

Pine Ridge Bible Church Children's Ministry Policy

Purpose:

Pine Ridge seeks to make disciples of children. Therefore, our purpose for establishing this Child Protection Policy and accompanying procedures is to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and youth.

Statement of Covenant:

We pledge to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and youth as well as all of the workers with children and youth. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of workers; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events; we will educate all of our workers with children and youth regarding the use of all appropriate policies and methods and we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of state law; and we will be prepared to respond to media inquiries if an incident occurs.

1. A child is any person 17 years of age and under.
2. Any person 17 years of age and younger must be accompanied by an adult to volunteer with children or youth.
3. No adult will minister to children without another adult in the general vicinity and never behind a closed door alone. (This includes bathroom visits, classes, etc.)
4. Examples of abuse or harassment:

*Examples of sexual abuse or harassment include, but are not limited to, threatening adverse actions if sexual favors are not granted; promising preferential treatment in return for sexual favors; physical contact; and / or sexually explicit remarks, including but not limited to the following kinds of prohibited behavior:

A) Verbal: Sexual advances or proposition or threats; sexual innuendoes; suggestive or insulting comments or sounds; sexual jokes or teasing of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; or any other abuse of a sexual nature.

B) Visual: Display of sexually suggestive or offensive material

C) Physical: Physical contact including offensive touching, pinching, brushing the body, sexual intercourse or other sexual acts; sexual assault or battery.

* The above list is not meant to be exhaustive, but is included to provide examples of prohibited action. Behavior that is acceptable and is not considered inappropriate include such normal daily interactions as personal counseling, touching which could not reasonably be perceived in a sexual way – such as touching someone on the elbow, showing concern, encouragement, a polite compliment, or friendly conversation.

5. All volunteers must have the participation covenant and authorization for criminal records check submitted before serving in children or youth ministries. All forms will be stored in a locked cabinet in the church office, accessible only necessary church leadership.
6. Transportation of children:
 - * Workers will not transport any child (other than their own) alone.
 - * Workers will not transport any child while accompanied by other children without the permission of the child's parent or guardian.
7. Field trips or group activities must include at least two adult chaperones.
8. Any staff member or volunteer who is accused of child abuse will be suspended immediately from contact with children until the matter is fully investigated.
9. Counseling should not be conducted in isolated areas of the building. Counseling should only be done in an easily accessible area, observable through a window or opened door, with other adults in the general vicinity. Adults should not counsel children unless there is another adult present.
10. Medication should not be dispensed to children without written directions given directly from the child's parent / guardian to a children's ministry volunteer.
11. Corporal punishment is not allowed for maintaining discipline. Workers may use force for self-protection or to protect others who are in clear danger.
12. It is expressly understood that all worker requirements and procedures apply to responsibilities carried out while on church property, as well as when involved in an off-site church-related activity.
13. Whenever an emergency arises, parents should be contacted. If time is of the essence or parents are not available and a situation warrants immediate action, 911 should be called immediately. Emergency personnel will then assume responsibility for determining the appropriate course of action.
14. Children are never to be left unattended by themselves in the building or even outside waiting for parents without adult supervision.
15. A "buddy system" should be used when sending children 4th grade or younger to the rest room or on an errand.
16. Children 4th grade and younger will be released at the conclusion of their program or class only to a relative {middle school or older} or another adult approved by the parent or guardian.

Conclusion:

In all of our ministries with children and youth, this congregation is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each child will be "...surrounded by steadfast love, ... established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal."

Participation Covenant Statement

As a children's ministry worker I state that...

1. I have never abused a child (sexually, physically, emotionally, or mentally).
2. I will report any child abuse or suspected child abuse to my ministry overseer. If the abuse and abuser is not dealt with as soon as possible I will continue to communicating up the chain of command even to the extent of reporting it to law enforcement.
3. If I am an adult survivor of child abuse, I acknowledge I need the love and support of the body of Christ. I will discuss my situation and abuse with the pastor overseeing children's ministries.
4. I agree to attend children's ministries training events provided by Pine Ridge.
5. I have read and familiarized myself with Pine Ridge's children's ministry policies.
6. I agree to abide by Pine Ridge's children's ministry policies.

_____/_____/20____
Signature of Applicant Print Full Name Date

Please return completed form to:

Pine Ridge Bible Church, c/o Church Office, 280 S. Ray Quincy Rd., Quincy, MI. 49082
For questions or to contact one of the pastors, call the church office at: 517-639-8118

