

Crestwood Baptist Church

Prevention of Children and Youth Abuse Policy

Revised / Approved as of 8/1/2018

Acknowledgement: I hereby acknowledge I have received a copy, read, understand and agree to adhere to the Crestwood Baptist Church Prevention of Children and Youth Abuse Policy. This signed agreement will be retained in my personnel/volunteer file.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PREVENTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH ABUSE POLICY

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PREVENTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH ABUSE

Statement of Policy:

Members of Crestwood Baptist Church come from a variety of experiences, backgrounds and needs. Church leadership is committed to providing an environment which is as safe as possible for children and youth who attend the Church or any sponsored programs or activities, and to take the necessary precautions to protect Church leaders from accusations or suspicions.

Church leadership recognizes the need to have formal, written policies and guidelines to help prevent the opportunity for, or the appearance of, abuse to a minor. The following procedures are not based on a lack of trust in a particular worker but instead are needed to protect our preschoolers, children, youth, employees, volunteers and the entire Church body.

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them." Mark 10:14,16

"Now it is required that those who have been given trust must prove faithful." 1 Corinthians 4:2

1.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

.01 By fostering awareness of appropriate, as well as inappropriate behaviors in the presence of minors, Crestwood Baptist Church, as part of the body of Christ, will demonstrate Christian love and respect for one another.

.02 Leadership recognizes that certain people have exceptional talents for teaching and supporting the growth and development of Crestwood Baptist Church's children and youth, and we wish to encourage them to use their spiritual gifts. At the same time, however, we have set certain criteria on those adults who choose to serve in this capacity, so as to protect the well-being of our children and youth.

.03 Our intent is not to be judgmental, for we are all accountable to God. We rely on God's wisdom in developing, implementing and carrying out His will through these guidelines. Compassion and truth will be the guiding forces for any investigation outlined in this policy.

.04 Congregational support is critical for adherence to this policy. The limited nature of our resources, and our desire to devote as much as possible to the work of the Lord, dictate that this policy be fully understood by every member of our congregation and extended family. This will enable staff and leadership to do what is within their power to preserve the Church resources for the work of the Lord.

.05 In the context of these procedures, the words "worker" or "workers" can mean any of the following individuals who provide services or work support for the care and oversight of a minor in a ministry activity or event of Crestwood Baptist Church.

- A full-time or part-time paid employee of Crestwood Baptist Church,
- Any self-employed individual who provides such care and support,
- Any volunteer, no matter of the age, who is not compensated for their services.

.06 "Immediate family" is defined as spouse, parents, siblings and children.

2.0 REPORTING AND INVESTIGATIONS

2.1 INCIDENTS DEFINED

.01 An "incident" means any occurrence in which any person:

- Has threatened or inflicted physical or emotional injury upon a child, youth or vulnerable adult, other than by accidental means, or is reasonably suspected to have done so.
- Commits or allows to be committed any sexual offense against a child, youth or vulnerable adult, or engages in any sexual contact with a child, youth or vulnerable adult, or is reasonably suspected to have done so.

- With respect to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult making any kind of sexual advance, or making a request for sexual favors, or engaging in sexually motivated physical contact, or engaging in other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, or is reasonably suspected to have done so.

2.2 REPORTING PROCEDURES

.01 The person reporting an incident shall contact the Pastor if an incident involves a child, youth, or vulnerable adult (or in his absence the chairman of the Safety Team).

.02 In all cases where any worker has reasonable cause to believe that a child or youth, may be abused or neglected, the worker and Pastor shall make a report to the local law enforcement agency's child abuse investigators.

2.3 IMMINENT THREAT

.01 In all cases where an imminent threat of continued or additional abuse exists, any witness shall immediately contact the Pastor or chairman of the Risk Management Committee on call at Crestwood Baptist Church and request that they take immediate steps to ensure the safety of the alleged victim. After the safety of the alleged victim has been secured, the person witnessing the incident shall notify law enforcement.

.02 An alleged wrong-doer shall not be allowed to work with children until the investigation is complete by law enforcement officials.

.03 Crestwood Baptist Church will cooperate fully with law enforcement officials during the investigation.

2.4 CONCLUSION OF ABUSE

.01 If the law enforcement officials conclude that there is reasonable cause to believe abuse may have occurred, the Risk Management Committee shall meet with the Deacons to discuss the incident.

.02 The Deacons, in consultation with the Pastor, shall have the power to take reasonable action deemed appropriate in response to the reported incident of abuse.

2.5 GENERAL GUIDELINES

.01 Always be aware incidents in this policy involve minors which demand strict, legal confidentiality. As a volunteer or Worker you are not permitted to discuss incidents with anyone outside of (internal/external) investigators.

.02 You are not permitted to make any statement to a member of the media, press or answer outside inquiries on behalf of the church. Any such requests for comments should be directed timely to the Senior Pastor (or Chairman of Deacons in the absence of the Senior Pastor.)

