



CHILD/STUDENT/VOLUNTEER LEADER PROTECTION POLICY

FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH
LAGRANGE, GA

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Our Vision

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinance, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expense of the church, and the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children/students; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintance; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful to our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, excessive anger; to abstain from the sale or use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian reconciliation and be mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

Our Mission

As a testimony to the community, Faith Baptist Church has set a standard of performance and requirements for those who choose to participate in children/student ministries of the church. These individuals must be an active member of Faith Baptist Church during their work in children's/student ministry. They must agree with the church covenant and statement of faith. They must also agree to live by Christian standards as set forth in the Bible.

The children and student ministries of Faith Baptist Church exist to glorify God by:

- Maintaining a safe and secure environment for our children/students.
- Supporting and encouraging parents who are primarily responsible for teaching biblical truths to their children/students (Ephesians 6:4)
- Making the whole counsel of Scripture known to children/students with special emphasis on the Gospel (Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Romans 1:16-17)
- Praying for the children/students and relying on the Holy Spirit to regenerate their hearts through the faithful teaching of His Word (Romans 10:17; Ephesians 2:4-10)

- Living faithfully before the children/students and modeling for them how Christians are called to respond to God, interact with each other, and with the world around us (Matthew 5:16;1 Corinthians 11:1)
- Encouraging children/students to learn to serve and to not just be served (Mark 10:43-45).
- Maintaining the highest ethical standards such that volunteers and teachers always live and serve above reproach, protecting the reputation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Preparing children/students to one day walk with God as adults, which means getting them ready to be a part of the public services and Lord willing, one day, a fully participating adult member.

Staff and Volunteer Expectations

All children/student ministry staff and volunteers share a particular responsibility for:

- Loving the children/students as Christ loves them
- Setting an example of proper Christian conduct in the way we live our lives
- Ministering to the children/students
- Understanding that the care of children/students is not a right, but a privilege; and this privilege embodies responsibilities to God for ministering to and caring for them

Child Protection

Our first concern is that children/students be safe while they are in our care. To this end we:

- Screen all children/student ministry volunteers
- Perform background checks on all full-time church staff, regardless of whether or not they have direct contact with children/students.
- Require training for all children/student ministry staff and volunteers
- Use parent authentication identification system for certain ministries
- Educate our staff and volunteers to recognize suspected child abuse and to require them to understand and follow any applicable reporting laws and to encourage them to report suspected abuse to church officials
- Adhere to a healthy child/student policy for admittance to children/student ministry
- Adhere to a two-volunteer room policy whenever possible.
- Equip our volunteers to know how to evacuate children safely in case of an emergency

Parameters for the Child/Student Protection Policy

This child/student protection policy applies to children/students (from birth to 12th grade) who are voluntarily placed by parents under the responsibility of the church for the church's public worship services or specific children/student ministry-related church-sponsored

activities (parenting and marriage seminars, bible studies held at the church with accompanying childcare, Vacation Bible School, Backyard Bible Club). Any form of abuse, harm, neglect or other problems related to children/students at home, school, or in any bible-study, activity, or venue not directly related to a children/student ministry at Faith Baptist Church is not covered by this policy.

Protecting the Children/Students Before They Arrive

Ensuring a safe environment begins long before Sunday or Wednesday services. Every applicant who wishes to serve in children/student ministry is required to go through a screening process and attend childcare training.

Screening Procedure

To ensure safe and quality care, Faith Baptist Church has established a screening procedure to approve all volunteers to work with our children/students:

- All volunteers must be members of Faith Baptist Church in good standing.
- All volunteers must be eighteen years of age or older.
- Junior leaders, 15 or older may assist with children's church, junior church, and AWANA and 16 or older may assist with nursery but they are always in addition to the adult volunteers.
- All volunteers must have completed Faith Baptist Church annual childcare training.
- All volunteers must have completed the volunteer application and been recommended by or in consultation with the pastor responsible for children/student ministry.
- At least one reference check must be satisfactorily completed prior to beginning of service. Criminal records checks and other appropriate screening checks will be completed.
- All completed records of screening procedures will be kept securely along with the original application.
- Volunteers are to be approved by the Ministry Director in consultation with the Pastor.
- All volunteers must repeat the screening procedures and criminal background checks at the discretion of the church.

