



Discovering the Ultimate Treasure  
The Children's Ministry *of*

Southview Baptist Church

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## CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES<sup>1</sup>

*Revised July 2020*



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<sup>1</sup> We are grateful to Capital Hill Baptist Church in Washington D.C. for their permission to use their child protection policy as the basis for ours.

## Biblical Foundation, Vision, and Mission

Our biblical purpose is to support parents in their vital role of teaching and training their children in the word of God (the Bible).

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:4–9, ESV)

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 3:14–15, ESV)

We recognize the great value of children in the mind of God.

Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to him, saying, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.” (Luke 18:15–16, ESV)

“Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.” (Matthew 18:5–6, ESV)

And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me.” (Mark 9:36–37, ESV)

Because Jesus equates receiving children as receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father, and because the Lord Jesus places such high value on children, we at Southview Baptist Church place high value on receiving and ministering to children. We are also committed to ensure children are protected from abuse and to create a safe environment for Jesus and the gospel to be represented and presented. The church has established policies and procedures that address leadership, safety, security, and hygiene.

**Our mission at Southview Baptist Church (SBC) is therefore to glorify God by:**

- Maintaining a safe and secure environment for our children.
- Supporting, equipping, and encouraging parents to fulfil their biblical responsibility for teaching biblical truths to their children (Ephesians 6:4).
- Making the whole counsel of Scripture known to children while emphasizing the Lord Jesus Christ and His gospel as the central theme throughout the scriptures (Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Romans 1:16-17).
- Praying for the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit to transform the hearts of the children through the teaching of God's Word so they would be enabled to behold "the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God" (2 Corinthians 4:4).
- Being living examples of the Lord Jesus Christ to the children, demonstrating to them how believers in the Lord Jesus are called to respond to God, interact with each other, and assess the world around them (1 Corinthians 11:1).
- Training children to see the value in serving and to not just be served (Mark 10:43-45).
- Maintaining biblical ethical standards in order that volunteers and staff live and serve above reproach, protecting the reputation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Preparing children, depending on the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, to walk with God as adults, and to be a full participating adult member of the church.

## Volunteer and Staff Expectations

Those who teach, guide, and care for children must have some of the basic qualification of deacons:

"... must be above reproach ... sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach [for head teachers], not a drunkard, not violent, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He [or she] must manage his [or her] household well, with all dignity keeping his [or her] own household ... must be well thought of by outsiders ... " (1 Timothy 3:2-7 ESV).

All children's ministry volunteers and staff share the responsibility for:

- Loving the children as Christ loves them.
- Living as examples of Jesus Christ and growing more like Him.
- Serving and ministering to the children.
- Understanding that serving and caring for children is not a right, but it is a privilege which carries with it responsibilities to God for ministering to and caring for children in a way that would bring glory to God.

## Child Protection

Because the safety of children while in our care is our primary concern, we do the following:

- Screen all children's ministry volunteers with, but not limited to: background checks, interviews, and reference checks.
- Perform background checks on all full-time church staff, regardless of whether or not they have direct contact with children.
- Require training for all children's ministry staff and volunteers.
- Use kiosk child drop-off and pick-up authentication.
- Employ & volunteer/child ratios that optimize safety.
- Employ hall monitors to promote and maintain safety in the building.
- First aid kits centrally located in strategic areas.
- 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 policy for admittance to children's 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.

### **A. Parameters for the Child Protection Policy**

This child protection policy applies to children, from birth to 5<sup>th</sup> grade, who are voluntarily placed by parents under the responsibility of the church for the church's public worship services and small group meetings where children's ministry classes are provided, and other church-sponsored activities where children's ministry child-care is provided (training meetings, leader meetings, seminars, Vacation Bible School). Any forms of abuse, harm, neglect or other problems related to children at home, school, or in any bible-study, activity, or venue not directly related to children's ministry at Southview Baptist Church is not covered by this policy.

### **B. Definitions of Personnel**

*Adult* – any person eighteen years old or older.

*Child or youth* – any person under the age of eighteen.

