

First Baptist Church Calvert City, Kentucky

Church Child Protection Policy

January 1, 2024

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First Baptist Church
Calvert City, Kentucky
Church Child Protection Policy
Dated: August XX, 2023

General

Goal

First Baptist Church (FBC) Calvert City is committed to maintaining a safe environment for the physical and emotional well-being of all children participating in church activities, including participants in any daily or temporary childcare programs. To that end, FBC leadership will inform workers and enforce policies explained below to ensure that all children are safe and well protected while attending scheduled activities.

Future revisions to this policy may be made with the authorization of both the Pastor and the Personnel Committee.

Overview of the First Baptist Church Safety System

Because we love children and desire to protect them, FBC requires all staff members and volunteers working with children or students (and other vulnerable populations) to complete **FOUR SAFETY STEPS** before ministry work or volunteer placements begin.

STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

FBC policies and procedures require that staff members and volunteers avoid abusive behavior of any kind. Staff members and volunteers are required to report any policy violations to a supervisor or a member of the FBC Safety Committee. Staff members and volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in 'grooming' a child for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or 'gatekeeper'), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.

To equip First Baptist Church staff members and volunteers with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, FBC requires all staff members and volunteers to complete online MinistrySafe's Sexual Abuse Awareness Training. **Training will be renewed online every two years.**

STEP TWO: Screening Process

Staff members and volunteers are required to complete the FBC Screening Process, which requires a staff member or volunteer to:

- complete an Employment Application (employees only)
- complete a face-to-face interview (employees and volunteers)
- provide references to be checked (employees and volunteers)
- volunteers must be a member of FBC for **six months** before being eligible to serve in volunteer positions providing access to children, students or vulnerable populations. Under certain circumstances, the Pastor or the Personnel Committee may authorize an exception to this rule for a specific planned event.

STEP THREE: Policies & Procedures

Staff members and volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual annually and sign the last page indicating that he or she has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

STEP FOUR: Criminal Background Check

FBC requires that all staff members and volunteers working in children's or student activities or programming undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required.

Individuals who have committed sexually-oriented or sex-related crimes may not serve in any area providing services to children or minors. In addition, certain other past criminal acts may preclude an applicant from serving minors.

STEP FIVE: First Aid Training

It will be the goal of the church that all paid employees who work with children will maintain current certification in basic first aid and basic CPR (or the equivalent) as required by applicable licensing requirements or other local regulations. The FBC goal is to provide the cost of this training. Volunteer workers are encouraged, but not required to get training if they frequently accompany children on activities such as recreational activities, camps, retreats, mission trips or any other activity with an element of risk.

Selection and Screening Process

Pre-employment Procedures for Paid and Volunteer Workers

FBC staff will screen the applications of persons desiring to work with children participating in all church programs, including participants in any daily or temporary childcare programs.

Classification of Workers

In order to screen workers appropriately for their responsibilities, the ministerial staff person responsible for each division will categorize workers as either primary and secondary. These terms refer to the relative levels of responsibility and risk, not to the ages of the children being served.

- Primary workers: All paid staff members plus those volunteers in roles with greater responsibility or risk are classified as primary workers and should meet the primary screening standards. These include Sunday school teachers, children and youth ministry leaders, and children/youth choir leaders. Primary volunteer workers must be eighteen (18) years of age or older.
- Secondary workers: Persons who occasionally interact with children and/or do so in less risky circumstances. i.e.: Substitute teachers and volunteers who interact with children in a group setting, on church premises, or who interact with children in the presence of an approved primary worker are classified as secondary workers. This category may also include parents of participants who help supervise activities. All volunteer workers under the age of eighteen (18) will be considered secondary workers.

Younger persons may assist adults, but may not take the place of adult workers. The church may employ responsible teens (under the age of 18) only in positions with and under the direct supervision of an approved adult worker.

Volunteer Applications

Volunteer applicants must complete and sign an *Application for Volunteer Workers Who Will Work with Children*. **See Appendix.**

Applications will be submitted to the administration office. Church staff will be responsible for the interview process and reference checks.

The church keeps confidential all information received in the applicant selection process. Such information will be stored with access afforded only to appropriate church staff on a need-to-know basis.

If the church learns of false, misleading or amended information on an application that could cause potential danger to children or liability to the church, that person will be terminated.

References

The ministerial staff will check and document at least three (3) references for each primary worker applicant and conduct a reasonable inquiry into the character of secondary worker applicants. References may be checked by phone, mail or in person. Information gained in these checks should be noted directly on the application.

The three references shall include:

- a person who has known the applicant for at least 6 months; and
- a former supervisor, teacher, pastor; and
- list any previous work with children or youth, either church related or non-church related. Include name and address of organization, type of work, dates.

