neighboring class may be sent to locate the Staff Director or the Coach. If neither is available, a parent should be contacted and brought to the room. Additional training on behavior management may be provided in departmental training.
- D. Identification:** Volunteers must wear ministry lanyards with name tags when serving. This helps identify them as part of our team, which is important in ensuring security, as well as identifying trained people in case of emergencies.
- E. Evacuation:** In case of an evacuation need, volunteers will help to safely escort children and students to a pre-designated meeting area outside of the church. Each ministry room has a posted evacuation plan and map next to the door. The evacuation plans vary by room and age group, so volunteers should familiarize themselves with the plan prior to an emergency. During an evacuation, parents should meet you at the designated meeting area. Children should not be released to their parents until all children on the class roster are accounted for. If parents do arrive before you are at the meeting area, encourage them to walk with you to the destination.

VI. Supervision of Middle and High School Students (11 – 17 years old)

A. Two-Volunteer Rule

Except where impossible, two qualified volunteers must be present with students up through age 17 at all times. This means, when reasonable, we avoid all situations where an adult may be alone with a student or a group of students.

Exceptions:

There may be cases, from time to time, where a staff member or volunteer may be the only adult with a group of minors under the age of 17. In these circumstances, every effort must be made to ensure the safety of the children and the adult leaders. The following are several examples.

1. A high school student (Students over the age of 14) can be one of the two volunteers for Children's ministry/Kidstown (caring for children under the age of 11) but should not serve alone with a second high school student. Staff may make exceptions to this guideline where they have expressly determined that particular individuals are suitable to serve as co-leaders.
2. For Small Groups, all rooms will have open doors or windows to ensure visibility. In the unlikely event that there is only one volunteer in the room, the following procedures should be followed:
 - a. If you are the only adult in a classroom with a group of students, please keep the curtains, blinds, and classroom doors open.
 - b. If you are the only adult in the classroom and there is only one student attending, please join a neighboring group, or cancel the group meeting.
3. Middle and High School events are best to be scheduled as drop off and pick-up at the event by parents. No adult (staff or volunteer) should ever be alone in the car with a student who is not their own child. There may be cases where a volunteer or staff member drive a group of students to/from an off site activity. It is still expected that the adult is not alone in the car with a student who is not their own child, and that, where possible, the drivers leave and arrive at their destination within the same timeframe. If a staff member or volunteer is driving a rental car, rented on behalf of Grace Chapel, please refer to our rental car policy for more information.

Procedure for circumstances where all options have been exhausted and a leader is the only option for a student's transportation:

- - Exhaust all options within policy
 - If the only option remaining is that a leader is alone in a car with a student who is not their child
 - Director must be made aware
 - Director must obtain written permission from the parent
 - Director must obtain verbal consent from the student and volunteer
 - Director must establish a group text between the driver and the parent
 - The Driver must text the group chat when departing, of any and all interruptions, and arrival/drop-off
4. During overnight retreats and Cross Cultural Learning Experiences (CCLE aka Missions Trips) an adult may be alone with a small group of students in sleeping quarters where the space does not allow for the 2 adult rule. However, an adult may not be alone in a group of no less than 2 and no more than 8 students. Groups of students should never be alone in a cabin overnight without access to an adult leader in case of an emergency.

In a dormitory or hotel setting, students (ages 13 and up) may be in a room by themselves, but an adult leader will be in an adjacent room, and it will be clearly communicated who is responsible for supervising them and who to contact in the event of an emergency.

B. Never Alone with a Student

Staff and volunteers should make all attempts to never be alone with a student of the opposite sex. This includes being in the same room with the door closed, being in a car, an isolated area of the church, etc. This is to protect the staff, the leader, the student, and the church from the appearance of impropriety. Discussions in open areas and within the sight of others are permissible. When you find yourself in a situation where you are going to be alone with a student, immediately contact the Student Ministry Leader and/or the parent. Exceptions are counseling situations by a Pastoral Counselor and/or Care Ministry staff where the person is being counseled in the church office while other adults are nearby, and with the parents permission. (All doors must have windows or doors should be left open.). If an adult volunteer or staff member seeks to meet alone with a student, even if that student is of the same sex, parental permission must be obtained.

Student ministry volunteers should make every attempt to not be alone virtually as well. This includes, but is not limited to, Zoom, Facetime, Text Messaging, and all social media platforms. Where possible, another adult should be included on any text communications with individual students and groups of students. Words of affirmation over text such as “Praying for your test” or “Thanks for sharing” are ok, but long text exchanges are best done as a conversation either in person or over the phone with the parent’s knowledge and consent.