.03 You are not permitted to discuss or publicize in any way, any incident covered by this policy, in any form of electronic media, social media, etc. (even if omitting names of those individuals involved.)

.04 Whenever possible two adults, not in immediate family, should be present in each room where minors are present.

.05 Workers will be able to reach security by use of a church mobile radio available in the designated areas. Radios will be held by appropriate safety personnel in addition to the ministry directors.

.06 Special needs children may require specific arrangements. In such instances, specific directions will be given by the ministry director.

.07 Use of Video Cameras: To further protect the minors who have been placed in our care and the workers who so faithfully serve in this ministry, video cameras may be placed in strategic locations.

.08 Overnight Trips: Written Permission and Medical must be completed prior to the trip. The ratio of minor to adult leadership must be followed throughout the trip, with any exceptions clearly stated and approved in

advance by the parent or guardian. The total number of adults on each trip will be adjusted according to the requirement of the planned activities.

3.0 PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS

.01 The following behaviors are prohibited for all workers. This list is not meant to be all-inclusive, but is intended to provide guidance as to what may constitute prohibited behavior.

- Threatening or inflicting physical injury upon a child or youth, other than by accidental means.
- Committing any sexual offense against a child or youth, or engaging in any sexual contact with a child or youth.
- Making any kind of sexual advance, or making a request for sexual favors, or engaging in other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- The presence or possession of obscene or pornographic materials at any function of Crestwood Baptist Church.
- The presence, possession, distribution or being under the influence of any illegal or illicit drugs or alcohol while serving in a supervisory capacity for any function of Crestwood Baptist Church.
- The taking, storing or electronically transmitting of any inappropriate pictures with any electronic device or camera.
- Electronically transmitting or posting of any pictures of minors without parental consent.

4.0 DISCIPLINE OF CHILDREN

.01 Physical discipline, such as spanking, is never permitted. Using physical restraint to prevent a child from doing something dangerous is permitted and may, in some instances, be necessary. Affirmation and encouragement is always appropriate.

.02 The director shall advise workers on the best age-appropriate discipline methods.

.03 If a child becomes disruptive to others, or physically harms a child or an adult they should be immediately removed and taken to their parent.

.04 The behavior of a child who is a constant disruption to a class shall be discussed with his or her parents and the Director. In appropriate circumstances, the parents can be asked to attend class to observe or control the problem behavior. If the behavior persists, the child may be removed from the class. A child who is a threat to other children or an adult shall be removed immediately. The child cannot return until their behavior is under control.

5.0 WORKER ENLISTMENT AND SCREENING

.01 Volunteer workers considered for a position in the preschool, children and youth areas of ministry must be members in good standing of Crestwood Baptist Church for a minimum of six months before serving in these areas.

.02 All workers must be 18 years of age or older. Younger persons may assist adults, but they may not take the place of adult workers.

.03 All workers who work with preschool, children and youth will complete the Application for Preschool, Children and Youth Worker. Workers will also need to complete the Volunteer Application. All workers will need to complete the Authorization for Criminal/Court Records Check and agree to an annual background check.

.04 Names of all potential workers will be submitted to the pastoral staff for additional screening procedure if deemed necessary. An interview with the volunteer worker may be required by the pastoral staff. Additional information concerning the applicant may be required in the review process.

.05 All workers will be asked to provide personal references on the above-mentioned Authorization for Criminal/Court Records Check. The Volunteer Reference Check may be sent to the references or used to document discussions and findings.

.06 All workers with minors must be photographed and the picture placed in their personnel or volunteer file. Photographs will be updated every two years or as deemed necessary.

.07 Individuals who have been charged with, arrested for, under probation for, or convicted of either sexual or physical abuse cannot serve nor will they be employed for any Church sponsored activity or program for preschool, children or youth.

.08 Minor Workers must always be under the supervision and care of adult teacher or adult worker, adhering to 2-deep leadership.

.09 Workers shall be allowed to review his/her criminal records check and transcript at the Church, but under no circumstances shall the Church allow the worker to retain and/or copy his/her transcript.

6.0 GUIDELINES FOR WORKERS IN CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

6.1 WORKER CONDUCT

.01 Whenever possible the door to classrooms shall be kept open or, in the case of rooms with Dutch doors, the top half of the door shall be kept open, unless they are windowed.

.02 Classes shall remain in their assigned spaces. If there is to be a change, the ministry director must be informed and approve the change.

.03 Care shall be taken by workers so that young children do not leave the ministry area unattended.

.04 Paid workers shall always wear their assigned nametags with a special shirt for identification while on duty. Also, a picture ID of the paid worker shall be posted in the hallway. All workers shall wear a nametag while on duty.

.05 Touching to comfort or affirm a child in an age-appropriate manner is permitted. Children in first grade or older shall not sit in the lap of workers of the opposite sex. Workers shall not touch children in genital areas, except as necessary to change a diaper or to assist a child in the restroom as noted below.

.06 In the preschool division, only paid workers will change diapers or take

a child to the restroom.