Confidential Interviews

All applicants desiring to work with children must be interviewed for suitability for the work they desire to do. Church policy concerning prevention and response to child abuse and neglect must be discussed during the interview.

Criminal Background Check

A criminal background check and child abuse registry check shall be required for all children's activities; both employee and primary volunteer workers. An individual who has been convicted of a crime involving misconduct with children will not be allowed to work/volunteer with children. In the event a felony conviction turns up on the report, the ministry staff will review, without revealing the name of the volunteer. Collectively, the ministerial staff will decide whether or not to approve the worker/volunteer for work with children. Completing the *Application for Volunteer Workers Who Will Work with Children* authorizes the church to conduct these checks. Background checks will be kept confidential in a locked file with access afforded only to appropriate church staff on a need-to-know basis. **Background checks will be updated every two (2) years.**

Identification of Workers

All employees or volunteers who work with children must be photographed with copies of those photographs kept in their personnel file. They will use identification tags while working with children or youth.

Acknowledgement of Church Policies

All applicants must acknowledge in writing that they understand the church's policies pertaining to the protection of children and that they agree to abide by them. This

requirement will be met by having applicants sign the *Initial Acknowledgement of Receipt* form. **See Appendix.**

Safety Committee

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for children, FBC will appoint and maintain a Safety Committee, which will meet at the beginning of Spring and Fall semesters.

The purpose of the Safety Committee is to enable FBC Children's Ministries to carry out appropriate ministry activities while safeguarding program participants against emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

Composition

The Safety Committee will be comprised of the following members:

- Pastor
- Children's Ministry Director
- Youth Director(s)
- Chairman of Deacons

Responsibilities

The Safety Committee will be charged with the following duties:

- Applying existing FBC policies and procedures related to children's safety and risk management issues.
- Monitoring all Children's Ministries programs for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
- Making recommendations regarding safety issues.

Survivors of Child Abuse

Survivors of childhood sexual or physical abuse need the love and acceptance of the church family. Their experience with abuse and their recovery process may be pertinent to their work with children. Survivors of abuse may, if they choose, request confidential counseling either from the pastor or from a professional counselor. It will not necessarily disqualify them from service. The desire of the church is to assist and care for survivors of abuse as well as fulfill our obligation to protect the children left in our care.

Child Safety Policies

It is the responsibility of all persons having contact with children participating in church programs to promote the emotional and physical safety of the participants giving regard to all factors and circumstances known to them. If in their opinion, an unsafe condition exists; such persons shall immediately take appropriate precautions under the circumstances to protect all children. Nothing contained in any other church policy, procedure or instruction shall be construed to relieve persons having contact with children from this responsibility.

Parental Involvement

Parents who leave a child in the care of FBC staff members and volunteers during church services or activities will be contacted if their child becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in Children's Ministries programs.

Parents are encouraged to visit any and all services and programs in which their child is involved at FBC. Parents have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in

which their child is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their children's programs at FBC will be required to complete the FBC volunteer application and screening process.

Worker to Child Ratios

FBC is committed to providing adequate supervision in all Children's Ministries programs. Accordingly, the following worker to child ratios will be observed:

Program	Workers	Children
Nursery	2	8
Preschool, 2 and 3 years old	2	12
Kindergarten, 4 and 5 years old	2	18
Elementary (Grades 1-5)	2	20
VBS	2	20
Youth (Middle School and High School)	2	30

****The above ratios are MinistrySafe minimum recommendations. Where supervision is concerned, more is generally better.***

If a worker is 'out of ratio' it is his or her responsibility to immediately notify the program supervisor, Children's Ministry Director, or Pastor. Supervisors will make diligent efforts to find substitute workers to immediately bring worker to children ratios into compliance with Church policy.

Building Safety

Every ministry supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the ministry program area is monitored during programming serving children. This includes unobserved monitoring of staff members, volunteers and children. No child will ever be left unattended in a ministry area or on a playground during regular programs, classes or activities.

Supervisory Requirements

It is the policy of the church to provide adequate supervisory control of persons working with children participating in all church programs, including daily or temporary childcare programs of the church. The following regulations shall be applicable to all primary and secondary workers having contact with children participating in all church programs.

Two-Adult Rule

It shall be the goal of FBC that a minimum of two workers will be in attendance at all times when preschoolers and children are being supervised during a church activity regardless of the number of participants, location or activity. **At least one of these must be a primary worker.**

Some Children's or Youth Sunday School classes may have only one adult in attendance as the teacher while the class is in session. In this case, doors to the classrooms will remain open unless windows are installed on the doors of the classrooms. At no time should an adult ever be in a room or an enclosed area alone with a single child.