C. Overnights

No minor student may participate in an organized Student Ministry overnight event unless s/he shall have provided the Student Ministry leader with written parental authorization to participate in the event. All official overnight trips require separate sleeping areas for both genders assigned at birth. Privacy screens can be made available upon request.

When taking minors on overnight trips, a complete roster containing health and safety information must be made available for each staff member and adult volunteer. This roster must include emergency contact information, prescription medication including dose and time the prescription is administered, whether or not they have permission to have over the counter medication, health insurance information, and, if applicable, passport information (issuing authority, passport number and expiration date).

When going on any trip with minors that take them off the church premises, a check in/check out process must be followed. For Overnight trips this is even more important. When going on an overnight trip, such as a retreat or CCLE, there should be a designated volunteer to assist with check-in who will make sure each person has all of the necessary documents completed and signed, as well as verify all prescription medications that will be taken on the trip, and collect that medication. This will preferably be performed by the person responsible for the distribution of medications during the trip.

In the event of a medical event or emergency involving a minor that involves medical care beyond basic first aid, it is expected that the parent or guardian will be contacted and informed. For more information regarding handling a medical emergency, please refer to the Grace Chapel Emergency Operating Plan.

For International travel, the leader should have photo copies of each person’s passport, and a letter from the minor’s parent giving them permission to travel with you to the destination and back. There should be one copy of this letter with the copy of the passport and one kept with the passport. Upon arrival at the destination, all passports must be collected by the staff member in charge of the trip and secured in a locked safe until departure.

D. Medication Distribution

For overnight trips or extended day trips where a student requires medication, we require that families provide the following information (to be included in our Student Ministry Waiver):

- Student name and Date of Birth
- Medication and Dose
- Times to be administered
- Special instructions
- A photo of the student

Students will not carry medication of any kind (prescribed or over-the-counter (OTC)) on their person. All medication (prescribed or OTC) must be handed over during check-in to our staff. The only exception to this policy is for students with life-saving drugs, including inhalers, insulin, or epi-pens. Students will be asked to keep these medications on their person and to use them as instructed by their primary care physician/prescriber.

All medication must be supplied in correctly labeled Grace Chapel-provided containers. Only the amount of medication required for the duration of a student’s stay with us will be accepted.

For any given trip or extended day trip, Grace Chapel Student Ministry identifies 1 Student Ministry staff or volunteer (preferably a nurse whenever possible) to be the only adult responsible for the safe and reliable distribution of medication. They will ask for the student’s name, date of birth, and match their face to the photo provided by the family before distribution. They will observe the student taking their meds before that student is dismissed. If a

student refuses to take prescribed medication or follow the instructions associated with those meds (like eating certain foods or drinking certain liquids), they will immediately be sent home. Any student who misrepresents their identity in order to avoid their medication or take another students' medication will immediately be sent home.

Updates in medication, dosages, or frequency must be communicated to the staff and an updated waiver must be submitted before an overnight trip or extended day trip.

Any leftover, "as-needed" OTC medication must be picked up by the parent/guardian when the event is over. Any medications not picked up will be discarded once all students have been picked up after the event. We will not hold onto medication.

Complementary/Alternative medications such as homeopathic medications, herbal medications must be FDA approved and supplied in correctly labeled Grace Chapel-provided containers. A written consent from the parent/guardian is required as included in our waiver.

E. Grace Chapel Student Ministry Waiver

Annual: students who participate in Grace Chapel student ministry must fill out our annual waiver which includes a liability release and emergency contact information as well as emergency medical information (health insurance, allergies, pertinent medical diagnoses, etc.) annually. If any of this information changes during the course of the year, a new waiver with the updated information must be submitted as soon as reasonably possible.

For every trip: students who participate in a Grace Chapel Student Ministry experience off Grace Chapel property, for an extended day experience (4+hrs), or an overnight experience must fill out a waiver every time that includes liability release specific to that event and the most up-to-date medication information.

F. Minimum Age to Serve

Volunteers shall be of sufficient age and maturity to work effectively with the students in their charge. Qualified volunteers in middle school programs shall be at least fifteen years of age.

G. Student to Volunteer Ratios

To ensure safe and adequate care, the following ratios are recommended for scheduling (numbers are based on expected attendance and do not preclude the two-volunteer rule):

- Middle School: 1 volunteer for every 8 to 10 students
- High School: 1 volunteer for every 7 to 8 students
- CCLEs:
 - Middle School: 1 volunteer for every 4 students
 - High School: 1 volunteer for every 5 students.
- Overnight events/retreats
 - Middle School: 1 volunteer for every 5 to 6 students
 - High School: 1 volunteer or every 7 to 8 students

H. Leader / Student Romantic Relationships

No leader may have a romantic relationship with a student. If a leader and a student engage in a romantic relationship no matter how close they are in age, the leader will be removed from their position immediately. They may also be subject to prosecution.