Faith Baptist Church reserves the right to reject any applicant for volunteer service or dismiss an existing volunteer for any reason, including, but not limited to, refusing or failing to complete screening; failing to provide requested information; providing information that is subsequently determined as false or misleading; sin or suffering issues that compromise the applicant or volunteer's ability to care for children/students; any criminal report or charge; obtaining information from references or criminal record checks that suggest that the applicant is not suitable to help with children/students. Any volunteer, helper, deacon, staff or Pastor (or any Faith Baptist Church member) who learns of or has knowledge of misconduct by an

applicant must report that knowledge to the children/students ministry director/pastor. He or she also must be personally responsible for any legal obligation that he or she may have to disclose such information to the authorities.

Training

All children/student ministry staff and volunteers must attend Faith Baptist Church's childcare training before they are allowed to work with the children/students. Additional training sessions will be scheduled for existing volunteers to update them on policies and procedures. Full-time staff who does not have direct contact with children will receive training on child protection policies. Parents with questions about childcare training are welcome to attend these sessions.

Photography/Video of Children/Students

Any child/student photographed or on church video during ministry activities must have a completed consent form on file for that ministry.

Communications within Children/Students

Any child/student 6th-12th grade must have a communications consent form in order for leaders to communicate privately with that child/student. Any child/student between birth and 5th grade should never be contacted privately by a leader.

Protecting the Children/Students As They Arrive and Depart

Arrival and Departure Times

Volunteers should be ready to accept children/students 15 minutes prior to the start of any session, so that parents have enough time to transition their children/students before the session begins. Parents are encouraged to pick up their children/students immediately after the conclusion of the session. In the event that a child/student is not picked up within 15 minutes of the end of the session, volunteers will locate the parents.

Signing a Child in to Children's Ministry

Any parent who would like his/her child to participate in a children's ministry program will sign the child in to the appropriate classroom, nursery, or activity when he/she arrives, granting permission for the child to participate in the event or program. The parent should also

use this opportunity to note any allergies or special needs the child may have. Check-in and check-out of children applies to all children birth through 5th grade. Leaders and staff have the right to refuse any child at check-in. Some reasons might include potential illness, behavior that endangers other children or anything else that might impair our ability to maintain a safe and secure environment for the children. Some children/student ministries utilize the Kidz Check or Min Hub check in system. Policy for these ministries will be set by the ministry director.

6th-12th grade students are allowed to be dropped off at the church and should report to their ministry area. They will be released on their own and are expected to meet their parents at a designated location described by the ministry director.

Divorce, Separation or Custody Visitation

In a situation where the parents are divorced or separated, the volunteers should only release the child/student to the parent who brought this child/student to check-in. If the other parent or anyone else attempts to check-out the child/student, the volunteer or staff should immediately contact the pastor/director responsible for the ministry the child/student participates in. If a parent presents a court order for a child/student, the police must also be present and we are to release the child/student to police custody. In any of these circumstances, the volunteer or staff should immediately contact the ministry director and the ministry director will contact the Risk Management Team upon receiving notification of a potential problem.

Protecting the Children/Students While They Are In Our Care

Two Volunteer Rule

For all children/students classes and programs, at least two qualified volunteers must be present in each classroom at all times. Helpers are always in addition to and supervised by the two adults. Helpers are never to be left alone at any time with children/students without the presence of the two adult volunteers. Staff and volunteers must never leave a child alone in a classroom. Two male volunteers should not be alone with a single female child/student. A single staff member or volunteer may take children out of the nursery or classroom only for a compelling reason, such as to use the bathroom or in cases of illness, emergency, or evacuation.

Staff or volunteers should not have private one-on-one meetings with a child/student. When a meeting is necessary, it should be done with at least one other adult present, and held with the knowledge and consent of the staff and the parents.

Visibility

When children/student classes or programs are in session, the interior doors and windows should allow for unobstructed views from the outside of everyone inside the room.