Avoid being alone with an individual child in any room or during any ministry program. If one supervising adult must leave a group of children, another volunteer or employee must be notified so that the *Two Adult Rule* can be followed.

If an unusual circumstance occurs and you find yourself alone with a single child, take the

child to a room or building occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others. (Example: If a child is the last one in a class to be picked up by a parent, move to an adjoining room where other staff members or volunteers are present.)

If you need to talk with a child alone, do it in the hallway or a highly visible area, or have another leader with you.

After every ministry event, ensure that every room, area and restroom is checked prior to leaving.

Ministerial and Staff Oversight

The ministerial staff will ensure ongoing supervision of all workers. This will include periodic unannounced visits to the classes and other program venues.

Drop off, Check-in, Pickup

Only parents (dropping off children), screened ministry volunteers, church staff members, and children are allowed in areas where ministry to children is occurring. All other adults should be asked for identification and immediately escorted out of the area. If questions or concerns arise related to any person in the area, a ministry supervisor or security team member should be notified immediately.

At any time that a child has been entrusted to FBC staff members or volunteers, the Church incurs responsibility for the safety and well-being of the child. Staff members and volunteers must act to ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of children in their charge.

Children's Ministries staff members or volunteers are responsible for releasing children in their care only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians at the close of services or activities. It is presumed a person who drops off a child or student has authority to pick up the child.

To reduce the possibility of kidnapping, the church will develop an identification system so that the adults who drop off a small child are the same adults who pick the child up. The primary volunteer in charge shall maintain the system to identify persons authorized to pick up and take responsibility for preschool children leaving a church activity. The identification system will not be necessary for children above the grade of kindergarten unless a parent specifically requests it in writing.

Sunday School--Nursery & Toddlers: Children will be signed in and out by parent or guardian. Upon check-in, each child's parent or guardian will be given a buzzer with a number on it. Volunteers must check and collect each buzzer with the correct number for the child before releasing the child at pick up.

If a buzzer is lost, send the parent or guardian to Children's Ministry Director or Pastor, where proper identification must be shown to a staff member before the child is released. (Have the child stay in the classroom; the parent may pick up the child once cleared).

If their parent or guardian does not pick up a child kindergarten or younger on time, the child will be kept by their teachers where safe supervision can be continued until the parent or guardian is located.

These procedures will apply to nursery operations for all other church-related activities.

Sunday School--Kindergarten through Youth: Children Kindergarten through second grade will be picked up by parent or guardian unless otherwise instructed. Children third grade or older are permitted to leave without further supervision by the workers, unless otherwise instructed by the parent or guardian.

In the event that staff members or volunteers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they should immediately contact the Children's Ministry Director before releasing the child.

Restroom Policies

DO NOT USE OR OCCUPY a bathroom in use by children. Adults should use a restroom separate and apart from restrooms used by children during weekend services or when there are children present. (Unless not possible given physical plant/facility limitations.) No volunteer OF ANY AGE should enter or occupy a bathroom while children are using it. When no child is present, adults (and young volunteers) are allowed in a bathroom (one at a time) so long as there is another adult at the doorway keeping any child from entering.

Nursery Children, Pre-School, and Kindergarten

Because nursery children may require complete assistance with their bathroom activities, all staff members and volunteers will observe the following policies:

Diapering

- Children should be changed on changing stations only.
- Changing of diapers should be done in plain sight of other nursery workers.
- Children will never be left unattended on changing tables.
- Children should be re-diapered and re-clothed immediately upon the completion of changing their soiled diaper.
- Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in nursery will be recorded on the registration cards ("Seth Adams has a medicine in the bag for rash.")

Toilet training

- No child will be forced to toilet train.
- When children are taken into bathrooms the door will be left partially open.
- Young children will never be left unattended in bathrooms.
- Parents should be consulted on each child's progress in the toilet training process before leaving the child with volunteers or staff members. Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in the nursery will be recorded on the registration card ("Georgia can use the toilet, but she needs to be reminded – ask her if she needs to go.").
- Children should be assisted in straightening their clothing before returning to the room with other children.
- "Accidents" should be handled by reassuring the child and completing the changing of diapers or underwear and clothing. Extra diapers are available from FBC in the children's area, if the parent has not furnished extra diapers.

Grades 1-5

If you must go into the restroom to check on an individual child, seek out another worker to

accompany you. If another worker is not available, go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance. Do not enter the restroom. If a child requires immediate assistance, leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child in completing his or her toileting activities, while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall. Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another staff member or volunteer.