*Volunteers* – adults who work with children and are not in the employment of the church. Volunteers include childcare workers, teachers, assistant teachers, and anyone else who serves in the children's ministry. Volunteers who serve in the children's ministry are those who have successfully gone through the children's ministry screening and training process.

## Protecting the Children Before They Arrive

In an effort to create the safest possible environment, Southview Baptist Church has put into place procedures that begin long before Sunday services or Wednesday evening small groups. These procedures include a screening process and training.

### A. Screening Procedure

Southview Baptist Church has established a screening procedure to approve those who volunteer to work with our children.

- All volunteers must be members of Southview Baptist Church or a regular attendee for at least 6 months prior to serving in the children's ministry. Exceptions to the six-month guideline are made on a case by case basis only if the following criteria can be met:
  - The potential volunteer has served in a like-minded ministry with children for at least six months in the church he or she attended prior to coming to Southview Baptist church, and
  - The potential volunteer can provide a reference from the staff person or church leader with whom they worked at that church.
- All volunteers must be eighteen years of age or older.
- Children or youth are welcome to help provided they comply with the restriction for children and youth (see page 7).
- All volunteers must have completed and signed the Southview Baptist Church volunteer application and the background check release form.
- All volunteers must complete an interview with the children and families pastor or the nursery coordinator and be approved in consultation with the pastoral staff.
- All volunteers must pass a criminal background check and reference check prior to serving in the Children's Ministry. Criminal background checks will be completed again every two years for all volunteers and staff.
- All completed records of screening procedures will be kept securely along with the original application.

SBC 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; 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.

Any volunteer, helper, deacon, staff or elder (or any SBC member) who learns of or has knowledge of misconduct by an applicant or volunteer must report that knowledge to the children and families pastor or nursery coordinator. 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.

**B. Training**

All children's ministry staff and volunteers must have completed orientation and training before they are allowed to work with the children. Additional training sessions will be scheduled for existing volunteers to update them on policies and procedures. Parents with questions about childcare training are welcome to attend these sessions.

## Protecting the Children as They Arrive and Depart

**A. Arrival and Departure Times**

- Volunteers should be ready to accept children 15 minutes prior to the start of any service or session. This enables parents to have enough time to check-in their children before the session begins.
- Parents are encouraged to pick up their children immediately after the conclusion of the session. If a child is not picked up within 15 minutes of the end of a service, meeting, or small group session, a hall monitor will be asked to locate the parents.

**B. Signing a Child into Children's Ministry**

- Any parent who would like his/her child to participate in a children's ministry program have to initially register the child at a manned kiosk. The parent should note any allergies or special needs the child might have. A child must be checked in at a kiosk before entering a class, nursery, or activity, thus granting them permission to participate in the event or program. Two name tags are printed for each child which includes a security number, and one pick-up tag is printed with a matching security number which is needed to pick up the child at the end of the service or event.
- Check-in Kiosk leaders, classroom leaders, and staff have the right to refuse any child at check-in. Some reasons might include potential illness, behavior that endangers other children, the room being closed because the adult child ratio, or anything else that might impair our ability to maintain a safe and secure environment for the children.
- The parent or designated guardian must be in the church building at all times while their children are checked-in.

**C. Parental Authentication Identification System**

- In order to protect the children in our care, each child must be checked into his/her class by a parent or guardian.
- Parent/guardian will receive an Identification Number Tag (INT) with an Identification Number that will match the number on each child's Security Name Tag (SNT). The child will have two Security Name Tags (SNTs) printed with a security number on each that matches the Identification Number Tag (INT).

**D. When the parent/guardian drops-off the child:**

1. Place one of the Security Name Tags (SNT) on the child (chest or back) and the other SNT on the roster pad at the classroom door.
2. Keep the Identification Number Tag (INT), for the parent/guardian must present this to pick-up the child.

**E. When the parent/guardian comes to pick up the child:**

1. The parent/guardian must present the Identification Number Tag (INT).
2. The children's ministry volunteer will match the INT with the SNT. (The teacher does not need to take the INT from the parent, as the parent may need it to pick up additional children).
3. The volunteer will bring the child to the door and remove the child's label before releasing the child to the parent. Parents should not enter the classroom, but wait for the volunteer to bring the child and their belongings to them. Children should never be sent to "find" their parents.
4. Volunteers will mark the SNT on the Roster Pad after the child has been picked up.
5. The parent/guardian or whomever the parent has authorized, by giving them the INT, can pick up the child from their classroom. The person picking up the child must be 14 years of age or older.
6. If a children's ministry volunteer has a child in another class, that volunteer should make arrangements with the other teacher on how the child will be picked up.