Appearance

As leaders of the children/students of Faith Baptist Church our appearance is very important as we become the role models for our children/students and an example of Christ in our duties: The following procedures should be followed at all times when children/students may be present:

- No use of tobacco products in the presence of children/students.
- No suggestive clothing should be worn in the presence of children/students (Ministry Specific)
- No social media postings that suggest evil or sinful material
- No use of cell phones, computers, etc. while supervising children/students, unless it directly pertains to ministry work.
- No cursing, gossiping, negative talk, or personal conversations should be had around children/students.
- You are not to act as the child's "friend" in a child's friendship manner. You are his/her leader. You must always appropriately maintain your proper respect and authority status and act accordingly. This does not mean that you cannot act "friendly." But it does mean that you at all times act with the respect and dignity which is befitting to your position of ministry.

Diaper Changing and Rest Room Procedure

0 Months through 2 Years Old

Parents of children with dirty diapers are asked to change their children prior to signing them into the classroom. Volunteers will change diapers at least once or as need during service. Both men and women are allowed to change diapers. Diapers must be changed in the presence of at least one other volunteers.

2 Years Old through Pre-K

Parents should take their children to the restroom prior to signing them into a class. At check-in and drop-off, parents should let the volunteers know if their child is potty training. In the event that a child needs to use the rest room, a leader will escort the child to the restroom in the presence of a volunteer and wait outside the door. If the child needs assistance it will be done in the presence of another adult volunteer.

K to 5th Grade

For all other classes up to 5th grade, any child needing to use the rest room may go on their own at the discretion of the leader. Attention should be paid to the length of time that the child is in the restroom and the volunteer should ensure that they use the restroom and leave in a timely manner.

Appropriate Discipline

All children's/student ministry volunteers are responsible for providing a loving, respectful, and orderly atmosphere in which the child/student can learn, play, and interact with others. This atmosphere should be maintained by preparing beforehand, proactively directing children/students towards acceptable activities, verbally encouraging positive behavior, and, when necessary, correcting or redirecting inappropriate behavior. Acceptable means of redirecting inappropriate behavior may include correcting the child/student verbally, withholding a certain privilege or activity for a brief time, or separating a child/student from the situation or problem for a brief time (particularly if his behavior is endangering or upsetting other child/student). During correction, a child/student should never be removed from the classroom. Correction should be discrete; in the classroom (not in the hallway); and never outside of the sight of others.

Steps of correction might include (depending on the age of the child/student):

- (1) removing the child/student from the situation or problem;
- (2) pointing out the problematic behavior; talking to the child/student about his/her sin and need for Christ;
- (3) praying for the child/student and redirecting to a new activity;
- (4) helping the child/student to reconcile with the offended child/student when appropriate.

Volunteers should view misbehavior as an opportunity to introduce the child/student to the gospel.

Children/student's ministry volunteers and staff members are strictly prohibited from using any form of corporal punishment such as slapping, kicking, punching, spanking, or hitting. They should never speak harsh words, insults, belittling comments, threatening words, or any other verbal humiliation to a child/student. If a child/student's behavior is uncontrollable or the child/student does not respond to the acceptable means of discipline indicated above, volunteer or staff should turn the child/student over to the ministry director so that they can be taken to their parents. If the child/student assaults, harasses or bullies other children/students, misbehaves beyond minor correction, or has a pattern of misbehavior, the parents should be immediately called so the child/student can be removed.

Volunteers, staff or deacons are allowed to physically restrain a child/student if he/she is physically endangering other children/students or themselves. Please report any of these problems (as well as the appropriate response taken to deal with the behavior) to the ministry

director. Once a child/student is removed from the ministry, reinstatement is possible at the determination of the pastor and/or the ministry director. A child/student may be reinstated if the risk of re-offense has been adequately reduced. For further information regarding discipline, please speak with the ministry director/pastor.

Physical Touch Policy

Two types of relationships are important to consider: volunteer-to-child/student and child/teen-to-child.

Volunteer-to-Child/Student

While appropriate physical contact with children/students can be an effective means of aiding in communication, redirecting attention, calming restlessness, or showing godly love and care, it can also be misinterpreted. Particularly in our interaction with children/students, we want to be blameless and above reproach. The following will help workers to avoid any compromise or concerns in this area.