If restroom use is required:

- Only one child in the restroom at a time, in a single toilet facility.
- When a worker is assisting a child, the door must not be locked, and must remain ajar. In general, children should receive the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities. Encourage children to do all they can for themselves.
- All students in grades 1-3 must be accompanied to the restroom by an adult leader. 4th and 5th grade students may go to KIDS ONLY restrooms alone.
- Be aware if a student repeatedly asks to use the restroom and stays there for unusual periods of time. Report this behavior to the Children's Ministry Director or Pastor if it occurs.

Special Needs

Parents will offer instruction to staff members or volunteers to change the diapers of individuals with special needs. After the age of 4, parents or legal guardians will change the diapers of all individuals with special needs. If someone with special needs requires assistance using the restroom, a special needs volunteer may assist them in the restroom.

Medication

Do not administer medication of any kind to any child while serving in ministry programs, including 'over the counter' drugs.

Verbal Interactions with Children

Verbal interactions between staff members or volunteers and children should be positive and uplifting. FBC staff members and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children.

Staff members and volunteers should not talk to children in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, staff members and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children.

One-to-One Interactions with Children

Staff members and volunteers should never conduct one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interaction with children while participating in FBC Children's Ministry program. Another adult who has completed the FBC application and screening process should always be present.

Physical Contact

FBC is committed to protecting children in its care. FBC has implemented a 'physical contact policy' which promotes a positive, nurturing environment for our Children's Ministries while protecting children. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in Children's Ministries programs:

- Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members or volunteers and children are important for children's development, and are generally suitable in the church setting.
- Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to the Children's Ministry Director or the Pastor.
- Physical contact should be for the benefit of the child, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.
- Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other children or children's staff members and volunteers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation.
- Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of staff members or volunteers in Children's Ministries must foster trust at all times. Personal conduct must be above reproach.
- Do not force physical contact, touch or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.
- Children's staff members and volunteers are responsible for protecting children under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.
- Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by a staff member or volunteer must be reported immediately to the Children's Ministry Director or the Pastor.

Intoxicants

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while in any FBC facility, while traveling with children, or while working with or supervising children.

Tobacco Use

FBC requires staff members and volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products in church facilities, while in the presence of children or their parents, or during FBC activities or programs. FBC is a tobacco-free facility.

Sexually Oriented Conversations

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with children and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any child in the program.

Sexually Oriented Material

Staff members and volunteers in Children's Ministries at FBC are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) on church property or in the presence of children.

Nudity

Staff members and volunteers in FBC's Children's Ministries should never be nude in the presence of children in their care. In the event there is a situation that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes during a pool party, weekend or overnight retreat, etc.), staff member/volunteer will submit a plan to either the Children's Ministry Director, Youth Director, or Pastor concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.

Playgrounds

On the playground, remember to circulate, watching children during play periods, giving particular attention to areas not easily seen from all viewpoints. (Example: under slides, in corners, behind structures).

Any two children together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area of the playground.

Transportation

Persons who drive FBC owned or privately-owned vehicles for conducting church business or transporting children on a regular basis must maintain a current valid Kentucky driver's license and comply with all other church transportation policies.

A child under eighteen (18) years shall not be taken from or allowed to leave church property, either unattended or in a group without specific parental permission (*Release of Claims Form*). Permission must be obtained from a parent or guardian for any volunteers to transport children to or from any organized church activities (*Annual Transportation Permission Form*). **(See Appendix.)**

The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of children:

- Children should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Two adult workers should be presented in the vehicle when transporting children.
- Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.
- No cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving FBC vans, or vehicles owned or rented by FBC, unless in an emergency.
- No drivers under age 25 may drive FBC owned or rented vehicles.

Travel Release Approval

Overnight activities outside of the local area, a *Release of Claims Form* is required and must be signed by the child's parent or legal guardian. Without the form signed and in the possession of the church, the child will not be allowed to participate in the away activity. **See Appendix.**

Some church activities may be held at local area venues such as a pool party at a member's home or a visit to a local restaurant. These activities will typically occur throughout the church year. To ensure travel approval for these activities, parents or legal guardians will be asked to sign an *Annual Transportation Permission Form*. This form will be kept on file by the Children's Ministry Director or Youth Ministry Director. Transportation approval will be valid from August through July of the following year. **(See Appendix.)**

Disciplinary Policies

Discipline

It is FBC's policy that staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children. **No form of physical discipline is acceptable.** This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children.

