



**GRACE**

FELLOWSHIP CHILLIWACK

**Child Protection Policy**

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## Our Vision

To see children become faithful followers of the Lord Jesus Christ and vibrant members of His church, by His grace.

## Our Mission

To glorify God by evangelizing and discipling children and by equipping parents and church members to teach them the Word of God.

### i. Evangelizing & Discipling Children

The church has a mandate to make disciples of Jesus Christ. We go to all the world and share the gospel (the good news of Christ) with every person and train them to follow Christ (Matthew 28:18–20; Luke 24:46–47). Therefore, the motivation for children’s ministry begins with the command to evangelize the lost, which includes children. We make it our goal to point them to the reality of sin, the need for repentance, and the salvation that is found in Jesus Christ.

In a secure and safe environment, we cultivate the soil of children’s hearts and sow the seed of the gospel, showing them what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. This includes teaching children about who Jesus is, the fear of God, humility over weakness, sorrow over sin and facts about the gospel the riches of God’s grace. We teach them to serve, rather than to be served (Mark 10:42-45).

Salvation belongs to the Lord (John 1:13). We recognize that God’s salvation is for children as well as adults. As the gospel is presented, we call children to respond in faith (Romans 10:9-10).

We emphasize Bible content in our teaching, rather than simple moral lessons. Our curriculum is carefully chosen for Biblical accuracy and theological precision in line with our doctrinal statement. We teach them systematically through every major event in the Bible, so that they are continually pointed to God and become familiar with the Scriptures as a foundation for future preaching they will hear.

In our children’s ministry, we strive to be exemplary, faithful followers of Christ, excelling in every area. This is not only to show children how to respond to God and interact with the people He has put in their lives, but to glorify Christ in the world.

Finally, we pray for our children; that God would save their souls (Ephesians 2:1-10). We pray that He would graciously cause us to walk by the power of the Holy Spirit as we serve the children entrusted to our care.

### ii. Equipping Parents

Grace Fellowship Church Chilliwack partners with parents to teach children the Word of God and to obey their parents. Parents have a mandate to raise their children in the

discipline and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21). Thus, parents are to be the primary evangelists and spiritual trainers for their children. This is a continuous command that is actively fulfilled by the parent by being an example, providing exhortation, and encouraging their children.

As a church, we seek to encourage parents in their God given task of raising godly children. This is clearly implied through the household commands (Colossians 3:18–21) and the church’s mandate to equip, edify, and encourage believers (Ephesians 4:12–16). Our expository preaching and Scriptural Bible studies give parents a solid foundation of Scriptural knowledge and wisdom to bring to parenting their children. Also, we periodically offer parent training in Biblical parenting principles as part of our partnership with parents.

The Scriptures call for strong Christian families that are growing and being molded through the ministry of the Body of Christ (Ephesians 5–6). Therefore, our church seeks to support and enhance the spiritual vitality of the home while never usurping the parental role and responsibility.

### iii. Equipping Church Members

The church also has a mandate to edify and equip servants for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11–16). This happens as pastor-teachers provide spiritual leadership and resources to the congregation and the congregation takes those resources and uses them in all walks of life, including that of children. Our children’s ministry, therefore, functions as an effective link in the chain of equipping and enlisting saints into productive ministry. It provides a plethora of opportunities for saints to sacrificially serve and grow while simultaneously strengthening the church. These servants are also edified as they communicate God’s truth to children and each other on a weekly basis.

## Parameters

This policy applies to all those who participate in the children’s ministry (including the nursery) at Grace Fellowship Church Chilliwack (hereafter GFCC). The children’s ministry may be defined as specific classes and programs hosted by GFCC.

## Definitions

*Adult:* an individual 19 years or older

*Church:* Grace Fellowship Church Chilliwack

*Coordinator:* either a staff member or volunteer who is responsible for various areas of the children’s ministry, overseeing the policy, receiving reports of abuse, conducting training, reviewing applications, checking references, requesting background checks, etc.; consists of the Pastor, Nursery Coordinator, Children’s Ministry Coordinator etc.

*Deacon:* a member of the church appointed to fulfill the role of a deacon

*Director:* a member of the church appointed to fulfill the role of a director

*Elder:* a member of the church appointed to fulfill the role of an elder

*Leadership:* a group consisting of two or more persons of the following: A pastor, elder or member of the Advisory Council

*Minor:* individuals under nineteen years of age

*Pastor:* a person hired to fulfill the role of pastor

*Staff:* the paid employees of the church. All full and part-time church staff are required to receive a background check regardless of whether or not they have direct contact with children.

*Volunteer:* an adult or minor who works with children and is not an employee of the church. All volunteers who serve in children’s ministry are required to go through the children’s ministry training and screening procedures before they serve. Volunteers include nursery workers, youth leaders, hall monitors, teachers, coordinators, and anyone else who serves the children. The term “volunteer” will be used throughout this policy manual as an all-encompassing term for anyone who serves the children and is not church staff.

## Expectations of All Staff & Volunteers

All children's Ministry staff and volunteers are expected to endorse and uphold the church's Child Protection Policy (hereafter CPP).

## Training & Screening Procedures

Staff and volunteers must:

- Have a sincere relationship with Jesus Christ as evidenced by humility, a love for God's Word and prayer
- Be members in good standing for at least 6 months, or faithful attenders for over 1 year with a written recommendation from a member of leadership (who knows and supports their reasons for not being a member)
- Regularly attend worship services and minister to the needs of the body
- Be 13 or older
- Complete an Application for Children's Ministry (see Appendix)
- Consent to a social media check
- Consent to a Canadian criminal record check\*, updated every 5 years (fingerprinting may be required depending on your CRC results)
- Provide a driving record, updated every 5 years (if transporting children)
- Partake in training classes\*\*
- Read, endorse and uphold GFCC's CPP
- Be approved by ministry coordinator(s) to serve in this capacity

\*In the event that a criminal conviction or other disclosure is revealed on the CRC, a leadership member and/or the applicable coordinator will meet with the individual to discuss their past actions and will then make an official determination whether the person may serve with the children or not.

\*\*The leadership of GFCC offers training classes for attendees and members to learn more about the CPP and child abuse.

## Expectations for Classroom Settings

**Nursery:** Volunteers should be in their assigned room 15 minutes before the service, ready to receive the children.

**Sunday school:** Volunteers should check their classroom before the service starts to make sure the supplies have been delivered by the ushers and the room is set up to be safe and inviting for the children.

If a volunteer is not able to work their assigned service, they should contact another person on the schedule to switch with them. If that cannot be done, arrangement for a substitute should be made. Always contact a Nursery Coordinator (for nursery workers) or the Children's Ministry Coordinator (for Sunday school workers) to make them aware of the changes.

**Nursery:** If a parent desires to transition their child from the nursery room to the toddler room, please see a Nursery Coordinator to approve the change.

**Sunday school:** Children must remain in their assigned class for the duration of the school year. Children may be promoted to the next class at the beginning of the school year in September. Even if a child has a birthday, they do not move up to the next class until the following September.

### i. Adult-to-Child Ratios

**Nursery** is for ages birth-30 months. There is to be one adult (or minor) for every four children. If the number of children exceeds this limit (for example if there are three workers and a 13th child arrives), an additional volunteer must be called before we can accept the child. If no qualified volunteers can be found, the child will have to remain with his parent and the nursery will be closed to additional children.

There must be a minimum of two volunteers at all times (see exception below). At least one is always to be an adult woman. This is for the protection of the volunteers and children in case of an emergency. If this requirement cannot be met for whatever reason the nursery will be closed, though the room may remain available for parents to supervise their own children.

Children under the age of 13 are not allowed in the nursery area. The only exception is a child who has permission from a Nursery Coordinator or Pastor to work with their parents. No children under 13 are allowed to hold the babies or change their diapers.

There will be a Nursery Coordinator on duty each week. Their name will appear in the bulletin in the volunteer section. The coordinator is there to assist nursery volunteers with any problems they may encounter while serving in the nursery. In addition, the coordinator's weekly responsibilities include:

- Call the volunteers before Sunday to remind them that they are scheduled
- Arrive early to set up the nursery
- Wait in the nursery until the first of the volunteers arrive
- Check in with the nursery during the service break, making sure there are adequate volunteers and no problems have arisen
- Return to the nursery after the service to put the room back to its original arrangement
- Take the toys home to sanitize them once per month

**Sunday school** is for ages 24 months to grade 6. Classes must have at least two adults (one female) at all times. Exception: The school-aged class that meets in the small room on the right side of the hall downstairs can have one adult, if there are fewer than 12 children and a hall monitor is present outside the classroom

The Sunday school classes must maintain these maximum ratios of adults to children. If more children are present, ask the hall monitor to get an additional volunteer for the classroom.