- Always remain in open sight of other adults.
- Appropriate touch is positive physical contact that nurtures children/students and develops a sense of emotional security and maturity in their interactions with adults. Appropriate touch is applied to meet the needs of children/students and not the adults.
- Appropriate physical contact will vary according to the age of the child/student. What is appropriate for nursery children (holding, rocking, sitting on laps, etc.) will not be appropriate for older children/students.
- Inappropriate touch involves, but is not limited to coercion or other forms of physical contact which exploits the child's/student's lack of knowledge, satisfies adult physical needs at the expense of the child/student, violates laws against sexual or physical contact between adult and child/student, and any attempt to modify child/student behavior with physical force.
- Sitting on laps is only appropriate for ages 0 to 6.
- In general, a man will need to limit physical contact more than a woman in the same situation, especially when working with older children/students.
- Volunteers should refrain from rough-housing, wrestling, shoulder or piggy-back rides, rubbing, massaging, or any physical activity that might make a child/student feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Only touch children/students in "safe" areas and for brief time. "Safe" areas generally include hands, arms, shoulders, upper back, or gentle pats on the top of the head. Never touch a child/student on or near any region that is private or personal, unless when necessary while assisting in a diaper change or restroom visit.
- Never touch a child/student out of frustration or anger. Physical discipline is not an appropriate means of correcting someone else's child/student.

Child/Teen-to-Child

- No male or female under eighteen should ever be alone together while in children/student ministries.
- No inappropriate touching (as defined above and in the appendix) of any kind will be accepted.
- Fighting will not be tolerated and any child/student participating in violent action will be dismissed from a class/program and placed into his or her parent's care.

Further guidelines on appropriate and inappropriate touch can be found in Appendix 1.

Parents in the Classroom, ministry room, or field trips

If a child/student would feel more at ease with a parent in the classroom, this is allowed temporarily (for a few minutes), especially for visitors or children/students who are going through separation anxiety. If this goes beyond a few minutes and the child/student cannot remain without the parents, the parents should remove the child/student from the classroom and are encouraged to relocate to sanctuary. While accompanying their children/students, a parent should be kindly but firmly dismissed if the parent is causing difficulty or presenting concerns for the welfare of the class.

Parents will not be permitted to "hang" out in the children/student ministry locations. All parents are not vetted as being "safe volunteers" therefore if they have not completed an application, background check, and are active in a children/student ministry they are not permitted to be in the location that the ministry is taking place with the exception of the paragraph above.

Security and Emergency Response

Emergency Situations

In emergency situations, if appropriate, 911 will be called to secure help and the Risk Management Team will respond to the appropriate location to assist with the emergency.

Accidents, First Aid and Medical Emergencies

In the event of significant or life-threatening injury or illness, emergency medical services will be called and parents should be located and informed immediately. The ministry director should complete an Accident Report Form for all injuries or illnesses, whether major or

minor prior to leaving the premises on the day of the accident. This will then be given to the RMT medical personnel for review and completion.

No medications shall be administered to any child/student without consent of the parent at the time the need arises.

Missing Child or Kidnapping

In the case of a missing child/student, the staff will first do a thorough check of the ministry room/location to make sure the child/student is not in another part of the building. If the child/student is not found after a thorough check of the area notify the ministry director or member of the Risk Management Team and continue to search for the child/student until they are found. If the child/student is not found, the Risk Management Team will contact the proper authorities.

Parent involvement in Emergency Procedures

The ministry director and Risk Management Team leader will decide how and when to notify parents about security or emergency situations. Involving parents too early might cause unnecessary fears or panic. If an emergency does happen, parents will need guidance, pastoral care and counseling, so we rely on staff to walk with parents through difficult situations.

Healthy Child/Student Policy

Communicable Disease Policy

In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases among the children/students, several guidelines are in place concerning disease.

1. Children/students with infectious diseases should be kept home until they are no longer contagious. If a child/student is exhibiting symptoms of illness such as fever, diarrhea, open skin lesions or blisters (as in chicken pox), or persistent nasal discharge, the parent should keep the child/student home.
2. Volunteers will use disposable latex gloves and proper hygiene procedures to change diapers, wipe noses, and handle blood spills.
3. Hand washing or use of anti-bacterial hand sanitizer must be a regular habit for both children and volunteers.
4. Toys and equipment should be washed and disinfected regularly.
5. Faith Baptist Church is dedicated to preventing the spread of disease among the children/students. Ministry Directors/Pastors have the right to refuse a child/student on the basis of questionable symptoms. To prevent this, parents are asked to comply with the Healthy Child/Student Policy guidelines.