When a child is misbehaving, follow these steps:

- Go to the child and calmly ask him or her to stop the behavior. (Most children respond immediately and correct the behavior.) Give a warning and remind the child of class expectations and redirect to a positive behavior. Do this individually when possible, try not to single out a specific child in a large group setting. When working with younger children, some physical redirection may be necessary: for example, removing a toy from the hands of a child who is hitting another.
- If the child repeats the action, guide them to a quiet place, separate from the other children, for a short but designated period of time. Stay within sight of others and avoid being alone (or unseen) with the child. Provide the child with a simple, understandable reason for the separation, and a clear explanation of your expectations. ("Terry, you didn't stop hitting Kelly when I asked you to, so it was necessary for me to separate you from the group.")
- After a 3rd time, refer to a staff member. A staff member may inform a parent or guardian, who may be asked to become involved in redirecting misbehavior.
- Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported to Children's Ministry Director or Pastor.

NEVER...

- Never yell at a child.
- Never grab a child.
- Never threaten a child. Always follow through with your word.
- Never hit a child.
- Never confront a parent in front of others.
- Never openly humiliate a child in front of the class.

Bullying

Verbal, physical or emotional bullying is not acceptable in FBC ministry programs. At the first sign of bullying in any form, act decisively, and inform the Children's Ministry Director, Youth Director, or Pastor. There is no "harmless put-down" where bullying is concerned.

- *First Offense:* Issue a warning to the child and a general reminder to the group that this kind of interaction is wrong. Try not to embarrass or chastise.
- *Second Offense:* Pull the offending child(ren) from the group (in a seen or supervised location) and discuss the inappropriate interaction or behavior. Set clear parameters and behavioral goals. Let the child know that the next step is communication with a pastor and the child's parents. Notify Children's Ministry Director, or Youth Director, or Pastor of ANY signs of bullying or verbal abuse. Privately, but with another adult present, confirm that a child who was the target of the bullying behaviors is not in danger of continued harassment and is physically and emotionally stable. **DO NOT SINGLE A CHILD OUT IN FRONT OF THE GROUP ... be discreet.**
- *Third Offense:* Send the child to a Pastor, or Youth Director, or Children's Ministry Director for a phone call (or communication onsite) with his or her parent(s) and possible removal from the activity or event.

Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse

FBC has a **zero tolerance** for abuse in ministry programs and ministry activities. FBC is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. Any report of inappropriate behavior or suspicions of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to Child Protective Services or criminal law enforcement.

Definition of “Children”

The term “child” or “children” shall include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years.

Reporting Violation Policy

Because sexual abusers ‘groom’ children for abuse, it is possible that a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to groom a child for sexual abuse. While not required by state law, please report ‘grooming’ behavior, policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to an immediate supervisor, pastor, or a member of the FBC Safety Committee, such that the church may take appropriate action to safeguard children in the program.

In order to maintain a safe environment for our children, FBC staff members and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of these policies. All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to an immediate supervisor in the ministry area, the Children’s Ministry Director, or the Pastor.

Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse to Law Enforcement

We report all suspected or alleged abuse or neglect of children to the appropriate Kentucky authorities pursuant to KRS 620.830(1) which include one of the following:

- Marshall County Social Services Department at 270-527-1354
- The Child Abuse Hot 1-877-KYSAFE (270-597-2331)
- If the child is in immediate danger: 911

Because many adults are unfamiliar with Kentucky reporting requirements and may be fearful of the process, FBC utilizes a ‘tandem or dual report’ model, where permitted. A ‘dual report’ occurs when a FBC supervisor reports the suspicion or allegation *together* with the individual who saw, heard or received information causing him or her to suspect abuse or neglect.

THIS PRACTICE IS NOT REQUIRED, OR INTENDED TO INHIBIT ANY STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER FROM REPORTING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT, CPS OR THE ABUSE HOTLINE *DIRECTLY*. Instead, it is meant to facilitate reporting, protect children and support individuals who may not feel able or willing to report alone.

NO PERMISSION IS NEEDED from FBC before reporting to law enforcement personnel or the Child Abuse Hotline.

When in doubt, report.

Reporting and Responding to Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect

It is the policy of the church to report any incident of child abuse or neglect toward any child in the church.

- Do not treat any suspicion as unimportant.
- Notify the pastor or a church staff person immediately. Commence the investigation right away.
- The pastor and his appointee in charge will suspend the accused person from the performance of duties involving children until the official investigation has been completed.

- Cooperate fully with law enforcement officials.
- The pastor or his appointee will inform the victim and victim's family of the steps that are being taken. If child abuse is confirmed, ask the victim and the victim's family what action they would like to take in the matter and fully cooperate to address their requests within the bounds of a legal and prudent response. The church will seek legal counsel during any investigation of alleged sexual abuse.
- In an instance where child abuse is confirmed, the church will immediately dismiss the worker from their position. Termination will be considered appropriate, due to the circumstances.
- In instances where evidence is inconclusive, the church should take action based on the advice of legal counsel, in consultation with law enforcement officials. This depends on the strength of the evidence available and after consideration of the victim and the victim's family's requests.
- The pastor, in consultation with legal counsel, will determine the amount of information he believes is appropriate to relate to the congregation.