I. Discipline

The purpose of discipline with students is to maintain safety in a manner consistent with the teaching of religious responsibility, respect, and cooperation. No student shall be disciplined by the use of any form of physical punishment. Verbal reprimands shall not include destructive criticism, insult or shouting. Verbal reprimands should remain private when possible by pulling the student aside and not done in a group setting. Staff, leaders, and others helping in the classroom are encouraged to listen, clearly communicate expectations of appropriate behavior, use time-outs or give alternate choices. If a student is disruptive, a leader from the class or a neighboring class may be sent to locate the Staff Director or the Coach. If neither is available, a parent should be contacted and brought to the room. Additional training on behavior management will be provided in departmental training.

J. Identification

Volunteers must wear ministry lanyards with name tags when serving. This helps identify them as part of our team, which is important in ensuring security, as well as identifying trained people in case of emergencies.

K. Evacuation

In case of an evacuation need, volunteers will help to safely escort students to a pre-designated meeting area outside of the church. Each ministry room has a posted evacuation plan and map next to the door. The evacuation plans vary by room and age group, so volunteers should familiarize themselves with the plan prior to an emergency. During an evacuation, parents should meet you at the designated meeting area. Students should not be released to their parents until all children on the class roster are accounted for. If parents do arrive before you are at the meeting area, encourage them to walk with you to the destination.

VII. Incident and Lost/Found Child Reporting

A. Report the Injury

Accidents sometimes happen, and when they do the church requires anyone using the church facilities for any activity (whether sponsored by Grace Chapel or by an outside organization) to report to the staff member or ministry leader if a student is injured during a Student Ministry event on Grace Chapel properties or as a part of the ministry of Grace Chapel. A written Incident Report should be submitted as soon as possible and be signed by the parent/guardian when they are informed. See your Student Ministry director for the Incident Report Form.

B. Follow-Up

- Complete an Incident Report Form and have a Parent/Guardian Sign the form.
- Report the incident to a staff member or ministry leader

C. Found Child Policy: A found child is a child who is not in the care of the Kidstown staff and appears to be separated from their parents and typically under age 10. This child may be wandering an empty corridor, be in the middle of a crowd, or outside the building. The child may appear to be distressed from being separated from the family or is calling out for the mother or father. As soon as the child is found they should be taken to the information center to be reunited with parent/guardian/leader. Then immediately notify all radioed personnel that the child has been found and to be on the look out for their parent/guardian.

D. Lost Child Policy: A lost child is a child who has become separated from his/her parent/guardian or run from a KT leader or SHINE buddy. As soon as possible, notice should be given to all available security personnel and staff with a description of the child – approximate age, gender, name, clothing, and area of the building last seen. All available personnel should proceed to their nearest exit to prevent the child from leaving the building while others begin to search the floors. As soon as the child is found they should be taken to the information center to be reunited with parent/guardian/leader. Then immediately notify all personnel that the child has been found and is safely reunited. If the child left the presence of a KT or SHINE leader, an incident report should be filed. No report is necessary if the child had been in the care of their own parent/guardian.

E. Process: Grace Chapel ministry staff and volunteer leaders will approach the child, make eye contact by getting down to the child's level, and ask the child if they are looking for the mother and/or father. If the child responds in the affirmative, then:

- Assure the child that you will help find the parents
- Take the child's hand and continue to give comfort
- Look around the area and wait to possible see if an adult comes forward
- After a reasonable amount of time, tell the child you will be taking him/her to a main location
- Bring the child to the Main Information Desk and alert security and the Kidstown team of your action.
- Wait with the child until the parents are located.

Follow-Up:

- Report the incident to a staff member or ministry leader.
- If necessary (as stated above) Complete an Incident Form ([Appendix E](#)) and have Parent/Guardian Sign form.