- Toddlers class (ages 2-3): one adult for every eight children maximum (1:6 is ideal)
- Preschool/Kindergarten class (ages 4-5): one adult for every twelve children maximum (1:9 is ideal)
- School-Aged classes (grades 1-2 & 3-6) one adult for every fifteen children maximum (1:12 ideal)

If these guidelines cannot be met, the class will be cancelled for the day and an announcement will be made in the service that the children in that class will need to stay with their parents.

A hall monitor will be present each week to:

- Monitor the front door while children are transitioning from the auditorium to their classrooms
- Secure the baby gate at the entrance to children's ministry wing (see ii. Child Security & Visibility)
- Monitor the hallway outside the classrooms for the duration of the nursery and Sunday school period to assist with problems (get a parent if necessary, help ensure there are always enough adults present in the classrooms etc.)

## ii. Child Security & Visibility

A baby gate must be secured across entryways at all times in younger classes (nursery-kindergarten). A baby gate is also positioned at the entrance to the children's ministry wing hallway. Hall monitors should walk through the hall periodically during the Sunday school hour and look in the windows on the doors to insure all looks appropriate and assure accountability for teachers.

Private communication (text, email, conversations etc.) between staff/volunteers and children/youth is not permitted apart from parental supervision.

## iii. Discipline

**Nursery:** No corporal punishment will be administered. If there is a behaviour problem, a child's parent will be notified.

**Sunday school:** No corporal punishment will be administered. If a behaviour problem occurs, the teacher may try talking with the child or redirecting the child to a more appropriate activity. Yelling or shouting by staff or volunteers is not permitted at any time, neither is talking negatively to or about the child. If the behaviour continues, the teacher may set the child in a time out chair within the classroom (visible in all parts of the room) to calm down. If this is not effective, the parent will be called and may stay in class with the child to make sure all future behaviour is appropriate or may take the child with them back into the service. Once a child has left the class for this reason he or she may not return on the same Sunday.

## iv. Physical Expectations

High-fives or a quick hug from the side (arm around the shoulders) are appropriate. Children not yet of school age are permitted to sit in staff or volunteer's laps.

The following are not allowed:

- Piggyback rides
- Children on shoulders
- Rough-housing
- Excessive tickling
- Touch anywhere that is normally covered by a swimsuit or in a way that would hurt or cause harm to a child (slap, hit, shaken, etc.)
- Lap-sitting (see above for exception)
- No rubbing or massaging
- Physical discipline. Call for help if a child is out of control and needs to be physically restrained. A parent should be called immediately.

## v. Food & Drink

**Nursery:**

- A basic snack of Arrowroot cookies will be provided and available for snacks each week. The attendance sheet will note which children are allowed or not to have this snack.
- Parents may provide a snack that their child can eat themselves or a premixed bottle that will be given to their child as needed.
- Always be sure to ask visitors if their children have any allergies or restrictions. Teachers need to pay careful attention to the allergies and food restrictions of the children in the nursery (listed in the attendance sheet).
- Children should always be contained to eat, either in a chair at the table or on a volunteer's lap.
- Our children's department is a peanut free zone, so no snacks with peanuts or peanut butter in any amount are allowed. This applies to parents and volunteers.

**Toddler & Kindergarten classes:**

- A basic snack of Zookies animal crackers will be provided and available for snacks each week. The attendance sheet will note if any of the children are not allowed to have this for snack.
- Always be sure to ask visitors if their children have any allergies or restrictions. Teachers need to pay careful attention to the allergies and food restrictions of their students (listed in the attendance sheet).
- If any teacher brings in a special snack, they must check with all parents at drop off to make sure it is okay before serving it. (In the older classes, they must verbally ask each child about any allergies and look at the attendance sheet for allergy information before serving the snack.)
- Our children's department is a peanut free zone, so no snacks with peanuts or peanut butter in any amount are allowed. This applies to parents and teachers.

No medication may be given to children by anyone other than their parents.