Reporting Obligation

By Kentucky law, anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that a child is being physically, emotionally, or sexually abused, experiencing neglect, or their welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect, shall report that belief according to the following procedure:

- The worker shall report such belief to the pastor, a member of the church staff and/or church leadership.
- The pastor or staff member will immediately report to one of the following: Marshall County Social Services Department (270-527-1354), or Child Abuse Hotline (800-752-6200) or Calvert City Police Department (270-395-4545).
- The pastor or his appointee will notify the parents of the child (unless the parent is the person responsible for the abuse or neglect).
- The pastor or his appointee, in consultation with the chairperson of the Personnel Committee, will notify the appropriate legal counsel.
- The pastor, or his appointee, will notify the church's insurance agent that an abuse report has been filed with the appropriate local or state agency.
- If it is an emergency situation where a child is in danger, call 911. Church leadership should also be informed immediately of any suspected child abuse.

The person making a report should identify the name and address of the child and caretakers name, current location, including the address or directions to the home and any of the following that applies:

- If there are concerns about the child's immediate safety.
- Any person believed to be responsible for the abuse or neglect to the child if the person is known, and their relation to the child.
- The nature, extent, and occurrence of the abuse or neglect.
- The name, address, phone number and email address of the reporter, if the reporter agrees to provide this information.
- Any other pertinent information concerning the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect.

Additional information that may be helpful:

- Does the reporter have firsthand knowledge of the situation or the family?

- Has the reporter been involved with the family or attempted to work with them on the problem?
- Has the caretaker been responsive or resistant to any attempt to help?

If it is an emergency situation where a child is in danger, call 911. Church leadership should also be informed immediately of any suspected child abuse. (Rev 10/2021)

To assist in reporting child abuse or neglect use the *Record of Child Abuse or Endangerment Form or Child Abuse*. If responding to an allegation, use the *Endangerment Allegation Response and Appeal Form*). **(See Appendix.)**

Consequences of Violation

Any person accused of child abuse or neglect will be suspended from all church related duties involving children. *The Personnel Committee is not authorized to conduct an investigation of the incident but is allowed to monitor the investigation.*

The Personnel Committee may receive confidential information concerning the incident as deemed necessary to determine issues concerning continuation of employment and compensation. The person accused will be suspended on 'paid leave' until the investigation is completed. This removal from duty should occur in such a way that an innocent person is not immediately deemed guilty. There are false claims made each year. If the allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated by law enforcement or Child Protection Agency, the employee may be allowed to return to their prior position.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act should be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves children, students or vulnerable populations at FBC. If the person is a staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from FBC.

Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination (employee) or removal (volunteer). Volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any activities involving children, students or vulnerable populations at FBC.

Confidentiality

All reports of child abuse or neglect shall be held in absolute confidence. No person shall communicate any information concerning the alleged event to any person, except as necessary, in order to cooperate with any official investigation. Any breach of this confidentiality by an employee or volunteer of the church shall be cause for immediate dismissal. In no situation shall the identity of the victim or the accused person be disclosed, except as required by law.

Investigation of Alleged Abuse or Neglect

No person shall attempt to conduct a detailed investigation either through examination or interrogation of the child, the accused person or a witness. It is acceptable to obtain a reasonable amount of information to have cause to believe a child has been abused or neglected. ***Interviews shall be conducted only by authorized officials of the agency to whom the suspected crime has been reported or, when appropriate, by legal counsel or persons representing the church in an official capacity.*** All employees and volunteers of the church shall cooperate with the official investigation as requested.

Preservation of Records

Copies of all documents relating to an event of abuse or neglect, including a list of all persons known to be present or in the vicinity shall be transferred to the pastor or his appointee. These documents will be reviewed to determine if they are complete, in accordance with church policy. If any documents are missing, a written notation will be made and the transferred documents will be retained by the church.

Ministerial Care

The ministerial staff shall encourage and assist the child and the parents in securing appropriate counseling, care and support. In the event the abuse or neglect involves a member, employee or volunteer of the church, the staff shall encourage and assist the individual in securing appropriate pastoral care and support, including third party counseling, being mindful of the potential for a conflict of interest. All persons shall act towards the child, the parents and the accused in accordance with the principles of Christianity at all times.

Liaison with the Community

The pastor, or his appointee, will serve as the church's sole access to the media with a consultation of an attorney. The church will emphasize to the public its position on child abuse, its concern for the victim, and the extensive steps being taken to address the safety of all children.

