

Mount Zion Baptist Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Child Protection Procedure Manual for **Preschool, Children, and Students**

(Church Photo)

Date Approved:

Child Protection Procedure Manual for

Preschool, Children, and Students

Purpose: It is the purpose and intent of this manual to provide a safe, secure environment to teach and care for all minors on campus during church sponsored activities and events, or during off campus trips.

Goal: It is the goal and intent of this manual to provide a safe, well protected environment for the well being of all minors attending church activities. To fulfill the goal, this manual communicates a set of instructions for accomplishing the provisions of the Child Protection Policy Manual. In addition to policy adherence, listed also in this particular manual are procedures that are deemed important to communicate to the church family. Understanding that special situations arise that require decisions for one minor that may not be the appropriate decision for another, it will be the responsibility of the Preschool/Children's Minister or Student Minister to discern and make adjusted decisions to the procedures included in this manual. The overall goal is to lower the risk of unhealthy and abusive behavior by anyone working with minors. Also included is the will to protect employees and volunteers from false and unfounded accusations.

Definition of Terms:

Policy – a high level overall plan embracing a set of rules and beliefs to be followed; “What we believe”.

Procedure – a set of instructions/steps for accomplishing an established standard; “How we fulfill what we believe, with the Minister in charge using discernment in each individual situation”.

Minor - A minor is any individual under the age of 18 years.

Preschool – birth through kindergarten.

Children – 1st through 6th grade.

Kids – a generic term used to identify a number of preschoolers or children.

Students – 7th grade up to, but not including 18 year olds.

Volunteers, Workers, Teachers, Leaders – generic terms used to describe people working with minors.

General Guidelines for Those Working With Minors

To be a leader in any form working with minors, the following is required:

- An applicant must meet all requirements in the Child Protection Policy.
- An applicant will receive instructions and training from a person(s) designated by the Preschool/Children's Minister.

- Any verbal or non-verbal sexual behavior with a minor is inappropriate.
- Dating any minor is inappropriate.
- Discretion should be used in physical contact with minors. Innocent gestures can be misinterpreted
- Sexual gestures made by a minor to a volunteer should be reported immediately to the age appropriate minister.
- Any adult meeting on campus with a minor will do so in a public setting or where they are clearly visible by others. A staff member must be informed of the time and location prior to the meeting.

Illness Procedure

If your child has a fever, parents are asked to keep their child at home for at least 24 hours from the time fever breaks. The 24 hour rule applies to any illness that could be considered contagious or passed on to others.

Mt. Zion staff or volunteers are not allowed to give medication of any form to children. Topical care is allowed with minor injuries. In special situations such as long-term medical conditions requiring regular doses of medication, the Preschool/Children's Minister can determine if church leadership will participate in giving medication.

Preschool and Children

Parent/Teacher Responsibilities

Preschool Drop Off:

- Teachers are to be in the classroom 15 minutes before class begins.
- Each preschool child birth through two years old is signed in, receives a security retrieval sheet, and also receives a pager at the registration desk.
- Preschoolers may be dropped off in the classroom fifteen minutes prior to scheduled class time; however, no teacher is required or should feel compelled to receive kids before 15 minutes prior to class time.
- Teachers in classrooms can only receive preschoolers from the following:
 - Birth – Two year olds must be brought to class by an adult.
 - Three year olds – Kindergarten must be brought to class by a person at least 16 year old.
- Those dropping off preschoolers are to release kids to teachers at the classroom door, not entering the classroom.
- Teachers keep the top half of the security retrieval sheet which includes thorough information on the preschooler. The nametag sticker with a name and retrieval number is placed on the child's back for classroom identification. The bottom half of the security retrieval sheet includes only the child's name and retrieval number, and goes with the person dropping off the child.

Preschool Pick-Up:

- A preschool child is released from the classroom by the teacher only:

1. when the matching retrieval sheet is presented to the teacher, and
2. the person picking up the child is listed on the top half of the security sheet that was left in the teacher's possession, and
3. whenever a pick-up situation is questionable, the person picking up the child must be able to give the teacher detailed information listed on the top half of the security sheet in the teacher's possession.

Classroom Safety Restrictions

- A person must be a member or regular attendee of Mount Zion Baptist Church for at least 6 months.
- To best prevent harm or injury, classrooms and other space used by kids are regularly checked to ensure that the set up and furnishings are age appropriate. To best ensure this preventive measure, it is requested that personal toys or like items not be brought to the church facility.
- The youngest age a helper can be in a preschool classroom helping an adult worker for:
 - Birth through two year olds is 18 years old unless special permission is given by the Preschool/Children's Minister or an assigned representative of that position.
 - Three year olds through kindergarten is 16 years old unless special permission is given by the Preschool/Children's Minister or an assigned representative of that position.
- All non-classrooms used during church activities will be either locked, or the doors will be left open (example: resource rooms).

Preschool Restroom Procedures

- Preschool kids are taken to the restroom only upon their request. A teacher, worker, etc, will do a quick walk through to see the nature of who and how many persons are in the restroom. They will assess the situation to see if it is safe for a preschooler to enter.
- The restroom entrance will be kept open as long as a preschool child is inside, and the adult leader will stay at the door holding it open until the child comes out.
- If a child needs help with clothing etc., the leader will call them to the door to give the assistance needed. If the assistance requires anything that would bring embarrassment to the child, the leader will call an appropriate assistant to help, and the two will go together to a restroom stall to help the child.

Children and Students

- Children and Students will go to and leave from their classes at the discretion of their parents or guardians. If a parent requests that a teacher hold a child until they arrive to pick them up in a timely manner, then the child will stay in the classroom until that time.
- One Adult teacher is required in each classroom, with the ideal of having two.
- Teachers are to be in place in classrooms 15 minutes prior to class beginning. They should not feel compelled to receive kids until class time so as to have time to set up their room appropriately.