**vi. Clean Up**

**Nursery:** It is the volunteers' responsibility to make sure they maintain a clean and orderly classroom during each service. If one notices a toy being mouthed or drooled on, the worker should wipe it off with the provided wipes before returning to the bin. After the service, volunteers are responsible to:

- a. Return all toys and nursery supplies to the bins
- b. Roll up the mats
- c. Take down the Pack'n Play
- d. Pile all of GFCC's supplies together to be ready for the volunteers who will return them to storage

The coordinator on duty will come after the service to put the room back into it's original arrangement.

**Sunday school:** At the end of Sunday school, it is the teacher's responsibility to make sure all supplies and toys are replaced in the labeled bins ready to be carried back to the storage room. It is also their responsibility to make sure the room is left in the arrangement and condition it was found in.

## Protective Rules & Safety Guidelines

## i. Sickness & Prevention

For the safety of everyone, the children's ministry is for healthy children only. No child should be left who appears to be ill. If a child is found to be ill while in our care, the parents will be notified immediately. We ask that a parent keep their child out of the children's ministry if they have any of the following symptoms and/or illnesses:

- Discharge from nose, ears or eyes
- Fever within the last 24 hours
- Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing or other signs of possible severe illness
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated, and until the child has been free of fever for 24 hours
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a noncommunicable condition
- Mouth sores associated with an inability of the child to control his saliva
- Chicken pox, until the sixth day after the onset of rash or sooner only if all lesions have dried and crusted
- Pink eye with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep and eye pain or redness of the eyelids or skin surrounding the eye, until 36 hours after treatment has been initiated
- A diagnosis of a communicable disease including, but not limited to
  - Mumps, until nine days after onset of parotid gland swelling
  - Scabies, until after treatment has been completed
  - Head lice
  - Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD) – If any family member has this illness, we will not take children or siblings into our ministry. This disease has up to a 6-day incubation period, and some can carry the disease and not display any symptoms.
- Any open skin sore until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- If a child is being treated with antibiotics, he/she should be on the medication for 24 hours prior to joining children's ministry.

Parents, please let the Sunday school teacher nursery know if a child has a continually clear runny nose or rash due to non-contagious allergies.

In the case of contacting bodily fluids, volunteers must disinfect their hands with the antibacterial gel or wipes provided. Gloves are available in the supply tub for volunteers to use if they prefer the extra protection. Each room should be supplied with facial tissues, gloves and antibacterial gel. If a volunteer notices the room is out of any of these items, please let the coordinator on duty know.

The children's wing is equipped with a first aid kit containing band-aids, disinfectant and gloves. This is stored at the end of the hallway near the stairs and can be accessed by asking the hall monitor to bring it to the classroom.

### **When to Contact Parents**

- Behaviour issues: If a time out is not working effectively or a child's behaviour is putting others at risk, the parents will be contacted to come intervene.

- Inconsolable crying: Make every effort to engage an unhappy child through activities and attention. If a child is inconsolable (defined as 10 minutes of non-stop crying) his/her parent should be contacted.
- In case of sudden illness, accident, or injury:
  - Isolate the child as best you can
  - Contact a medical professional on premises (see Onsite Medical Personnel document)
  - Contact the parents
  - Complete an incident report form

## ii. Check-in & Checkout Process

**Nursery & Kindergarten:** Children must be taken to classes by a parent and signed in by the teacher. Matching numbered tags are used. (See below *Arrival*).

**All Ages:** For classes that meet in outbuildings, a volunteer will gather the children at the front door of the main worship center and escort them to their classes.

At the first visit or at the beginning of each school year, the parent must fill out a registration form for each child listing important information:

- Full name
- Birth date and age
- Parent(s) name(s)
- Cell number(s) to reach parents in emergency
- Parental ID (driver's licence number) for the purpose of back up ID
- Any allergies or health concerns
- Indicate whether or not the child is permitted to have Arrowroot cookies (nursery); or Zookies Animal Crackers (toddlers-kindergarten) as a snack
- For children ages six and up, indicate if their child may be dismissed independently when class is over.

A file of registrations is located in each classroom and important information is listed on the attendance sheets (serious allergies, custody concerns, etc.). Then, each subsequent week, a simple drop off/pick up can safely occur.

### *Arrival:*

**Nursery:** Tags are kept in the nursery. Parents arrive at the nursery with their child and receive three matching numbered tags. One is placed on the child, one is given to the parent and one is affixed to the bag. The number is then written next to the child's name on the attendance record sheet along with any special instructions.