Annual Review of Church Policy

The ministerial staff shall annually review the definition of child abuse and neglect as defined by law and the church's policy concerning these crimes. Any changes or additions to the church's *Child Protection Policy* will be covered in the reviews. Each worker shall acknowledge receipt of a written copy of the policy prior to the time they commence working with children and after each change to such policy. **See Appendix.**

Each worker shall acknowledge participating in the annual review of the church's policies and procedures. This review can be accomplished online on the church website or by signing the *Annual Review of Child Protection Policy Volunteer Worker Acknowledgement*. Documentation of this review by either means will be maintained in each childcare worker's personnel file. **(See Appendix.)**

Appendix

Required Forms

- **Application for Volunteer Workers Who Will Work with Children**
- **Statement of Initial Acknowledgement and Agreement with the Church**
- **Release of Claims Form**
- **Annual Transportation Permission Form**
- **Report Violation of Policy Form**
- **Allegation and Appeal Form**
- **Annual Review of Child Protection Policy Volunteer Worker Acknowledgement**

First Baptist Church
85 South Ash Street
P.O. Box 366
Calvert City, Kentucky 42029
270-395-4600
Email: office@calvertfbc.org/

Application for Volunteer Workers Who Will Work with Children

This application is to be completed by all applicants for positions involving the supervision or custody of children. It will assist the church in providing a safe and secure environment for all children. The term "child" or "children" includes all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years.

Date: _____ E-mail: _____

Full Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Business: _____

Driver's License No.: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Social Security No.: _____

Position applying for: _____

Date you would be available: _____ Days of the week available: _____

When did you make your profession of faith in Christ? _____ When baptized? _____

Are you a member of this church? Yes _____ No _____

Please list the names and locations of other churches that you have attended regularly within the last 10 years.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Please list the names of three other members of the church who know you:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

List the names and addresses and phone numbers of three personal references

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Because we care for our children and desire to protect them, we ask you to please answer the following questions. We understand they are personal, and we will protect your privacy.

Have you ever been known by another name? Yes ____ No _____. If yes, please explain:

During your lifetime, have you ever been arrested for molesting or abusing a child, accused of physical assault or a sexual offense of any nature? Yes ____ No _____. If yes, please explain:

Have you ever been prosecuted for child abuse or molestation? Yes ____ No _____. If yes, please explain:

Have you ever been convicted of a crime, including a child related offenses? Yes ____ No ____
If yes, please explain:

Have you ever participated in the physical and/or sexual abuse of a child? Yes ____ No _____. If yes, please explain:

Are you willing to be photographed for the confidential church personnel records?

Yes ____ No ____ If no, please explain:

Are you willing to wear a photo identification nametag whenever you are supervising children?

Yes ____ No ____ If no, please explain:

Applicant Statement

I hereby certify that I have read and completed the above application. My answers are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

I give permission for the church to maintain my photograph on file and to conduct a background check on me now and at regular intervals. If allowed to work with children, I agree to be bound by the bylaws and policies of First Baptist Church Calvert City.

I hereby authorize all persons, schools, organizations and law enforcement agencies to supply First Baptist Church Calvert City with any information concerning my character or background in connection with working with children and I hereby release them from liability or damages which may occur as a result of their response to this request.

I authorize First Baptist Church Calvert City to supply my service record, in whole or part, to any prospective or future organization or agency with a legal and proper interest in them. I understand that if allowed to serve, that any misrepresentation made by me in this application shall be considered sufficient cause for my dismissal without advance notice.

I have been given a copy of both the Commonwealth of Kentucky's "Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect" booklet and the First Baptist Church Calvert City's Child Protection Policy. The church staff has reviewed these documents with me personally. I have been apprised of and support the church's position regarding the problem of child abuse and neglect.

I have read and understand both documents. I understand my services as an employee of The Baptist Church or as a volunteer worker who works with children at First Baptist Church Calvert City is dependent on my strict adherence to these policies.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Staff Member Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Policies and Procedures
Statement of Initial Acknowledgement and Agreement

I have received and read a copy of the First Baptist Church Child Protection Policy and understand the importance of the material in the manual. I agree to abide by these guidelines while serving or working at My Church.

I understand the manual may be modified, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated by My Church.

I have reviewed the duties listed in my ministry position description, and I agree to fulfill these duties. I understand I may choose to end my employment or voluntary service at My Church at any time (If possible, I will provide two weeks' notice to my supervisor).

I acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this handbook in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between me and My Church. If applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no monetary compensation for hours worked.

I understand it is my responsibility to review new guidelines which may be created and distributed.

I acknowledge receipt of My Church policies and procedures manual.