**F. Divorce, Separation, Custody Violation, or Restraining Order**

The INT must be presented and the number of the INT must match the number of the SNT before a child is released. If a parent attempts to pick up a child without an INT, the teacher should explain that a security INT must be presented that matches the number on the child's SNT. If the parent insists on picking up the child without an INT, a security team member should be contacted immediately. If a parent presents a court order for a child, the police must also be present, and we are to release the child to police custody. In any of these circumstances, the Children's Ministry Pastor or the Nursery Coordinator should be contacted immediately.

## Protecting the Children while They are in Our Care

**A. Two Volunteer Rule**

- For all children's classes and programs, at least two qualified adult volunteers must be present in each classroom.
- When there is not an adequate number of volunteers to have two volunteers in a classroom, the one adult volunteer must be highly visible to other adults at all times. In this situation, doors must be open or there must be a window in the door.
- A child or children must never be left alone in a classroom.
- A child or children must never be allowed to leave a classroom alone.
- Two male volunteers may not serve together in the same room without a female volunteer also being present. The only exception to this rule is when a male Hall Monitor temporarily substitutes for a female volunteer who is taking children to the restroom. The hall monitor should stand at the doorway of the classroom.

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

**B. Visibility**

- When children's classes or programs are in session, the interior doors and windows should allow for unobstructed views from the outside of everyone inside the room.
- Children's ministry volunteers may take children out of the nursery or classroom for the following reasons:
  - to use the bathroom or in cases of illness, emergency, or evacuation.
  - children may be taken outside the classroom for brief periods to locations such as the sanctuary (for example to view baptisms) or the playground, etc. (always ON campus). A sign must be put on the classroom door informing parents as to the children's location. All children must be in their classrooms within the first 15 minutes and last 15 minutes of the service or function time.

**C. Children and Youth Age Guidelines for Service:**

- Youth ages sixteen and older can assist in the children's ministry programs for toddlers through elementary school age when an approved adult is serving in the same room (youth are never to serve or be left alone with children without the presence of an approved adult). When serving with toddler and twos, the following guidelines need to be followed:
  - Diapers shall be changed by female adults only.
  - Youth should not carry toddlers or twos.
  - Female youth shall not assist with bathroom needs for any age group without an approved adult, and no male youth shall assist with bathroom needs.
  - All youth volunteers must be approved by the children and families pastor prior to participating in the children's ministry program.

**D. Hall Monitors (Security Team)**

The Hall Monitor is a qualified male or female volunteer whose duties are not limited to any one classroom. Hall Monitors generally move about the hallways and buildings during scheduled session times to observe any unusual activity and be of service to the children's ministry volunteers (e.g., locating parents or helping volunteers during children's bathroom breaks). Hall Monitors and all classrooms are equipped with walkie-talkies to facilitate communication. Hall Monitors are on duty during Sunday morning, Wednesday evening services, and special events such as Vacation Bible School.

**E. Child to Volunteer Ratios**

The following ratios are maintained during the regularly scheduled weekly meetings of the church:

- Children 0-12 months: One adult for every three children
- Children 13-35 months: One adult for every seven children
- Children 3 year old-kindergarten: One adult for every ten children
- Children 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade: One adult for every 15 children
- Children 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade: One adult for every 25 children



Once a ratio is met, additional children should not be accepted into a classroom if doing so would exceed the ration unless and until additional volunteers are added. The Nursery Coordinator or the Children's Ministry Pastor should be notified when ratio limits are coming close to be met.

#### **F. Diaper Changing and Rest Room Procedure**

- 6 Weeks 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 needed during the service. Only women are allowed to change diapers. Diapers must be changed in the presence of at least one other adult volunteer.

- 3 Years Old through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Parent should take their children to the restroom prior to signing them into a class.

If a leader must take a child alone, he/she should inform a Hall Monitor. Children should *never* be sent to the restroom alone during Children's Ministry programs.

When possible, children will be encouraged to take care of their own bathroom needs. If assistance is required, the outer bathroom door must remain ajar. A leader should never go into the restroom or stall and close the door. One foot in the door while remaining in the hall is the way to give instructions to children in a restroom.

Men are never to assist with bathroom needs or enter a restroom with a child.

Children must wash their hands when done in the restroom.

Procedures when taking children to a bathroom in one of the hallways:

1. Make sure a hall monitor is with you.
2. Check the bathroom(s) to make sure no one is occupying it (them).
3. Do not allow anyone to enter the bathroom while the children are using it.
4. Prop the bathroom door open with your foot in order to give instructions to the children.
5. If you need to enter the bathroom, make sure the door stays ajar where the hall monitor may have clear sight of you.

#### **G. Appropriate Discipline**

- All children's ministry volunteers are responsible for providing a loving, respectful, and orderly atmosphere in which children can learn, play, and interact with others. This atmosphere should be maintained by preparing beforehand, proactively directing children towards acceptable activities, verbally encouraging positive behavior, and, when necessary, correcting or redirecting inappropriate behavior. Many discipline problems occur because teachers are unprepared. Therefore, all activities and lessons need to be prepared beforehand by the teacher. The classroom rules need to be clear and communicated to the children in each class.

- Acceptable means of redirecting inappropriate behavior may include correcting the child verbally, withholding certain privileges or activities for a brief time, or separating a child from the situation or problem for a brief time (particularly if his/her behavior is endangering or upsetting other children). During correction, it is best if the child is not removed from the classroom. If a child must be removed from the classroom, make sure a hall monitor is present. 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): (1) removing the child from the situation or problem; (2) pointing out the problematic behavior; talking to the child about his/her sin and need for Christ; (3) praying for the child and redirecting to a new activity; (4) helping the child to reconcile with the offended children when appropriate. Volunteers should view misbehavior as an opportunity to introduce children to the gospel and their need of Christ.
- Children'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 children.
- If a child's behavior is uncontrollable or the child does not respond to the acceptable means of discipline indicated above, volunteer or staff should ask the Hall Monitor to call the parents through the sanctuary paging system located in the toddler room (#405). If the child assaults, harasses or bullies other children, misbehaves beyond minor correction, or has a pattern of misbehavior, the parents should be immediately called so the child can be removed. Volunteers, staff, hall monitors, or deacons are allowed to physically restrain a child if he/she is physically endangering other children or self. Please report any of these problems (as well as the appropriate response taken to deal with the behavior) to the Nursery Coordinator or the Children's Pastor. Once a child is removed from children's ministry, reinstatement is possible at the determination of the Nursery Coordinator or the Children's Pastor. A child may be reinstated if the risk of re-offense has been adequately reduced.

#### **H. Physical Touch Policy**

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

##### **1. Volunteer-to-Child**

While appropriate physical contact with children 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, 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 and develops a sense of emotional security and maturity in their interactions with adults. Appropriate touch is applied to meet the needs of children and not the adults.

- Appropriate physical contact will vary according to the age of the child. What is appropriate for nursery children (holding, rocking, sitting on laps, etc.) will not be appropriate for grade school children.
- Inappropriate touch involves, but is not limited to coercion or other forms of physical contact which exploits the child's lack of knowledge, satisfies adult physical needs at the expense of the child, violates laws against sexual or physical contact between adult and child, and any attempt to modify child behavior with physical force.
- For ages 2 thru 7, only women can take children to the restroom.
- Sitting on laps is only appropriate for ages 0 to 5.
- A man will need to limit physical contact more than a woman in the same situation, especially when working with older children.
- Volunteers should refrain from rough-housing, wrestling, shoulder or piggy-back rides, rubbing, massaging, or any physical activity that might make a child feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Only touch children 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 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 out of frustration or anger. Physical discipline is not an appropriate means of correcting someone else's child.