**Sunday school:** Tags are kept on a bulletin board in the foyer. At some point between arriving and dropping their child off, a parent needs to take two matching tags and affix one to their child and one to themselves. When they arrive at the classroom, the teacher, or volunteer, checks off the child's arrival and verifies they have a tag by marking their number on the attendance sheet. There will be extra tags in the classroom for visitors. A numbered tag is affixed to the child and a matching one given to the parent. (These are not for regular attenders who simply forget to get a tag upstairs).

### *Dismissal:*

When the child is picked up, a parent or responsible person over 13 must present the tag. Staff or volunteers may only release the child to someone with the tag. Parents are responsible to make sure the person whom they want to retrieve their child has the tag. In the absence of the tag, a volunteer may release the child only to the parent listed on their registration form who shows the necessary back up ID. Note: We will not release children to siblings unless they are at least 13 years of age even if they have the tag.

Children ages six through eleven (grades one through six) will be dismissed independently. If a parent does not want their child to be dismissed independently, they will be able to indicate this on the registration form provided and a note should be made on the attendance sheet so all future teachers will know to keep that child until picked up.

### iii. Restroom Procedure

**Nursery:** Children in the nursery will not be taken to the washroom by the nursery volunteers. Parents should allow their child (if potty training) to wear a pull-up and must come take the child themselves if they need to try to go on the toilet.

Check ALL diapers ten minutes before the end of each service and change if wet or dirty. If a diaper becomes soiled earlier, then you may change when needed to keep the child comfortable. Only women may change diapers, and there must be two people present. Diapers must be changed on the changing table, and the changing table must be sanitized with the appropriate sanitary wipes. Never move away from the changing table without taking the child with you. Wet diapers are to be placed in the trash. Soiled diapers should be put in a plastic bag and knotted before being placed in the trash. Following every diaper change the volunteer must clean her hands with antibacterial gel. Gloves will be available for workers to use as extra precaution if they choose.

**Sunday school:** Parents should take young children to the washroom before class. If a child in the toddler or kindergarten class needs to use the washroom during class time, a female volunteer may take not less than two children at a time to the women's washroom. She is to notify the hall monitor and leave the classroom door open, so the monitor can go join the class that is left with only one teacher (standing in the doorway, if possible, to also watch the hall/washrooms). The main door to the washroom is to remain open while the children use the facilities, wash their hands and then all together return to the classroom.

If child (age 6 and up) needs to use the washroom, they may be dismissed to do so themselves in the washroom appropriate to their sex. The classroom door is to remain open, with one of the teachers standing in the hallway, until the child returns. For the class in the separate building one of the teachers must stand watch at the door to the hallway until the child returns.

### iv. Emergency Response Plan & Evacuation Procedures

**Evacuation:** If there is an emergency that requires evacuating the building (fire, earthquake etc.), all children will be escorted by staff or volunteers to the playground and will be line up along the fence. A staff member or volunteer should call 911 and must notify a leadership member on premises. Volunteers should take their attendance sheets, so children can be dismissed as per the proper procedures.

In the case of an emergency, parents are to keep away from the children's floors. This is because they risk creating chaos and blocking the exit path of the children. Instead, parents will meet their children in the playground and retrieve their children as per the normal procedures. The normal checkout procedures will still be followed in an effort to protect the children.

This evacuation information is visibly located in all locations where children's ministry takes place with a map showing the exits and meeting place (playground). Volunteers and parents should familiarize themselves with this information.

**Live Threat (shooting or some other type of security hazard):** If it is safe to do so, staff and volunteers should evacuate the children as per the evacuation procedures above. A staff member or volunteer must call 911 and give the location and nature of the threat. They must also notify a leadership member on premises. If running or evacuation is not a safe option, hide in as safe a place as possible. Close and secure the door, barricading the doors with heavy furniture. Close and lock windows and close blinds. Turn off the lights. Silence all electronic devices. Maintain silence. Have children lie or sit on the floor away from the door. If possible, stay out of sight of any interior windows. If neither running or hiding is a safe option, as a last resort, when confronted by a shooter or some other danger, adults in immediate danger should consider trying to disrupt or incapacitate the shooter by using aggressive force and items in their environment, such as a fire extinguisher or chairs. Under no circumstances will a child be allowed to confront the potential danger. After the area has been made safe and secure by police, the Children's Ministry or Nursery Coordinator, the pastor, or staff will communicate an "all clear" sign to anyone who is in lock-down mode.