A child/student should not participate in a class if and when any of the following exist:

- Fever, vomiting or diarrhea (Note: Children/students should be free of a fever, vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours before coming to children's/student ministry.)
- Any symptom of scarlet fever, German measles, mumps, chicken pox, or whooping cough
- Common cold – from onset of symptoms and one week thereafter
- Sore throat
- Croup
- Lice
- Any unexplained rash
- Any skin infection such as boils, ringworm, impetigo
- Pink eye or other eye infection
- Thick green, yellow or constant nasal discharge
- Any other communicable disease

Neglect & Abuse Prevention, Reporting & Response

If you suspect an abusive situation regarding a child/student, OR, if a child/student confides in you that they have been abused in any manner, YOU MUST do the following:

1. Familiarize yourself with the definitions and descriptions of child abuse listed on the CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION handout.
2. If you suspect that a child/student involved in any of the programs of FBC has been abused, the following steps are to be followed:
 - Report your concerns to the ministry director during your time of service.
 - DO NOT discuss the suspected abuse with the other workers, parents, etc. All information regarding the child should be kept confidential with your ministry supervisor and the proper authorities.
 - DO NOT interview the child/student regarding the suspected abuse.
3. Be prepared to document your concerns.

APPENDIX 1:

Inappropriate and Appropriate Touch

Inappropriate Touching

- Shoving, hair pulling, shaking, slapping, pinching, biting, kicking, hitting, or spanking a child/student for any reason.
- Squeezing of arm, neck, face, or any parts of the body.
- Tickling children/students over 5 years old. It is over stimulating and is considered by some professionals to be a deceptive device that could lead to inappropriate touching.
- Children/students sitting on laps of adults is inappropriate for ages 6 and older.
- Holding or restraining children/students on the lap. However, holding a child 5 years and younger is appropriate for short time spans when comfort is needed by the child or the child's behavior is out-of-control or endangering other children.
- Touching a child/student in the genital areas except for younger and developmentally delayed children requiring a diaper change, bathing/washing and assistance with toileting procedures. Otherwise, touch in the genital area is only permitted by medical personnel in case of injury or suspected injury.
- Kissing a child/student on the lips, neck, or anywhere else. A child/student should never be allowed to kiss a staff member, volunteer, or another child/student on the lips, neck, or anywhere else. Children/students are also not allowed to kiss one another
- Slapping a child/student on the behind, even when playing.
- Fondling children/students, even in non-private areas.
- Carrying a child/student on the back unless the child is unable to walk.
- Allowing a child/student to stand between the legs of a sitting man/woman.

Appropriate Touching

- A comforting pat on the shoulder and back, or allowing an emotionally distressed child/student to lean their head on your shoulder is appropriate.
- Back rub to help comfort, or put an irritable child under 5 to sleep is appropriate.
- High-Fives, handshakes, or the touching of two fists are appropriate and recommended touch, especially when interacting with older children/students.
- Holding hands is permitted with children 10 years and under when initiated by the child, or when helping a child to walk, climb stairs, etc.
- Holding a child/student firmly with your hands to restrain him/her is appropriate when it is used to prevent a child/student from an accident, injury, hurting self, others, or you.
- Very brief side hugs are acceptable if initiated by the child/student. Chest to chest hugs are inappropriate for two people of the opposite sex at all times.

APPENDIX 2:

Child Abuse Reporting Form

Instructions: If a volunteer, staff, leader, or pastor suspect, hear about or observe signs or symptoms of abuse, please: (1) Talk immediately with the ministry director and the Risk Management Team; 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 summary 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: _____

Check all that apply:

- Ministry Director Notified
- Risk Mgt. Team Notified
- Pastor Notified
- Law Enforcement Notified

Name of Child: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Name of Volunteer: _____

Signs or Symptoms of Abuse Observed:

Bruises or Injuries that are Visible:

Emotions expressed by the Child:

Summary of the Conversation with the Child:

Anything Else that is Relevant: