

**Child Abuse Prevention Policy and Procedure Manual
First Baptist Church of Mishawaka**

Revised January 2016

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I. Purpose

To help First Baptist Church (FBC) provide a caring, safe, and secure environment for children in all phases of church life.

II. Biblical Foundation

A. FBC seeks to express God’s love of children and provide for their personal wholeness.

This caring community seeks to prevent child abuse of any form to our children and youth and to minister to victims of abuse and their families. The Bible is foundational to our understanding upon which all policies, procedures, and ministries must stand.

And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.
Mark 10:13-16

“Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. “Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes!” Matthew 18:5-7

B. Our goal in response to these Biblical mandates is to maintain a safe, secure, and loving place where children may grow; a place where caregivers, teachers, and leaders (both paid and volunteer) minister appropriately to their needs.

III. CAP Rationale

A. FBC desires to be a safe place for all children and adults who attend any activity.

Individuals they know and trust sometimes victimize children. The church is not immune to such abuse, either by its members or by those in leadership positions. Incidents of child abuse or neglect cut across racial, social, economic, and religious boundaries. Although no organization or individual can assure complete protection, this *Child Abuse Prevention Policies and Procedures Manual* reflects FBC's commitment to help protect children from harm. This manual applies to all volunteer and compensated workers of FBC.

B. FBC will not tolerate child abuse or neglect. Your cooperation in this commitment not only reflects your concern about children’s safety in this society, but also your willingness to take steps toward halting child abuse and its detrimental effects. It is the policy of the church that no one who has been found convicted of child abuse in any form is allowed to work with children or youth in any capacity.

C. In order to help prevent allegations of child abuse, we:

1. screen workers,
2. adopt and enforce policies and procedures for the protection of children and staff,
3. respond properly to any allegation, and
4. keep detailed documentation.

D. For the safety and protection of our children/youth and workers, **all people** who participate in church sponsored activities with children/youth are required to sign and comply with the guidelines provided in this *Child Abuse Prevention Policies and Procedures Manual*.

E. Duty to Supervise—All children’s and youth workers, whether paid or volunteer, must take and update their training as required. Each worker must go through childcare training before working with children. The rationale for youth and child training is as follows:

1. The Bible commands us not to let our good be evil spoken of (Rom. 14:16).
2. We are commanded to do all things, “decently and in order” (1 Cor. 14:40).
3. We are commanded to “let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16).

IV. Requirements for All Youth and Child Care Workers of the Church

A. Adults

1. **Salvation**—each worker must have personally accepted Jesus Christ as Savior.
2. **Submissive**—each worker must be submissive to Biblical authority in all areas of his life and must sign and follow FBC’s *Guidelines for Service and Lifestyle Commitment Sheet*.
3. **Sanctified**—each worker must set himself apart by continually implementing Biblical principles in his life in matters of:
 - a. Faithful in Membership—must be an active member of the church.
 - b. Honesty—in dealings with all people.
 - c. Moral purity—refrain from fornication, adultery, and homosexuality, as well as practices contributing to these such as pornography, vulgarity, and profanity.

- d. Self-Control—demonstrate Christ-like self-control in matters of conduct, attitude, and actions.
 - e. Dependability—faithful to perform required tasks which may be assigned.
 - f. Forgiveness—willing to forgive others who may have wronged you.
4. **Submitted**—complete the *Standard Application and Disclosure Form* and agree to abide by the *Child Abuse Prevention Policy and Procedure Manual*.

B. Teens

1. Each teen worker must be saved, baptized, and a member of FBC.
2. Each teen worker must be in at least 7th grade.
3. Each teen worker must have completed a leadership or training class offered by First Baptist Church.
4. Each teen worker must be faithful to the services of FBC, including Wednesday night youth meetings and Sunday School.
5. Teen workers will be limited in ministry in the following ways:
 - a. Jr. High (7th-8th grade) workers can only miss 2 services a month due to ministry.
 - b. Sr. High (9th-12th grade) workers can only miss 1 service a week due to ministry.
 - c. Only 12th Graders can be placed into a teacher role (i.e. Sunday School, VBS) upon approval from the deacons.

V. Policies and Procedures to Reduce the Risk of Child Abuse

In an effort to create the safest possible environment within FBC, several abuse prevention measures will be used.

A. Six Month Rule

Paid and volunteer workers must have been **members** or **associate members** of FBC for at least six months prior to the time they begin serving with children in church sponsored activities. These are exceptions to the six-month guideline:

1. In certain circumstances, the pastoral staff and Deacon Board may choose to evaluate new members (active or associate) for service who have served in their former churches. New members will only be considered for service if they can provide references from their former pastor and the head of the ministry in which they served.
2. Occasional special speakers (e.g. missionaries and evangelists) approved by the pastor may serve with the children in ministry sponsored activities, but the “Two-Adult Rule” must still be enforced. The special speaker is NOT to be considered as one of the two adult workers present and should never be left alone with a child. The special speaker is an exception to the screening process.

3. An intern may be voted into associate membership and the 6-month waiting rule waived by a vote of the Deacon Board allowing the intern to serve as an approved adult if all other requirements are met.

B. Screening

The following procedures reflect FBC's commitment to provide protective care for all children and workers who participate in church sponsored activities.

1. All paid and volunteer **adult** workers must complete the following procedures **before** participating in any church sponsored child or student activities.
 - a. Complete a standard application and disclosure form;
 - b. Participate in an interview conducted by the appropriate leadership responsible for the area of ministry;
 - c. Sign an acknowledgment stating that they have received, reviewed, and agree to comply by the *Child Abuse Prevention Policies and Procedures Manual*;
 - d. Attend orientation/training activities appropriate to the level of volunteer/compensated worker involvement;
 - e. View the recommended awareness material a minimum of every 3 years;
 - f. Be subject to criminal/civil background record checks for the purpose of obtaining information regarding criminal history or child abuse findings.
2. All paid and volunteer workers who are **minors** must complete the following procedures before participating in any church sponsored child or student activities. *(Minors are eligible to begin training with their parent at the age of 12 years old. Beginning with age 13 years they may serve without their parent working alongside one of them).*
 - a. Complete a standard application and disclosure form;
 - b. Participate in an interview conducted by the appropriate leadership responsible for the area of ministry;
 - c. Sign an acknowledgment stating that they have received, reviewed, and agree to comply by the *Child Abuse Prevention Policies and Procedures Manual*;
 - d. Attend orientation/training activities appropriate to the level of volunteer/compensated worker involvement.
3. All paid and volunteer workers who are **minors** will have the following exceptions when preparing to participate in any church sponsored child or student activities.
 - a. Will not be required to view the recommended awareness material, as it is intended for adults.
 - b. Will not have criminal/civil record checks unless leadership requests them.
4. All paid and volunteer workers will be required to complete a Renewal Application every 3 years.

5. **No worker, whether volunteer or paid, who has been convicted or has charges pending of a crime against a child, may provide services in any child-sponsored activity or program for children or youth.**
6. Applications and the results of any screening will be kept confidential and shared only on a need-to-know basis within the affected ministry.

C. Two-Adult Rule

It is never acceptable for an adult to be alone with a child or to lead a child into a private place (unless that child is his own).

1. Whenever possible, teachers providing services in any church ministry sponsored activity or program for children or youth will be assigned in teams of two or more (e.g. Nursery, Sunday School classes, Children's Church classes, youth meetings, Wednesday night programs, and Vacation Bible School, etc.). Regardless of how few children are in attendance, two adult workers must be present with each group of children. We should strive to make the adult child ratio 1:10 for youth 7th grade through age 17. For children below 7th grade, strive for a lesser ratio, providing fewer children per adult than that of the older children.
2. A concerted effort will be made to recruit sufficient numbers of volunteer teachers to permit such team teaching (including a list of adult substitutes).
3. Combine ministries if there are not two adults present in the class. An adult should not be alone with a child or children. Having a window in the door, having the door ajar, or placing a camera to monitor the room, are **not** acceptable alternatives to the "Two-Adult Rule." *The exception to this guideline occurs when counseling. If counseling in an office, there must be a window displaying a clear view of the activities in the room in a high trafficked area and be done during normal church operating hours.
4. It is best to counsel a child/youth with 2 adults present, one being the same gender as the child. It is best to do counseling in an open room with several being counseled simultaneously.
5. Other church-sponsored groups of children or youth, whether they meet at the church or elsewhere, must have two or more adult sponsors present.
6. A church sponsored activity away from church having both male and female children/youth must have a male and female adult worker with them (e.g. summer camp, youth meetings at people's homes, trips to the park, etc.).

7. In certain situations it is acceptable for two males or two females to team teach. However, it is preferred that teachers represent the gender of the group that they are teaching (e.g. It is preferred that mixed groups have both a male and a female teacher.).
8. It is acceptable for the two adults to be related (e.g. husband and wife, sisters, etc.).
9. To pick up or take home a child at the request of the ministry, there must be two adults present in the vehicle, one being the gender of the child. If the child is not cooperative, the parent/caretaker must be called for the parent/caretaker to take the child home himself.
10. The exception to the above rule is if informal arrangements have been made between the parents (e.g. A neighbor asks you to bring her children to church with you and you agree.).
11. Children and youth workers are not to go into a child's home during visitation when that child's parents are not home.
12. Children and youth workers are not to go into a child's home and help him get ready for church if the bus comes and the child is not ready. This is the parent's responsibility.
13. Children and youth workers are to make sure no child is locked in the building after any planned church activities. Never leave a child alone on the bus or van.
14. The two adult workers are responsible for the children 17 years and younger entrusted to their care.
 - a. In between services 7 years and above may be released to go to the worship service to sit with their parent/guardian/bus worker, or other designated person. Otherwise, they will remain with the 2 adult workers until released to the appropriate person. The exception being that a parent who is a member of FBC has the option to **sign a Child Release Waiver** releasing their 7 year old and up to be released to go meet their parents. The waiver should state FBC does not recommend or prefer to release children to go find their parent and that the parent understands and accepts the additional risks associated with such.
 - b. If a parent or guardian wishes to escort their child to the worship service, they should be present at their child's Sunday School door to take responsibility of their child prior to dismissal.

- c. Below 7 year old children will not be dismissed to go to the worship service but will remain with the 2 adult workers until the child is released to the appropriate person.
 - d. When the children/youth are in the worship service, they are then considered to be in the care of the parent/guardian. Children who ride the bus are considered the bus worker's responsibility. It is acceptable for the bus workers to delegate their responsibility to appropriate personnel.
 - e. Youth (7th grade-12th grade) will be released at the time specified in the youth handbook unless otherwise noted. 2 adult workers will remain until the last child leaves the designated area. A parent/guardian may choose to be present before the specified time of dismissal if they desire to escort their youth from the room. After youth activities, e.g. 'Afterglow', youth will be encouraged to remain in the designated, well-lit areas with their 2 adult workers until their appropriate ride arrives.
 - f. At the **close** of the worship, evangelistic, or Wednesday night services, etc., when children below 7th grade are in their classes waiting to go home, the **two adult workers should remain until the children are released to their parents, guardian, or the person that the parent has specified.**
 - g. A Nursery age child may be released to a sibling that the parent has given the pager to, signifying permission to release the child to the sibling.
 - h. **Make certain children 6th grade and below are not released to go find their parents** at the close of services. Parents or guardians must come to the child. Workers should take extreme precautions to be sure the child is with the appropriate person when released (The exception being the signed Child Release Waiver).
 - i. Children/Youth are not to wait in a dark room for their parents to arrive. Dark areas are not conducive to providing a safe, secure place for children.
15. The exception to the "Two Adult Rule" occurs when escorting children/youth to the restroom on FBC property. **To decrease the risk of a child being alone in a private area with an adult, the adult should stay out of the restrooms while the children/youth are in them.** The adult should take children to the restroom, check the restroom to see that it is empty, wait for it to be empty, and then let the children enter. The adult should stay near enough to the outer restroom door so they can hear any commotion going on in the bathroom. If commotion is heard, the adult worker should check on the situation by going into the restroom long enough to stop the commotion, and then return to monitoring the bathroom from outside

the bathroom door. The children should be counted before they enter the restroom and after they are all finished to be sure that all are accounted for.*