**Missing Child or Kidnapping:** In the case of a missing child, staff or volunteers will first do a thorough check of the children's ministry areas to make sure the child is not in another part of the building. If the child is not found after a thorough check of the children's ministry areas, then notify nearby staff, volunteers and leadership members to block off exits and search in adjacent areas. If the child is not found, a staff member will call the police to secure further help. In the case of a kidnapping, a staff member, volunteer or a leadership member should call 911 to secure help from the police.

## v. Off-site or Out-of-Town Event Guidelines

Parents must fill out a registration form for each child attending an event.

All applicable sections of the CPP are in effect during off-site or out-of-town events. Addendum to iv. Physical Expectations: hand-holding is not permitted for children or youth above the age of 6.

Alcohol and drug use is strictly prohibited. If a parent must send medication with their child, they must list it on the provided form, and the medication must stay in the possession of a staff member or volunteer for the duration of the event.

A minimum of two staff members/volunteers must be present during events. The only time a staff member or volunteer may be alone with a child is if the staff member or volunteer is a parent of the child. There must be one adult for every fifteen children at a maximum (1:12 ideal). A child/youth may never be alone. Two children/youth of the opposite sex are not allowed to be alone.

Dating relationships between staff members/volunteers and youth are not permitted. If there is a dating relationship between youth, no public displays of affection are allowed. Church events are a group time of encouragement.

Bullying is strictly prohibited. This is enforced by staff members/volunteers. If a child is being bullied, they must let a staff member or volunteer know.

Children are allowed to leave the event (go to the corner store etc.) only if the minimum number of staff members/volunteers accompany them and the location is approved by the event coordinator.

The buddy-system is used for using the restroom. At least two children of the same sex need to go to restroom together. For children under 12, a staff member or volunteer of the same sex must accompany the children.

For sleeping arrangements, there must always be three people in the room of the same sex: two staff members/volunteers and one child, or one staff member or volunteer and two children. Exception: if the staff member or volunteer is a parent of one of the children, they may be alone with their child.

## vi. Transportation Guidelines

Only staff and volunteers (with a legal driver's license) are allowed to drive children to and from locations, unless a private arrangement has been made by a parent for their child to receive transportation elsewhere. There must always be three people in the car: two staff members/volunteers and one child, or one staff member or volunteer and two children. At least one of the staff members/volunteers must be a woman, unless all the children are boys, or the staff member/volunteer is a parent of one of the children and their child is the first/last child to be picked up/dropped off.

Drivers must submit their driving record to the applicable ministry coordinator every five years.

Seat-belts must be worn by all parties in the vehicle. No double-buckling is allowed. Legal requirements for car-seats and airbag safety for BC must be followed:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/driving-and-cycling/road-safety-rules-and-consequences/seat-belts-car-seats-booster-seats#childseat>.

## Reporting & Response Plan for Child Neglect & Abuse & Duty-to-Warn Policy

The Ministry of Children and Family Development oversees child protection and welfare in BC:

If a child is in immediate danger, call police (call 9-1-1 or your local police) to intervene and a child protection social worker should be contacted to determine whether the child is in need of protection. ... If you think a child or youth (under 19 years of age) is being abused or neglected, call 1-800-663-9122 at any time of the day or night. ... or 604-660-4927 (Lower Mainland & outside BC). The Child, [Family and Community Service Act \(CFCSA\)](#) requires that anyone who has reason to believe that a child or youth has been or is likely to be abused or neglected, and that the parent is unwilling or unable to protect the child or youth, must report the suspected abuse or neglect to a child welfare worker. Learn more in the [Child Abuse Prevention Handbook \(PDF\)](#)..."<sup>1</sup>

Reference the [Child Abuse Prevention Handbook \(PDF\) for definitions of child abuse and neglect and reporting procedures](#).

