

# Child Protection Policy

## Randolph Street Baptist Church

The purpose of this policy is to implement a prevention strategy which is designated to safeguard children/youth while under the care of Randolph Street Baptist Church. This policy applies to any ministry to children under the age of eighteen.

This policy will address the following three areas:

- I. Worker selection
- II. Worker supervision
- III. Response to allegations

### I. Worker Selection

The following procedures will be used when selecting new children/youth workers:

- A. Application and screening form. In order to qualify as an Adult (Two-Adult Rule), each person interested in ministering to children must be at least eighteen years old and must complete an application which will gather information including:
  1. applicant's name, address and social security number
  2. full explanation of any prior criminal convictions for sexual abuse, molestation, or related crimes
  3. ministry area in which the applicant is interested
- B. Authorization to conduct a criminal records check. By applying for consideration as children/youth worker, the applicant authorizes Randolph Street Baptist Church to conduct a criminal records check through Protect My Ministry background checks. Ongoing background checks on approved volunteers will be renewed every 2-5 years.
- C. Church membership requirement. An applicant must be a member of the church and have attended the church regularly for a minimum of six months prior to being considered for a children/youth ministry position. The only exception to this requirement would be paid nursery workers from outside the church. In the event it becomes necessary to use paid nursery workers from outside the church, proper attention will be given to their backgrounds to insure they meet all aspects of the church's child protection policy.
- D. Disqualification. Any applicant who has a criminal conviction for sexual abuse or has pleaded guilty to sexual or child abuse is disqualified for service.
- E. Agreement to follow policies. Before an applicant can begin ministry, he/she must attend training, provided by the church, regarding the child protection policy and sign a statement indicating they will follow all components of the policy. If they fail to follow this requirement, they will not be eligible to serve as a children/youth worker.
- F. Child Safety Training. Satisfactory completion of online child safety training through Protect My Ministry will be required for new volunteers. Current volunteers will be grandfathered in until the next background check is renewed.
- G. Non-Adult workers: In a case where a person, under 18, desires to serve in the children/youth ministry, they will not be considered an Adult in the Two-Adult Rule and will be subject to approval by the Administrative Pastor and Nursery Directory on a case by case basis.

## II. Worker Supervision

The following procedures will be followed by those working with children/youth in the church:

- A. Two-adult rule. Two adult supervisors are required to be present during any church activity for children/youth. Adult workers should not be one-on-one with a child. If this situation is unavoidable, permission from parents must be received prior to the event.
- B. Persons authorized to be in nursery. The ONLY persons authorized to be in the nursery are the assigned adult workers or others, who previously have been approved to work with children/youth and who are carrying out official business on behalf of the church. (Note: Only as necessary, parents or parent authorized caregivers, may be in the nursery for the purpose of providing attention to their own child. In this situation, they are not authorized to care for other children).
- C. Reveal suspicious behavior immediately. Any inappropriate conduct or relationships between an adult volunteer and a child/youth will be reported immediately to the elders and nursery coordinator.
- D. Providing adequate personnel. Church sponsored programs that involve children/youth should always include adequate supervisory personnel. Supervision must be maintained before and after the event until all children are in the custody of their parents, legal guardians or parent authorized caregivers.
- E. Nursery identification procedure. A procedure will be established so the child and the child's parent, legal guardian or parent authorized caregivers are clearly identified. Children should only be released to a properly identified parent, legal guardian or parent authorized caregiver.

## III. Response to allegations

If a children/youth worker has reasonable cause to suspect a child has suffered sexual abuse, or if a parent or legal guardian accuses a children/youth worker of sexual abuse:

- A. The elders will be notified immediately.
  - B. The appropriate law enforcement agencies will be notified.
  - C. If the alleged offender is in a ministry position in the church, he/she will be removed from that position pending the outcome of any investigation.
- During the course of any investigation, the elders will serve as the liaison between all parties involved, including the congregation and the media. During this time, the church will provide pastoral care to both the victim and the accused.
  - If the investigation results in the conviction of a children/youth worker, a thorough review will be conducted in order to determine how the abuse occurred and if this policy needs to be amended to prevent future instances of abuse.