- a. If a child needs to go to the bathroom at a time the group is not going, one adult must escort the child to the bathroom, using the above procedures.*
- b. When possible, children should be encouraged to take care of their own bathroom needs. Should assistance be required, the outer bathroom door must remain ajar while the adult female teacher assists the child.
- c. Church Nursery workers and Tiny Tots teachers who deal with babies still in diapers must be sure that the adult female workers are the only ones changing diapers or taking potty-trained children to the bathroom. The restroom door should be left open, if possible, so the worker can stand in the doorway enabling her to supervise the child using the restroom as well as maintaining a posture that would safeguard against any accusations (See *Specific Nursery Guidelines*).
- d. Avoid helping a young boy with his zipper or a young girl with her skirt whenever possible.
- e. Between services (i.e. Sunday School and the Worship Service), 7 year old and above may be dismissed to go to the Worship service. It is the - parent's/guardian's/designated person's responsibility to monitor the children/youth at that point.

D. Open Classrooms

1. Classrooms or childcare rooms will be visited without prior notice by church staff, parents, or other volunteer church workers (e.g. Sunday School Superintendent, CAPC). Brief observation of childcare rooms and classrooms of children or youth will be welcomed to ensure policies and procedures are being enforced.
2. Parents and guardians of children older than Nursery age are permitted to enter the room and welcomed to observe their child and/or help their child adjust to the class, but they may never be alone with the other children. The church's approved two adult workers must be present at all times.
3. Do everything you can to keep the parents informed about and involved in their child's activities. Inform them about the progress of their children in good behavior as well as misconduct. **Immediately** inform them of significant discipline that was exercised and/or the nature of any incident report that was filled out pertaining to their child. It is best to discuss the matter when the parent picks up the child. If this cannot be done, contact the parent/guardian within 24 hours (written or verbally).

E. Leaving the Church Property/Activities/Consents/Medical information

1. **All** church outings and activities off the church property must be approved by a member of the pastoral staff using an *Activity Requisition Form* ("blue slip"). The

transportation to and from those activities must be “blue-slipped” as well. After approval is obtained, each participant who is a minor, not having his parent/guardian to accompany him, must provide a *Consent and Release Form* which is to be signed by parents or legal guardians. If the activity has a high risk for potential injury, it is appropriate to request the prudent medical history and release for treatment forms.

Those participating in Youth Group activities may complete an *Annual Consent and Release Form* which is to be signed by parents or legal guardians. The *Annual Consent and Release Form* will not serve for over-night activities. An activity specific *Consent and Release Form* must be completed for any overnight Youth Group activities.

2. It is acceptable to obtain a *Consent and Release Form* to cover many weeks (e.g. AWANA wants to take children to bank parking lot to play games, consent should read that for the exact dates [i.e. Wednesdays in March and April 2015] permission to play [general kind of games to be played i.e. kickball or football] in bank parking lot from [times]). **Do not substitute activities that have not been specifically listed** (i.e. taking a walk by the river).
3. Activity consents and release of liability waiver forms specific to each activity off the church’s property are invaluable in avoiding lawsuits or in demonstrating to a jury that the parents were aware of and agreed to the risks attendant to the specific activity in which the child was to participate. Therefore, if no signed release form and liability waiver has been submitted, do not permit the child to take part in the activity (See *Consent and Release Form*). Phone consents are not acceptable alternatives. Therefore, plan ahead in anticipation of an upcoming event and distribute written consents weeks ahead for regular attenders, giving extras for visitors they may bring.
4. When children/youth are taken to an activity, whether it is to the play ground, fieldtrip or the restroom, a count must be taken before and after to insure all accounted for.
5. It is prudent to have a medical history and release of care form for children/youth at the start of a ministry for the year or when new children attend. This information will facilitate appropriate emergency care to be given to a child/youth in the event the parent/guardian cannot be reached.

F. Driving Policies

Transportation for church-related activities will be done by authorized church personnel only (see *Driver Checklist*). If and when multiple vehicles are used, when appropriate, they are to stay together as a group, following the directions of the church’s authorized

coordinator. If you ask another adult to drive other than authorized church personnel, you make yourself personally liable as well as the church.

1. **The designated leader of the event must know each person designated to provide auto/van transportation to or from the church. The driver must:**
 - a. Be a member who is **approved** by the pastoral staff or deacons;
 - b. Be at least 18 years old to drive a car or 21 years old to drive a bus or a van;
 - c. Have a valid state driver's license qualified for the vehicle being operated;
 - d. Have no record of convictions for the past five years for drunken driving, driving under the influence, driving with a suspended or revoked license, or reckless endangerment;
 - e. Have a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL), as required by law, when driving any vehicle that has a capacity of 16 or more.
 - f. Have proof of insurance when using a personal vehicle for FBC ministry purposes; and
 - g. Never be alone in a vehicle with a child that is not his own. The 2 adult rule must be maintained.