Appendices

Appendix A: Safe Sanctuary Scriptures

"Be self-controlled and alert." 1 Peter 5:8

"So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" 1 Corinthians 10:12

"But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, these are improper for God's holy people." Ephesians 5:3

"Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly." James 3:1

"Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity." 1 Tim. 5:1

Appendix B: Sources for Written Policy

1. Massachusetts Government web site to access child abuse definitions:
http://www.mass.gov/Eeops/docs/chsb/cori_cert.pdf
2. Ministry Safe: www.ministrysafe.com
3. Reducing the Risk Program (Your Church Resources)
4. "Risk Management for Churches and Schools" (Your Church Resources)
5. Pastor's Law Library (Hammer)
6. All Saints Anglican Church (Amesbury, MA) "Stay Safe Policy"
7. Essex Alliance Church (Essex, VT) "Safe Place Program"
8. Life Point Church (Reisterstown, MD) Children's Ministry documents
9. Valley Community Baptist Church (Avon, CT) "Children's Ministry Team Handbook"
10. First Congregational Church of Ossipee, NH "Policy on Child Abuse and Neglect"
11. Hope Community Church, Newburyport, MA "Children & Youth Safety Policy"

Appendix C: Child Welfare Definitions of Abuse.

These definitions are provided from the Department of Children and Families:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/definitions-of-abuse-and-neglect>

Abuse:

This definition is not dependent upon location. Abuse can occur while the child is in an out-of-home or an in-home setting.

1. The non-accidental commission of any act by a **caregiver** which causes or creates a substantial risk of **physical** or **emotional injury** or **sexual abuse** of a child; or
2. The victimization of a child through **sexual exploitation** or **human trafficking**, regardless if the person responsible is a caregiver.

Caregiver definition

- A child's parent, stepparent, guardian, or any household member entrusted with the responsibility for a child's health or welfare
- Any other person entrusted with responsibility for a child's welfare, whether in the child's home, a relative's home, a school setting, a child care setting (including babysitting), a foster home, a group care facility, or any other comparable setting. As such "caregiver" includes, but is not limited to:
 - School teachers
 - Babysitters
 - School bus drivers
 - Camp counselors

The "caregiver" definition should be construed broadly and inclusively to encompass any person who at the time in question is entrusted with a degree of responsibility for the child. This specifically includes a caregiver who is him/herself a child such as a babysitter under age 18.

Physical injury definition

Death, fracture of a bone, subdural hematoma, burns, impairment of any organ, soft tissue swelling, skin bruising and any other such nontrivial injury depending upon such factors as the child's age, circumstances under which the injury occurred, and the number and location of bruises.

Emotional injury definition

An impairment to or disorder of the intellectual or psychological capacity of a child as evidenced by an observable and substantial reduction in the child's ability to function with a normal range of performance and behavior.

Sexual abuse definition

Any non-accidental act by a caregiver upon a child that constitutes a sexual offense under the laws of the Commonwealth or any sexual contact between a caregiver and a child for whom the caregiver is responsible.

Neglect

Failure by a **caregiver**, either deliberately or through negligence or inability, to take those actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, emotional stability and growth, or other essential care, including malnutrition or failure to thrive; provided, however, that such inability is not due solely to inadequate economic resources or solely to the existence of a handicapping condition.

Hazing:

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartIV/TitleI/Chapter269/Section17>

Any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Appendix D:

Suspected Abuse Report Form

Date: _____

Name of child/student: _____ Age: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Name of Parent or caretaker: _____

Name of person filing report: _____

Name of person receiving report: _____

Nature of suspected abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect):

Indications of suspected abuse (including facts, physical signs and course of events where necessary):

Action taken (including date and time):

The above information will serve as a guide and will be necessary if a formal report is filed with the police or appropriate government agency. All information received is to be kept strictly confidential.

Print Name: _____ Print: _____

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Person Reporting

Pastor/Director or Designated Authority

Appendix E:

Kidstown Incident Report

To help us keep our facilities and procedures safe for everyone, please report incidents of injury, nearly avoided injury, maintenance needed to eliminate hazards, and lost child on this form.

This form is intended for minor injuries only. To complete the full incident report online please use the following website:
<https://gracechapelma.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/75/responses/new>

Location: _____

Name of child/student: _____

Name of person completing form: _____

Description of incident:

Recommendation for avoiding recurrence or eliminating hazard:

Immediate action taken:

Volunteer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Reported to Parent/Guardian: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Appendix F

Grace Chapel NextGen: Safety Policy Release

What We Believe

An important part of serving in student ministries is that you understand and commit to our doctrinal beliefs here at Grace Chapel. Please initial that you agree with the points below.

_____ **The Bible:** We believe that the Bible is the final authority in all matters pertaining to Christian faith and practice.

_____ **God:** We believe there is only one living and true God - perfect, infinite, and eternal.

_____ **Humanity:** We believe that human beings were created by God but we have alienated ourselves from Him and we are in need of reconciliation.