## 2. Child/Teen-to-Child

- No male or female under age eighteen (18) should ever be alone together while in children's ministry.
- No inappropriate touching (as defined above and in the appendix) of any kind will be accepted.
- Fighting will not be tolerated and any child participating in violent action will be dismissed from a class/program and placed into his or her parent's care.

### I. Parents in the Classroom

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

### J. Food and Drink Policy

- One of the ways we protect children is to limit the food and drink allowed in the classrooms. Only pre-packaged, store bought snacks are served in the classrooms (nothing homemade).
- Volunteers should always check each child's Security Name Tag (SNT) for allergy information before serving a snack.

## Healthy Child Policy

### A. Communicable Disease Policy

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

1. Children with infectious diseases should be kept home until they are no longer contagious. If a child 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 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. SBC is dedicated to preventing the spread of disease among the children. Teachers have the right to refuse a child on the basis of questionable symptoms. To prevent this, parents are asked to comply with the Healthy Child Policy guidelines.

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

- Fever, vomiting or diarrhea (Note: Children should be free of a fever, vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours before coming to children's 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
- Children who appear ill during a class will be kept immediately outside their classroom with a volunteer while the Hall Monitor locates the parents.

Please inform the Children's Ministry Administrator or Nursery Coordinator if your child appears to have contracted an illness while attending a SBC event so that other parents may be notified if necessary. If a child contracts an illness and has been in contact with other children while at SBC, it is the responsibility of parents to notify the Children Ministry Administrator or Nursery Coordinator.

Neither volunteers nor church staff may give any medication to any child.

Parents of children with special needs are encouraged to contact the Children's Ministry Administrator before signing the child into class. This allows the staff to assess the needs of the child and assist parents in transitioning their child into a classroom setting.

## **B. Universal Precautions**

Universal precautions are very effective for protecting both the children and volunteers from illness. These methods are employed such that all human bodily fluids are treated as if they carried infectious diseases. Universal precautions are applicable in any setting and should always be used.

Important Points of Universal Precautions:

- Wash hands before and after any contact with bodily fluids, including wiping noses, changing diapers, cleaning vomit, and treating a blood spill.
- Always wear disposable gloves when dealing with any bodily fluids.
- Treat all soiled linen (i.e. sheets, clothing) as potential infectious agents.
- In rooms with children ages 23 months and below, remove toys that children have mouthed from the general play area. Set them in the designated container to be washed.
- At the end of the session, disinfect the room with Lysol disinfectant spray

## Neglect & Abuse Prevention, Reporting, and Response

SBC desires to be a safe place for all children and adults who attend any activity. Trusted individuals sometimes victimize children. The church is not immune to such abuse, either by its members or by those in leadership positions. Incidents of child abuse or neglect cut across racial, social, economic, and religious boundaries. Although no organization or individual can assure complete protection, this Child Abuse Prevention Policies and Procedures Manual reflects Southview Baptist Church's commitment to help protect children from harm. This manual applies to all volunteer and compensated workers of Southview Baptist Church.

SBC will not tolerate child abuse or neglect. Your cooperation in the commitment not only reflects your concern about children's safety but also your willingness to take steps toward stopping child abuse and its detrimental effects.

For the safety and protection of our children and leaders, all ministry servants who participate in church-sponsored activities with children are required to comply with the guidelines provided in this manual. Reports of any inconsistency should be made in writing to the children's pastor or the nursery director.

### Definitions

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions shall apply, consistent with North Carolina's legal definitions set forth in the attached appendix,:

1. Adult – Any person 18 or older
2. Child or youth – Any person under the age of 18
3. Child abuse – Child abuse refers to an act committed by a parent, caregiver, or person in a position of trust and which harms or threatens to harm a child's physical or mental health or welfare.
  - a. Physical abuse – A physical injury, threat of injury, creation of a real and significant danger; or substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or impairment of bodily functions. Such injury or threat of injury, regardless of intent, is inflicted or allowed to be inflicted by non-accidental means.
  - b. Physical Neglect – The failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, or supervision for a child if the child's health or safety is endangered. Physical neglect may include multiple occurrences or a one-time critical or severe event that results in a threat to health and safety, such as a toddler left alone. Other types of neglect include inadequate shelter, inadequate personal hygiene, inadequate food, and malnutrition.
  - c. Sexual Abuse – Abuse that consists of sexual contact or interactions with a child, including physical contact (fondling, sexual intercourse) and nonphysical contact (exhibitionism, child prostitution, pornography).