2. **Any driver who within the last five years has committed the following violations is NOT ELIGIBLE to drive:**
 - a. Driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs,
 - b. Refusing to submit to chemical testing,
 - c. Fleeing an officer,
 - d. Reckless or careless driving,
 - e. Drag Racing or racing on roadways,
 - f. Causing more than two at-fault accidents,
 - g. Speeding in excess of 20 m.p.h., or
 - h. Receiving more than 3 speeding tickets.

G. Gifts

No staff, either paid or volunteer, are to give personal gifts to individual children or young people without the prior knowledge of the parent(s) or responsible leadership. Because gift giving can be a form of buying loyalty or silence, gift giving should be done in groups or for special occasions only. Gifts may not be elaborate but should be modest and appropriate to the occasion

H. Overnight Trips

Situations where staff members are taking children or young people out of the area for long periods of time or for overnight outings are to be carefully planned.

1. No child or youth shall attend any trip until advanced written permission is obtained and filed.

2. Only known, proven staff will be permitted to sponsor/chaperone the trips.
3. New staff or volunteers may be used as additional sponsors, but shall not be left alone with the children or young people in a situation where there are no other staff who are able to observe (the 2 adult rule must be followed).
4. Make sure that the gender of the children is represented by the chaperones (e.g. When both male and female children/youth are present, a male and female adult worker must go with them. If only girls are present, female workers must be present.).
5. In no circumstance will one adult be allowed to take children or youth on an overnight outing.

I. Specific Bus Ministry Guidelines

1. **Driving Policies**—Adhere to the driving policies as presented in the *Child Abuse Prevention Policy and Procedure Manual*.
2. **Two Adult Rule**—Follow the two adult rule, and, if riding with a mixed group, have at least one worker of each gender.
3. **Consent Forms**—**Before** allowing a child to ride the bus or a van, obtain written consent and keep it on file indefinitely.
4. **Records**—Keep accurate, timely, and complete records.
 - a. Keep attendance documents telling the exact dates the bus and van went out. Include the names of all adults, teens, children, and workers who were present on that specific date.
 - b. Keep record of any significant injuries, out of the ordinary events, or behavior problems on the Incident Report. Always include the action taken on the Incident Report (See *Incident Report* section for more information on completing these forms).
 - c. Keep records of any time that children are collected at or taken to church by a parent or representative on the Attendance Sheet.
 - d. Note any suspicious marks, etc. observed when children board the bus or van on an Incident Report.
 - e. Note any out of the ordinary circumstances (e.g. bus breaks down) on the correct spot on the attendance form.
 - f. Keep records indefinitely. Do not throw them away at any time. Yearly give documentation to the CAPC to securely store.

5. **Pick-Up**—Bus and van workers are not to go into a child’s home and help them get ready for church. This is always the parent’s responsibility. It is best never to enter the child’s home. The exception is on visitation with parents present.
6. **Church Services**—When children/youth are released after Sunday School to go to the worship service, or when there is no S.S., bus/van workers are then responsible for them until they are released to go to their children’s church class. Bus/van workers may delegate their responsibility to church time workers as appropriate.
7. **After Services**—Children below 7th grade who are brought by the bus or van may only be released to authorized church personnel (e.g. bus workers) or with parental written permission to another. When youth (7th grade and above) are dismissed, they should proceed to the van/bus. Bus/van children will be escorted to the van/bus as appropriate. All should be accounted for before the van/bus leaves.
8. **Baptism**—If a child accepts Christ and requests to be baptized, the *Release to Baptism Form* must be given to the child’s parents or guardians. The form must be signed by them and then obtained before the child may be baptized. Keep this form indefinitely as well.
9. **Drop-Off**—Bus workers will be sure child/youth are inside their home before the van/bus leaves.
10. **Supervision/Responsibility**—Bus workers are to be sure van/bus children are supervised the entire time they are on the church van/bus or at church. Bus workers take the place of van/bus children’s parent/guardian while away from parents during this time.

J. Specific Nursery Guidelines

1. A minimum of two adult workers must be present in each enclosed Nursery room regardless of how few children are in attendance.
2. Youth will be allowed to work in the Nursery under the supervision of two adult workers. The two adults should be present at all times. The youth worker should not be considered as one of the two workers. Youth 12 years old may train with their parent if the approval process is completed.
3. Nursery windows, as in all classrooms, will allow a clear view of all activities.
4. Adult female workers are the only ones who may change diapers or take Nursery age children to the bathroom. Bathroom doors should be left open. Workers should supervise from the door if possible. When changing diapers they must:

- a. **Always** wear rubber gloves during the entire diaper change.
 - b. **Always** use rubber gloves when applying lotion or powder.
5. Nursery children will be released only to persons with the child's corresponding pager number, signifying parent/guardian's authorization to pick up the child. It is appropriate to give a child to a sibling with the correct pager. If in doubt, ask the parent for written permission, to remain on file, as to whom they would like his child released to in the future. If a worker is uncomfortable releasing a child to a sibling, because of age, etc., the worker may request that the sibling get the parent/guardian to pick up the infant.
 6. Only approved workers are allowed to stay in the Nursery or to be in the Nursery area during sessions. If a mother wants to nurse her baby, she may do so in the nursing area. If a mother needs to comfort her child, she may pick her child up, comfort the child, and then return him to the Nursery, or remove him from the Nursery upon the return of the pager. Unless they are approved nursery workers, parents should always be encouraged to observe the Nursery, but they should remain outside of the children's area due to safety concerns for the other children.
 7. A positive approach to discipline will be practiced. Clear, consistent, age-appropriate limits will be established to help children function appropriately. Corporal discipline is **never** allowed.
 8. If the Nursery is used, any other time (e.g. weddings, playing while parents are in a meeting, etc.) than for a church sponsored ministry, the church is not responsible for staffing the Nursery or for enforcing the above guidelines.
 9. If an activity is not church-sponsored or if there is no church-staffed nursery, it is appropriate for a parent to make an informal agreement with another person to care for their child in the church Nursery. In this situation, the church will not be held responsible.
 10. The Nursery will be appropriately staffed and the above guidelines enforced during Sunday School, Sunday and Wednesday Services, Evangelistic Meetings and occasionally other special services. Any use of the Nursery that occurs outside of these times is not to be considered as a ministry of the church, and the church will not be held responsible.

K. Windows

Windows of classroom doors and between classrooms will remain uncovered to allow a clear view of classroom activities.

L. Rapport

Workers are not to act as a child's friend in a children's friendship manner. You must always appropriately maintain your proper respect and authority status and act accordingly. This does not mean that you cannot be friendly, but it does mean that you must act at all times with the respect and dignity that is befitting to your position of ministry.

M. Modesty

In regard to dress, workers are asked to dress in a modest and appropriate fashion. Ladies should refrain from wearing short, low-cut, or tight fitting clothing, or any type of attire that would draw attention to their bodies. Men should also dress modestly as to exemplify Christ.

N. Touching

Always remember that an adult touching a child who is not his own may be viewed suspiciously. All workers should avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. As a general policy, children should not be hugged or kissed by church workers. If a child initiates the hug it may be appropriate to hug the child back.

O. Holding

Older children should not be permitted to sit on a worker's lap for extended periods. While this may often be necessary with very small children (Kindergarten Class age and under), ministry workers should understand the increased risk these actions represent and act with discretion.

P. Threats

The church does not tolerate assault, threats, harassment, or abuse against church or school personnel, students, members, or anyone in attendance. Verbal or written threats, racial/ethnic/cultural harassment, physical and/or sexual harassment, or abuse perpetrated by anyone in the church or school, **whether intentional or unintentional**, is condemned as unacceptable. The church supports efforts designed to protect the welfare of staff and students. In dealing with matters of alleged assault, threats, harassment, or abuse, the church will strive to preserve the dignity and rights of all involved. The church is characterized by a safe and harmonious working environment in which the needs and well-being of every individual is paramount.

Q. Violent Behavior

Violent behavior shall not be tolerated and will be dealt with accordingly.

1. Any violent behavior must be **immediately reported to the CAPC for immediate follow up.**
 - a. Parents of children involved should be immediately contacted by the leadership responsible for overseeing the situation.

- b. First and foremost, the well-being of the child should be carefully protected. Expedient medical care should be sought when necessary.
 - c. An Incident Report should be immediately filled out containing a description of the violent incident and action taken. The CAPC will assist in completing this form.
 - d. If the situation is deemed an emergency, the CLA attorney and insurance company will be contacted by the CAPC for guidance concerning the situation and instructions will be followed.
 - e. After receiving counsel from the CLA attorney, if and when necessary, the Senior Pastor will contact the proper authorities and report the incident.
2. Indiana law states that if a caregiver has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or may be subjected to abuse or neglect or observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect; that person shall immediately report the perceived imminent danger to an appropriate person in authority and/or the CAPC. Other incidents or suspicions should be reported immediately following the close of the service so that the process can be completed within the 24 hour time frame (see section on *Guidelines for Reporting Child Abuse*).

R. Reporting

Any person who works with children or youth and has a firsthand knowledge of child abuse or a reasonable cause to believe that a child has been or is being abused has a state-mandated duty to report the abuse. The worker must **immediately** report the suspected abuse to the CAPC or Deacon Chairman in the CAPC's absence (See section on *Incident Reports, Guidelines for Reporting Child Abuse and Important Contacts and their Phone Numbers*).

VI. Guidelines for Reporting Child Abuse

Because we believe caring for the children entrusted to our care is one of First Baptist Church's most important concerns, we have adopted the following guidelines for reporting:

- A.** Treat each allegation of child abuse seriously.
- B.** Attempt to assure the safety and protection of persons who have been harmed.
- C.** Pray for the church and all persons affected by the allegation.
- D. Immediately begin documenting all procedures** observed in handling the allegation.
- E. Immediately notify the appropriate person in authority: CAPC or Deacon Chairman in the CAPC's absence.** The CAPC will obtain legal guidance from CLA and work together

with the appropriate leadership to initiate an internal investigation of the allegations within 24 hours of notice.

- F. As appropriate, the pastor, church administrator, or business manager shall **immediately notify the appropriate state office** of the allegation.
- G. As appropriate the pastor, church administrator, or business manager shall **immediately notify the parents** if it is not known that they have previous knowledge of the allegations and the allegations do not implicate them.
- H. **Immediately notify the church's insurance company.** As appropriate, the pastor, church administrator, or business manager shall immediately notify the church's insurance carrier of the possibility of a claim. If the abuse allegation does not implicate a church staff member or church volunteer, this step may be omitted.
- I. If an accusation of improper behavior is made against a worker, in order to neutralize the situation, the accused worker will be placed on administrative leave until the matter is resolved. Names and statements of all those involved and any witnesses will be obtained and documented via the *Incident Report*. Written statements signed by witnesses will be obtained in order to clear the matter up as quickly as possible. Upon the accusation being resolved favorably, the worker will be re-instated. If the allegations are proven to be true, the church will discipline lovingly and fairly in order to avoid future problems.
- J. The pastor should extend whatever care and resources are necessary. In providing care to the principals (alleged victims and the accused) and their families, the pastor or church leader, should under **no** circumstances be drawn into a discussion of the truth or falsity of the allegation which could contaminate an official investigation. Do not assign blame or take any steps that involve establishing or negating the allegation.
- K. It is appropriate to show care and comfort for the alleged victim. This should be the pastoral objective from the moment the allegation is received or otherwise made known.
- L. Observe confidentiality for both the alleged victim and the accused until advised to the contrary by the pastor.
- M. Do not confront the accused until the safety of the alleged victim is secured.
- N. Do not prejudge the situation, but take the allegations seriously and reach out to the alleged victim and his or her family. Showing care and support help to prevent further hurt. Extend whatever pastoral resources are needed. Remember that the care and safety of the alleged victim is the first priority. In some situations, churches have

responded in a negative or non-supportive manner to the alleged victim. This can increase the anger and pain of the alleged victim and his or her family. Further reconciliation can then be more difficult and the possibility of damaging litigation increases.

- O. Treat the accused with dignity and support. If the accused is a caregiver, that person should be relieved temporarily of his or her duties until the investigation is completed.
- P. If the media or other parties contact a church official about a pending allegation of child abuse, they should be referred to the senior pastor. Only the pastor or his designee should make comments about the allegations. Pastor will use the text of a prepared public statement to answer the press and to convey news to the congregation. The prepared statement shall be made only after consultation with the CLA attorney and will include the steps the church has taken to protect children, such as the development and implementation of this manual, and the care and concern the church has for all parties involved. The privacy and confidentiality of all involved shall continue to be of primary concern.

VII. Documentation

All records should be securely kept indefinitely.

- A. The Incident Report (see *Instructions for Completing Incident Reports*) — Each teacher or children’s worker should keep timely, accurate, and detailed records of every significant incident (including in class conduct and disciplinary measures, unexplained length of time why a child was out of classroom, injuries to child, suspicious conduct between another worker and a child, and evidence raising reasonable suspicion that a child may be abused at home, events out of the ordinary, especially if an exception to the guidelines occurs). Send these forms immediately to the CAPC to be appropriately acted upon. It is appropriate to use e-mail to speed the process.
- B. Attendance records for every classroom or Sunday school event should be kept which include names of each child in attendance that day, name of each adult worker, the date and function of the class.
- C. Bus Rider attendance forms must be meticulously kept (See: *Bus Rider Permission Form*).
- D. Written permission to ride the bus must be obtained before a child may ride the bus (See: *Bus Rider Permission Form*).
- E. Written permission for baptism must be obtained before a child that rides the bus may be baptized.

F. Any activity off the church campus must have written permission forms for each child before going. These forms should:

1. be specifically tailored to the planned event;
2. name the specific event and date on which the event is to occur;
3. not allow people to participate in the event without written release;
4. not allow activities to take place if the activity is not covered in the release;
5. ask specifically for the parent's consent for his child to participate in the event;
6. give the parent an opportunity to refuse to let his child participate in an event without incurring a penalty (i.e. plan ahead, giving out consents weeks prior);
7. give notice on the consent that it is intended to be a legally binding document;
8. be certain that the person signing the release has the legal capacity to release liability for the child.

Instructions for Completing Incident Reports

THE INCIDENT REPORT IS INTENDED TO BE POSITIVE, DEMONSTRATING FBC IS ACTING RESPONSIBLY. 1 Corinthians 14:40, “Let all things be done decently and in order.”

The Incident Report is the tool First Baptist Church chooses to use to record the details when an out of the ordinary event occurs. It will be used to **record the facts** in situations (e.g. Injuries, suspected child abuse, deviations in the guideline protocols, discipline requiring parental notification). The Incident Report is intended not only to record the details of a situation but also is FBC’s tool to **identify problem areas** to follow up on, preventing future deviations. Therefore, this record is to be helpful in troubleshooting as well as documenting.

Who may complete an Incident Report? Anyone who notes a deviation to the expected norm at FBC may complete an incident report or notify the CAPC. This includes parents, workers, teachers, volunteers, Heads of Ministry, CAPC, and Pastors.

How do I complete an Incident Report? Obtain the report (available in the print room) or contact the CAPC. The CAPC will complete the form with you if you choose and will inform those along the Chain of Reporting. The person completing the form will also be informed of the action taken.

How long will the process take? In an emergency such as alleged abuse or serious injury, 24 hours is the maximum for resolving the issue. If the matter is not urgent, the matter should be resolved within 4 days.

What if the process takes longer? The responsible party will receive communication regarding the incident report. For accountability and for documentation purposes, if the responsible party does not communicate with the CAPC within 24 hours stating the date and the follow up action taken, the CAPC will suggest the action to be taken. Repeat communication will be sent after 24 hours if CAPC is not notified. If the CAPC receives no response by the 4th day, communication will be sent to the Deacon assigned as the contact person to follow up on these matters. The Deacon should contact the CAPC as to the closure of the matter for accountability and for documentation purposes. **The same process will be utilized for emergency incidents except it must be completed within the 24 hours.**

What should I do if I receive an Incident Report? The CAPC will communicate incident reports through e-mail through the appropriate chain of reporting. Those informed by e-mail must quickly respond that they have received and read the incident report and offer any suggested action they may have. The CAPC will forward the suggested actions from those responding and offer solutions as needed. The CAPC will immediately obtain legal advice from the CLA attorney in emergency situations or whenever necessary. The advice is to be acted upon immediately. The CAPC will also inform the church’s insurance company in an emergency or if the situation warrants it.