_____ **Jesus Christ:** We believe that God became man in the person of Jesus Christ and that Jesus Christ is both completely divine and completely human.

_____ **Holy Spirit:** We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity and that He empowers us for life and service.

_____ **Salvation:** We believe that through the gift of Jesus' death on the cross our rebellion can be forgiven, and through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ we can be reconciled to God.

_____ **The Church:** We believe that the Church is universal and that it is manifested locally through companies of Christ followers, meeting together as the "Bride of Christ."

_____ **Ordinances:** We believe that both Baptism and The Lord's Supper are visible signs of the realities of salvation. We are commanded to observe them, but we do not depend on them for salvation.

_____ **Last Things:** We believe that Christ will return at God's appointed time.

Lifestyle & Legalities

In caring for students, we believe it is our responsibility to seek adult leaders who can provide healthy, safe, and nurturing relationships. Please answer the following questions accordingly. (Answering yes to any of these questions does not automatically disqualify you from volunteering in our ministry.)

- Have you ever been concerned that you may have an addiction to drugs, alcohol, pornography, or any other addictions; or has anyone ever suggested that you may have a problem with any of the above? Yes ___ No ___
- Have you ever been arrested, convicted, or pleaded guilty to a crime? Yes ___ No ___
- Have you ever been accused, charged, or alleged to have, or have you ever committed any act of neglecting, abusing, or molesting any child? Yes ___ No ___

If you answered "yes" to any of the questions above, please see your student ministry director.

- As a leader and role model for students, are you willing to commit to faithfulness inside of marriage, and abstinence outside of marriage? Yes ___ No ___
- Would you like to meet with a pastor regarding any of the above circumstances? Yes ___ No ___
- Are you currently maintaining a personal blog, website, Instagram, TikTok, twitter/X or Facebook account? If so, Are you willing to not follow students or allow students to follow you? Yes ___ No ___

We strongly encourage you set all of your accounts to private before serving in Student Ministry.

Personal Blog or Website URL (If applicable):

Volunteer Commitment

After praying and discussing with my family the commitment involved with volunteering in Grace Chapel Student Ministries, I choose to commit to the following:

_____ I acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ in my life, and I have a personal relationship with God through faith in Christ.

_____ I am committed to growing and maturing in my relationship with God through quiet times, active attendance at church, and involvement in accountability. I am committed to stop serving if, at any time, my personal spirituality becomes compromised.

_____ I am committed to a lifestyle that is both godly and above reproach. I commit to making wise choices. I realize that my lifestyle and decisions are a model for students.

_____ I am committed to attending the mandatory leader meetings throughout the year.

_____ I will not post anything on my personal blog, website, TikTok Instagram, Twitter/X, or Facebook that would be damaging to the reputation of Grace Chapel Student Ministries.

_____ I understand the philosophy of this ministry and agree with its purpose and commit to shepherding the students that God brings to me. I commit to rejecting divisive behavior. I commit to bringing my disagreements, concerns, or problems about the ministry to a Grace Chapel Student Ministries Staff Member and will refrain from gossiping to students, Grace Chapel Student Ministries volunteers, or church members.

_____ Because I am making a significant commitment and my presence is important, I agree to be consistent and timely to the program(s) I commit myself to. I also agree to communicate with a Student Ministries Staff Member if I will be absent.

Authorization and Release of Liability (Please read and sign below.)

I acknowledge that I have read the Children's and Student Ministry Safety Policy of Grace Chapel and agree to be bound by it.

I understand that a violation of this policy can result in my dismissal from my role. I hereby represent and warrant that the information contained in this application is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or any other person or organization, whether or not identified in this application, to provide information (including opinions) regarding my character and fitness for volunteer service. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application by the church, I hereby release the organization with which I am applying to volunteer and all of its directors, officers, employees, agents and volunteers or any other person or organization from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family relating to the obtaining, communication, and use of information about me or relating to this authorization on account of compliance or any attempts to comply with this authorization, excepting only the communication of knowingly false information. I further state that I have carefully read the foregoing release and know the contents thereof and I sign this release as my own free act.

Our main priority is to protect our students. Our goal is to bring on leaders who have the same heart for our ministry. We ask that you initial next to each one, indicating that you understand and agree to comply.

_____ No dating any students.

_____ Avoid spending time alone with students, and only when written parental permission is obtained.

_____ No physical punishment/hazing, etc.

Print Full Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return completed and signed form to: Grace Chapel, Attn: NextGen Ministry, 3 Militia Dr., Lexington, MA 02421