### i. Point of Contact for Reporting

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/protecting-children/reporting-child-abuse>

All leadership members and coordinators stand ready to address any allegations of neglect and abuse in accordance with the laws of British Columbia. The church has a moral and ethical obligation to report any neglect and abuse. Anyone who suspects, witnesses, or has any reason to believe that a child has been or is likely to be neglected and/or harmed or threatened with abuse in any form must contact a leadership member or coordinator within 24 hours to report the situation. This reporting includes questionable behavior (overly flirtatious behavior or other intimate acts, etc.) and/or possible offenses (volunteers observing actual abuse or possible evidence of abuse, like abrasions, lacerations, etc.). Any person who serves as the initial point of contact is required to report all allegations and/or eye-witness accounts to the leadership and applicable coordinators.

If reporting to a child welfare worker or the police is deemed warranted by the leadership of GFCC, then this person who suspects or witnessed abuse must report. At all times, this person will be required to fulfill their obligations to the law. Failure to report is illegal. A Child Abuse Reporting Form (see Appendix B) must be filled out.

## ii. Response to Neglect, Abuse & Child Pornography

GFCC will ensure that an appropriate response is always given to any suspicion or witnessing of neglect or abuse. We desire open communication and trust between the people of GFCC. Every allegation of neglect or abuse will be taken seriously. The alleged perpetrator or criminal offender will be immediately removed from any activity or program involving children until the leadership deals with the situation. The leadership will take into consideration church discipline as per GFCC's Constitution & Bylaws. The church will not tolerate any retaliation against a reporter who has voiced a reasonable suspicion of neglect or abuse. The victim(s) and victim's family will be cared for by the church in whatever way possible. Situations will be handled forthrightly with due respect for all parties' privacy and confidentiality.

If any member or person involved in the Children's Ministry of GFCC is suspected of or admits viewing, producing or distributing child pornography, the same guidelines for reporting and responding to abuse will be followed.

## Sexual Offenders in the Church

If anyone at GFCC learns in advance that an alleged or convicted sexual offender wants to attend a GFCC service or any related activity (with the possibility of children being present), leadership, along with the applicable coordinators, must decide whether to admit him or her to church services or GFCC related activities. Admission of the offender will be based on factors such as extent of prior convictions, and his or her willingness to follow guidelines set out by this policy. This is not a comprehensive list of admission criteria. A leadership member, coordinator, or a designated member of GFCC will contact the offender letting him or her know that he or she must be accompanied at all times while on GFCC's property or anywhere in GFCC buildings. The following will be enacted:

- The pastor overseeing children's ministry, children's ministry staff and volunteers, children's ministry deacons, coordinators on that day, and hall monitors should be notified.
- Leadership, along with the applicable coordinators, will designate GFCC members or staff, who will accompany the alleged perpetrator or criminal offender at all times while he or she is on GFCC's property or anywhere in GFCC's buildings. They will also work with members to come up with guidelines for GFCC related activities that are not on church property, but elsewhere.
- He or she will not be allowed in the children's ministry wing downstairs, or in the classrooms that meet in the gym. (Use of the restroom must be in the gym).

If he/she chooses to attend regularly:

- The elders will be notified.
- The congregation will be notified in a public service of the church, most likely the members' meeting.
- The sexual offender should provide a member of leadership, along with the applicable coordinators, with the name of his or her probation officer. A leadership member or the applicable coordinator, will contact the probation officer and find out 1) more about the underlying offense (offenders tend to minimize their offenses), and 2) the specific terms of the probation in order to make sure the offender stays in compliance while at the church.

## Contacts & Resources

**Church Office Phone:** 604-426-1044

**Pastor Jeremy Cagle:** [jeremy@gracefellowshipchilliwack.com](mailto:jeremy@gracefellowshipchilliwack.com); 604-426-1044 ext. 202

**Children's Ministry Coordinator Krista Laser:** [kevinandkrista@telus.net](mailto:kevinandkrista@telus.net)

**Nursery Coordinator Marlies Stoutjesdyk:** [wmstoutjesdyk@gmail.com](mailto:wmstoutjesdyk@gmail.com)

**Administrative Assistant Jordan Henderson:** [admin@gracefellowshipchilliwack.com](mailto:admin@gracefellowshipchilliwack.com); 604-426-1044, ext. 201

### **Ministry of Children and Family Development:**

- Abuse or neglect: 1-800-663-9122 or 660-4927 (Provincial Centralized Screening)
- Helpline for Children: 310-1234 (local anywhere in BC)
- Chilliwack office: (604) 702-2311, 8978 School St., Chilliwack, BC V2P 4L4