Staff Member or Volunteer's name (please print)

Staff Member or Volunteer's signature

Date: _____

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Release of Claims Form

NAME OF PARENT(s) OR GUARDIAN(s) (please print):

ADDRESS:

CHILD'S NAME(s):

ACTIVITY:

DATE(S) OF ACTIVITY:

I hereby affirm that my child shall be participating in the above-named activity and certify that I am cognizant of the inherent risks associated with participation in the activity and with the fact that participating in the activity may take place outside of, or off of, church premises.

I understand and agree neither First Baptist Church Calvert City, nor its representatives, instructors or appointees may be held liable in any way for any occurrence in connection with my child's participating in the activity which may result in injury, harm or other damages to me or my family.

As a part of the consideration for being allowed to enroll and participate in the activity, I hereby personally assume all risks in connection with my child's participation. I further release First Baptist Church Calvert City, its instructors, appointees and representatives for any injury or damage which may befall my child while my child is enrolled in or participating in the activity.

I further agree to hold unaccountable First Baptist Church Calvert City, its instructors, appointees and representatives from any claim by me or my family, estate, heirs or appointees arising out of my child's enrollment and participation in the activity.

I also authorize First Baptist Church Calvert City to render or obtain such emergency medical care or treatment as may be necessary should any injury, harm or accident occur to my child while participating in the activity.

I further state that I am of lawful age and legally competent to sign this affirmation and release; that I understand the terms herein are contractual and not a mere recital; and that I signed this document of my own free act and volition. I further state and acknowledge that I have fully informed myself of the contents of this affirmation and release by reading it before signing it.

I have executed this affirmation and release on the ____ day of _____ 20____.

Signature _____

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Annual Transportation Permission Form

This permission form is to be completed by the parents or guardians of children, including middle school and high school youth who may be transported by their leaders, on outings to and from the church facilities throughout the year.

Please Print

Child's Name	
Parents or Guardian	
Address	
Emergency Phone	
Allergies/Medications	

Permission Statement

I _____ give permission for my child to be transported to and from the church property for participation in periodic local trips throughout the year. I authorize First Baptist Church and its designated leaders to render or obtain any emergency medical care or treatment as may be necessary, should any injury, harm or accident occur to my child while participating in any planned transportation or activity.

By allowing my child to enroll and/or participate, I willingly agree to assume all risks in connection with my child's participation. I therefore, release and hold harmless, First Baptist Church in Calvert City, its instructors, appointees, and representatives from liability any injury or harm my child may incur. I understand that granting this permission is valid until revoked.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

First Baptist Church Calvert City Record of Child Abuse or Endangerment Form

This form may be used by reporting individuals or situations, including employees, volunteers and visitors, who wish to file a complaint of actual or potential child abuse or instances of actual or perceived safety issues at FBC. The Church Child Protection Policy provides guidance on what constitutes child abuse or endangerment.

Received by _____ Date _____

PART A (PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE)

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Contact/Cell Number: _____

Status (Employee, Volunteer, Other): _____

Work Address: _____

Home Address: _____

PART B - Summary of Complaint

1. Alleged situation was noted on or about: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____
2. Other dates/times? _____
3. _____
4. Is the alleged situation continuing? (Circle one) YES NO
5. Accused/Respondent Name(s) _____
6. Describe the incident(s) or facts regarding your complaint- what occurred? (Add extra sheets if needed).

7. Please identify any witnesses or other individuals with information regarding your allegations.

8. I affirm that the above allegation is true to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

First Baptist Church

Child Abuse or Endangerment Allegation Response and Appeal Form

This form may be used by employees, volunteers, or non-employees to respond to allegations of child abuse or endangerment. It can also be used to document rationale for an appeal to any adverse finding from an investigation. The Church Child Protection Policy provides guidance on what constitutes child abuse or endangerment.

PART A (PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE)

Name: _____

Email Address:

Contact/Cell Number:

Status (Employee, Volunteer, Other):

Work Address:

Home Address:

PART B – Response to abuse or endangerment allegations or to register an appeal for adverse findings.

1. Describe any mitigating facts regarding the alleged incident(s). (Add extra sheets if needed).

[illegible]

2. Please identify any witnesses or other individuals with information corroborating your response to the allegations. (Add extra sheets if needed).

[illegible]

3. Please describe rationale for an appeal to any adverse findings resulting from the investigation.

[illegible]

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Annual Review of Child Protection Policy Volunteer Worker Acknowledgement

This form is used in the place of an on-line affirmation of my annual review of the First Baptist Church Child Protection Policy.

I acknowledge that I have completed a review of the First Baptist Church *Child Protection Policy* and I have been informed of any changes to the policy. I have a clear understanding of what the term “abuse of a child” means.

This review may also be completed online.

(Signature)

(Date)