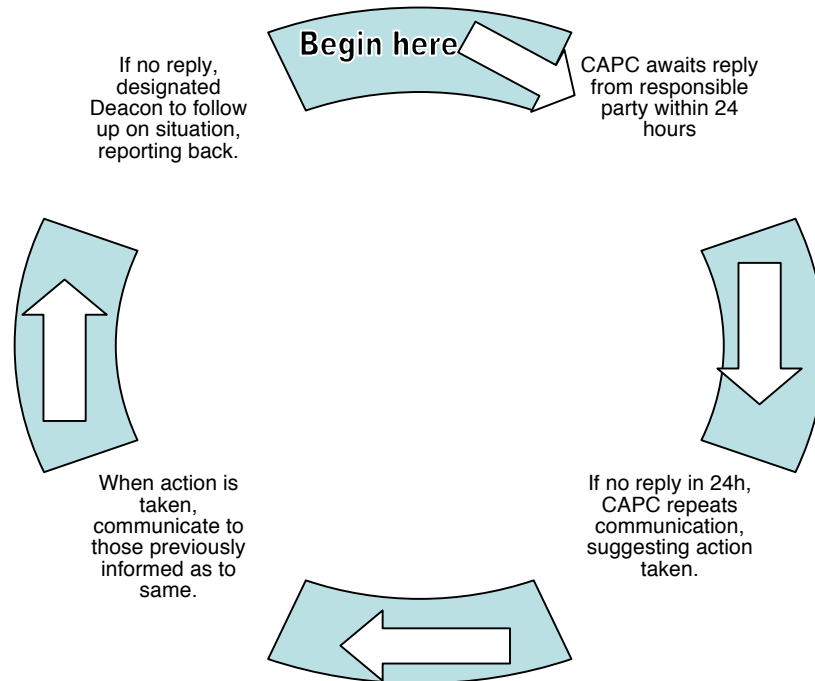
Reporting Child Abuse or Other Incidents

Step 1: When a person has observed an incident (of abuse, has a reasonable suspicion that abuse is occurring to a person, an emergency situation is noted, an injury has occurred, a deviation from the guidelines was noted, etc.), they should contact the CAPC. Emergency situations will immediately and thoroughly be investigated and documented by the church leadership, trying to resolve the issue if possible in 24 hours. Non-emergencies will be handled in a similar way, but the goal will be to resolve the issue within 4 days.

Step 2: When the CAPC is informed of a situation, it will be communicated to the Senior Pastor, Business Manager, and to the appropriate Head of Ministry. If the situation is an emergency or otherwise necessary, the Sr. Pastor or other staff member approved by the Sr. Pastor will contact the insurance company, the CLA, and the Trustee Chairman. Action will be taken based upon the counsel received and as deemed necessary by the Sr. Pastor.

Step 3: When appropriate, the CAPC will communicate back to the person who had initiated the incident report as to the outcome of the situation as soon as possible. Emergency incidents should be resolved within 24 hours. All other situations should be resolved within 4 days. The CAPC will note action taken by the responsible party. If, by the 4th day, the issue is not resolved, it will be passed on to the designated Deacon to immediately follow up on the issue. The closure of the incident should be reported back to the CAPC for documentation as soon as possible.

EMERGENCY SITUATION



Important Contacts and their Phone Numbers

National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-4-A-CHILD
State & Local Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-800-5556

Reporting Child Abuse

If First Baptist Church receives an allegation of child abuse, it will respond with the utmost concern to the victim, parent, or other party making such an allegation. The accused will be treated with dignity and support. Without clear and convincing evidence to the contrary, First Baptist Church personnel will assume that such complaints are made in good faith. Persons making such complaints should have no doubt that First Baptist Church takes them seriously and will take appropriate action.

When it becomes necessary to report suspected child abuse or neglect, the protection of children must be the most important concern. It is the legal responsibility of any person with responsibility for the care of children to report all cases of child abuse they observe, and further, to report visible signs of alleged abuse. Failure to report could lead to liability on the part of the church, the observer, or both. First Baptist Church and Christian School has determined that it is the responsibility of the program staff to report all cases of suspected child

abuse to the proper legal authorities. While the confidentiality of the pastor/parishioner relationship is very important, reporting reasonable suspicion of child abuse has the potential for helping individuals receive help for a previous problem and may prevent further harm to a child, that person, or others.

What is Reasonable Suspicion?

Reasonable suspicion means that there is credible evidence or a discrepant or inconsistent history in explaining a child's suspected abuse.

A report based on reasonable suspicion does not require proof that abuse or neglect has actually occurred or that the reporter witnessed the incident in question. Reporting is not a determination that child abuse or neglect has actually occurred; rather, it is a request for an assessment of the condition of a child.

Definitions

1. **Adult**—any person age 18 or older.
2. **Bizarre Discipline**—Any actions in which the caretaker uses eccentric, irrational, or grossly inappropriate procedures or devices to modify the child's behavior.
3. **Child Abuse**—Child abuse refers to an act committed by a parent, guardian, or person in a position of trust (even though he/she may not care for the child on a daily basis) which is not accidental and which harms or threatens to harm a child's physical or mental health or welfare.
4. **Child or Youth**—any person under age 18 years old (minor).
5. **CLA**—Christian Law Association is a "ministry of legal helps." They provide legal assistance to Bible-believing churches and Christians who follow specific fundamental guidelines and have a need for Christian legal counsel.
6. **Compensated Worker**—Hourly, salaried, part-time, or full-time employee who works with children at any church-sponsored activity.
7. **Corporal Punishment**—Any punishment applied to the body, but not limited to slapping, spanking, pinching, pulling, and squeezing.
8. **Educational Neglect**—The child's parent/guardian is directly responsible for the failure of the child to attend school or an approved alternative program of study.
9. **Emergency**—A life threatening injury has occurred or is likely to occur. A realistic potential for negative legal action.
10. **Failure to Thrive**—A syndrome of infancy or early childhood that is characterized by growth failure, signs of severe malnutrition, and variable degrees of developmental retardation. Children are considered to be in this category only when the syndrome is diagnosed by a physician and is caused by non-organic factors.
11. **Incident Report**—the tool FBC chooses to use to record the details when an out of the ordinary event occurs. It is intended to be positive in that it demonstrates FBC is acting responsibly. It will be used to record the facts in situation (e.g. injuries, suspected child abuse, deviations in the guideline protocols, discipline requiring parental notification). The Incident Report is intended not only to record the details of a situation, but also is our tool to address concerns and identify problem areas to follow up on, preventing future deviations (see section *Instructions for Completing Incident Reports*).