### **Child Abuse Prevention Handbook General Public Booklet:**

[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/public-safety/protecting-children/childabusepreventionhandbook\\_generalpublicbooklet.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/public-safety/protecting-children/childabusepreventionhandbook_generalpublicbooklet.pdf)

## APPENDIX A

### Application for Ministry to Children at Grace Fellowship Church Chilliwack

#### **Confidentiality – Please Read Carefully!**

This document is designed to collect information about you that we need to qualify you for service in children's ministry at GFCC. Some of this information is personal, and we are committed to protecting your confidentiality. As such, this document may be read only by the person who provided us with this information (you), the leadership, Children's Ministry and/or Nursery Coordinator, or other individuals specifically authorized by leadership to make decisions concerning who should serve in childcare at the church.

If at any time you determine that the information you provided in this document is not true, or if it changes in a way that substantively impacts your ability to serve in childcare, you are requested to notify one of the leadership members or the Children's Ministry or Nursery Coordinator as soon as possible.

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#### **Requirements**

According to the Training & Screening Procedures of GFCC's Child Protection Policy (CPP), the following are required of all staff and volunteers. If you have questions about any of the following, or if any of the following do not apply to you, please contact one of the children's ministry coordinators or the pastor, and they will be happy to speak with you. Staff and volunteers must:

- Have a sincere relationship with Jesus Christ as evidenced by humility, a love for God's Word and prayer
- Be members in good standing for at least 6 months, or faithful attenders for over 1 year with a written recommendation from a member of leadership (who knows and supports their reasons for not being a member)
- Regularly attend worship services and minister to the needs of the body
- Be 13 or older
- Complete an Application for Children's Ministry (see Appendix)
- Consent to a social media check
- Consent to a Canadian criminal record check\*, updated every 5 years (fingerprinting may be required depending on your CRC results)
- Provide a driving record, updated every 5 years (if transporting children)
- Partake in training classes\*\*
- Read, endorse and uphold GFCC's CPP
- Be approved by ministry coordinator(s) to serve in this capacity

\*In the event that a criminal conviction or other disclosure is revealed on the CRC, a leadership member and/or the applicable coordinator will meet with the individual to discuss their past actions and will then make an official determination whether the person may serve with the children or not.

\*\*The leadership of GFCC offers training classes for attendees and members to learn more about the CPP and child abuse.

I \_\_\_\_\_ meet and agree to the above requirements

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I consent to receive information regarding children's ministry via email

Is there a particular area of childcare that you prefer serving in (e.g. nursery, Sunday school, youth ministry)? List all applicable \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any concerns or circumstances from your past that would impact your ability to work with children that you would like to discuss with leadership? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your interest in serving the children of Grace Fellowship Church Chilliwack. By submitting this form, you consent for Grace Fellowship Church Chilliwack and its affiliates to contact you. Once your application has been approved, the children's ministry coordinators will work with you to find a spot on our children's ministry team that will be a good fit for you based on our needs and your interests and experience.

**Please give your completed application in a sealed envelope to one of the children's ministry coordinators or mail it to the church office.**

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: Please insert dates for the following: Social media check performed: _____ Completed a CRC (and fingerprinting, if applicable): _____ Received training: _____
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## APPENDIX B

### Child Abuse Reporting Form

Instructions: If a staff member, volunteer, or leadership member hears about or observe signs or symptoms of abuse, please: (1) Talk immediately with a leadership member or the applicable coordinator; and (2) document any relevant information on this form.

This report should include signs or symptoms observed, notations about bruises or injuries that are visible, a record of what the child said, and a description of any emotions expressed by the child. Do not go back and interview the child. Fill this form out based on whatever information has already been obtained.

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Reporter: \_\_\_\_\_

Notified (name[s]): \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Child Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender (please check):  Male  Female

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Alleged Perpetrator/Offender Information\***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender (please circle): Male Female

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship between the victim and the alleged perpetrator/offender: \_\_\_\_\_

\*For multiple perpetrator/offenders: add their information in the blank area at the bottom of the form.

#### **Observations:**

Frequency, date(s) and location(s) of alleged or substantiated abuse:

Bruises or injuries that are visible:

Emotions expressed by the child:

Record of the conversation with the child:

Any other relevant information including evidence that supports the allegations (eyewitness, medical exams, confessions, etc.):