.07 When a child is taken to a bathroom outside the room, a worker must check the bathroom before a child is permitted to enter and remain outside to ensure their safety.

6.2 PAID WORKER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

.01 All paid childcare workers will receive training regarding the spread of infectious diseases and AIDS.

.02 All paid workers will be trained in precautionary measures for dealing with soiled diapers, blood, vomit and the like, in protecting themselves, the children and disposal of soiled items.

.03 All paid workers must be certified in CPR and first aid and must keep their certifications current.

6.3 RECEIVING AND DISMISSING OF CHILDREN

.01 Parents or the person bringing the child will be required to provide contact information, as well as information necessary in caring for the child's well-being on a Child's Profile/Parent's Information Sheet.

.02 At any time, if there is a change in child's custody or guardianship, the ministry director should be informed. Additionally, if there is any knowledge the child's safety may be compromised, the ministry director should be informed.

.03 All children must be appropriately checked-in and have matching identification to the person (age 16 yrs or up) that is leaving with them. This identification tag should be on the child for easy identification for the workers.

.04 This identification will be matched with the person (age 16 yrs or up) that is picking the child up.

.05 Children facilities open fifteen minutes prior to church meetings and

services. Parents are asked to call for their children immediately at the close of each session. Sometimes even the most well-adjusted child will become anxious if he is left after the other boys and girls are gone.

.06 Only the appointed and enlisted workers are to be in the classroom with the children. Parents do not need to be in the room unless the Director has given permission.

6.4 COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

.01 Workers shall attempt to keep open lines of communication with parents.

.02 All children who attend must be registered with the children's education program.

.03 Parents will be given a copy of the Prevention of Children and Youth Abuse Policy upon request.

.04 Parents shall not leave a child if the child has had a fever, rash, diarrhea or vomiting in the past 24 hours or other severe illness.

6.5 STAFFING THE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

.01 In preschool and younger rooms, at least one (1) of the workers must be female.

.02 The ratio of workers to children is recommended to be 1:4 for nursery, 1:7 for preschool classrooms and 1:9 for school age classrooms.

.03 There shall always be a Director, or Designee, on duty while class is in session who will make roving checks of all classrooms. The checks shall be on an irregular basis so that the time of the visit cannot be predicted from week to week.

.04 The Director, or Designee shall make provision for last-minute replacements of a worker who cannot be present on a given day. If the required number of workers cannot be obtained, the class must be cancelled

or combined with another class.

.05 Qualified substitutes may be requested to work in children's rooms to fill in for other workers.

.06 To ensure that there shall be sufficient substitutes available when the regular worker cannot attend, the Children's Ministry Team, in conjunction with the Director, shall develop a program to encourage parents to undergo the worker screening process and to screen substitutes on a preliminary basis.

7.0 GUIDELINES FOR WORKERS IN YOUTH PROGRAMS

7.1 STAFFING CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUTH ACTIVITIES

.01 A specific ratio of leaders to youth should be no lower than 1:10; the ratio should be raised to be appropriate for the activity being undertaken.

.02 Any one-on-one meetings involving a youth must be conducted in an open area in plain sight of others present. When possible, scheduled meetings should occur with the following directives:

- (1) proper approval has been given by the parent or guardian,
- (2) the designated Church official has been notified, and
- (3) separate transportation is used.
- (4) At no time shall a youth worker pursue a dating relationship with a student.

.03 Unplanned meetings between director and youth should be held with another adult, not in immediate family, present.

8.0 GUIDELINES REGARDING CHURCH FACILITIES

.01 Parents are encouraged to:

- accompany their children to the restroom
- disallow their children to wander around Church facilities unaccompanied
- discourage their children from leaving the worship service unattended

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.02 Safety personnel will monitor parking lots during major activities and have also been instructed to be alert for minors leaving worship services or wandering around Church facilities unaccompanied. If they feel that the minor has no valid reasons for leaving the service, they will confront the minor and direct him or her back to the parent or supervised activity.

.03 A list of proper reporting procedures should be posted in areas of children's activities.

.04 A monthly inspection of the nursery/toddler area shall be conducted by the Preschool Director. The following items, but not limited to, shall be inspected:

- Are all electrical plugs equipped with child-proof covers?
- Are all drapery/blind cords out of reach of cribs and children?
- Are crib mattresses less than two finger widths from side of the crib frame
- Are bumper pads present in cribs for children who cannot stand?
- Is the crib rail at least 26 inches above the top of the mattress support?
- Are cribs free from loose or protruding pieces?
- Do the changing tables have safety straps?
- Are safety gates modern and safe (non-accordion style)?
- Do all high chairs have both waist and between-the-leg straps?
- Are the playpens made of mesh and in good working order?
- Are all toys clean and in good repair?
- Are all toys and parts large enough not to be swallowed?
- Is there a gate or door separating the restroom area?
- Are playpens and cribs free from items tied onto them?
- Are doors to closets, hallways, and other rooms equipped with a lock?
- Are all medications out of the reach of children?