12. **Mandated Reporter**—any persons with the responsibility for the care of children
(See *Guidelines for Reporting Child Abuse*).
13. **Medical Abuse/Neglect**—A pattern of acts or omissions by the parent/guardian that result in harm to a child’s psychological or emotional health or development. Refusal or failure by caretaker to obtain and/or follow through with a complete regimen of medical, mental, or dental care for a condition, which if untreated, could result in illness or developmental delays.
14. **Parent/Guardian**—Person responsible for child when church worker’s responsibilities are completed.
15. **Physical Abuse**—A physical injury, threat of injury, or creation of a real and significant danger of substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or impairment of bodily functions. Such injury or threat of injury, regardless of intent, is inflicted or allowed to be inflicted by non-accidental means. Examples include, but are not limited to: asphyxiation, bone fracture, brain damage, skull fracture, subdural hematoma, burns, scaldings, cuts, excessive bruising, welts, excessive abrasions, internal injuries, poisoning, sprains, dislocations, gunshot wounds, and stabbing wounds.
16. **Physical Neglect**—The failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, or supervision for a child if the child’s health or safety is endangered. Physical neglect may include multiple occurrences or a one-time critical or severe event that results in a threat to health or safety, such as a toddler left alone. Other types of neglect include abandonment, inadequate supervision, inadequate clothing, inadequate shelter, inadequate personal hygiene, inadequate food, and malnutrition.
17. **Blue Slip** – The nick name for the Activity Requisition form used to obtain permission from the church for an activity that is church sponsored or at the church (e.g. weddings). It helps coordinate the activities of the church, preventing conflicts, and also helps to ensure appropriate chaperones will be present.
18. **Sexual Abuse**—Abuse that consists of sexual contact or interactions with a child, including physical contact (fondling, sexual intercourse, etc.) and nonphysical contact (exhibitionism, child prostitution, pornography, voyeurism, etc.).
19. **Volunteer Worker**—Any non-compensated individual who works with children at any church-sponsored activity.
20. **Waiver Form/consent**—Permission slip or release form that gives written permission for a child to participate in an activity and indicates that the parent or guardian understands and accepts the risks involved.

Chain of Change

Heads of Ministries

If, after trying to implement this *Child Abuse Prevention Policy and Procedure Manual*, you conclude that a change is needed to provide a safe environment for children and/or workers, or you are concerned with the feasibility of a guideline, you must follow the appropriate chain of requesting a formal change. **No changes to the guidelines should be made without written approval.**

Appropriate Chain of Change

Give the suggestion in writing to the CAPC, who will then pass it along to the Senior Pastor and to the other appropriate persons involved.

Process of Reviewing Change

Your written suggestion will then be discussed, and upon the discretion of the Senior Pastor, Assistant Pastors, and the CAPC, it will be brought before the Deacons as soon as time allows at the next scheduled Deacon's meeting. When appropriate, our insurance company and/or the CLA will be consulted before a decision is made.

Feedback

If your proposed change is approved, or other modifications made, you will receive written approval. No changes should be made without the written approval of the Deacons and/or pastoral staff.

Guidelines for Service
First Baptist Church of Mishawaka

As members of the body of Christ and His servants in the local church, we are to serve faithfully in our chosen task. 1 Corinthians 4:2 tells us that God requires faithfulness. The following are ways in which He has instructed us to be faithful:

FAITHFUL IN DEVOTIONS

Prayer and reading of the Scriptures

Matthew 6:33a - "Seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness..."

Psalms 119:11 - "I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you."

1 Thessalonians 5:17 - "Pray without ceasing."

FAITHFUL IN FELLOWSHIP

Attending and participating regularly in the church's worship services and growth opportunities

Hebrews 10:25 - "Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

FAITHFUL IN SERVICE

Assuming full responsibility for your tasks and providing for their performance in your absence

Colossians 3:23-24 - "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ."

FAITHFUL IN STEWARDSHIP

Giving financially to the Lord, through His church, generously from the worldly goods He has so freely given to you.

2 Corinthians 9:7 - "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

FAITHFUL IN WITNESSING

Spreading the good news of salvation wherever and whenever the Lord grants you opportunity.

Mark 16:15 - "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation."

FAITHFUL IN SEPARATION

Living a life that is holy and distinct from the lifestyle of the world

Romans 12:1-2 – "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

Philippians 4:8 – "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

GLORIFYING GOD IN APPEARANCE

Biblical principles clearly teach

1. the distinction between the sexes which is communicated in terms of behavior, roles, and appearance (Deut. 22:5; Eph. 5:22-23);
2. the need for believers to separate from clearly worldly practices (Psalm 1:1; Eph. 4:14-18; 2 Cor. 6:17);
3. the importance of not causing our brother to stumble (Rom. 14:13, 19, 21); and
4. the goal of being godly examples (Phil. 2:5, 7, 14:15; 1 Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:12).

While we currently have no written standard that would set forth in specifics the preferred dress and hair styles of those serving in leadership and teaching positions it would be good to keep in mind the following principles: (A) modesty (B) appropriateness (C) example (D) bringing glory to Christ, not self or world. Our dress also reflects the respect we have for those in whose presence we are, and helps shape the attitude of others toward us and the purpose at hand. It should be our desire to set the highest and most positive standards in this area.

HONORING THE LORD'S HOUSE AND DAY

To promote a spirit of worship on Sunday in the Lord's House (Matt. 21:12-13), and to avoid causing a brother to stumble (Rom. 14:13, 19, 21), all ages, but especially youth in grade school through high school are to refrain from soliciting, selling or delivering fund raising items on church property on Sunday. This policy is also applicable to Wednesday night or any special worship service. It does not apply to other church activities. Contacts by phone or outside the church are matters for individual members to handle.