- d. Medical Neglect – Refusal or failure by a caretaker to obtain and/or follow through with complete regimen of medical, mental, or dental care for a condition, which if untreated, could result in illness or developmental delays.
  - e. Failure to Thrive – A syndrome of infancy or early childhood that is characterized by growth failure, signs of severe malnutrition, and variable degrees of developmental retardation. Children are considered to be in this category only when the syndrome is diagnosed by a physician and is caused by non-organic factors.
  - f. Mental Abuse/Neglect - A pattern of acts or omissions by the caretaker that result in harm to a child’s psychological or emotional health or development.
  - g. Bizarre Discipline – Any actions in which the caretaker uses eccentric, irrational, or grossly inappropriate procedures or devices to modify the child’s behavior.
4. Compensated Worker – Hourly, salaried, part-time, or full-time employee who works with children at any church sponsored activity.
  5. Volunteer Worker – Any non-compensated or volunteer worker.
  6. Caregiver or leader – Any compensated or volunteer worker.
  7. Mandated reporter – Any persons with the responsibility for the care of children is a mandated reporter. North Carolina states that if a caregiver has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or may be subjected to abuse or neglect or observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, that person shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the director of that ministry.

### Signs of Abuse

Preferential Molesters are less common, but may have many victims since they seek out children to molest. Often, they are willing to invest large amounts of time with children, building relationships of trust. A screening program that includes criminal background checks and alerts interviewers is the most effective method to minimize the risk of this type of molester.

Situational Molesters are more common, but have fewer victims. Rather than actively seeking situations in which they may abuse, they take advantage of situations that present themselves. Since they have fewer victims, criminal records often do not exist so background checks are less effective. Policies that require two or more unrelated adults to be present with preschoolers or children at all times, viewing windows in all classroom doors, and adequate supervision of teachers are effective deterrents to this type of molester.

#### 1. Signs of Physical Abuse

##### *Physical Indicators*

- Unexplained bruises and welts in unusual patterns or shapes which suggest the use of an instrument (belt buckle, electric cord) on a child in various stages of healing regularly appear after absence, weekend, or vacation

- Unexplained bruises
- Rope burns
- Infected burns indicating delay in treatment or burns in the shape of common household utensils or appliances

#### *Behavioral Indicators*

- Behavioral extremes (withdrawal, regression, depression)
- Inappropriate or excessive fear of a parent or caregiver
- Antisocial behavior such as substance abuse, truancy, running away, fear of going home
- Unbelievable or inconsistent explanation for injuries
- Lies unusually still while surveying surroundings (for infants)
- Unusual shyness, wariness of physical contact

## 2. Signs of Sexual Abuse

#### *Physical Indicators*

- Torn or stained clothing
- Frequent, unexplained sore throats; infections
- Physical complaints, including pain and irritation of the child's private areas
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Bruises or bleeding
- Pregnancy

#### *Behavioral Indicators*

- The victim's disclosure of abuse
- Regressive behaviors (thumb-sucking, bedwetting, fear of the dark)
- Promiscuity or seductive behaviors
- Disturbed sleep patterns (recurrent nightmares)
- Unusual and age-inappropriate interest in sexual matters
- Avoidance of undressing or wearing extra layers of clothing
- Sudden decline in school performance, truancy
- Difficulty in walking or sitting



### 3. Signs of Neglect

#### *Physical Indicators*

- Poor hygiene, including lice, scabies, severe or untreated diaper rash, bedsores, body odor
- Squinting
- Unsuitable clothing; missing key articles of clothing (underwear, socks, shoes); overdressed or underdressed for climate conditions
- Untreated injury or illness
- Indicators of prolonged exposure to the elements (excessive sunburn, insect bites, colds)
- Height and weight significantly below age level

#### *Behavioral Indicators*

- Unusual school attendance
- Chronic absenteeism
- Chronic hunger, tiredness, or lethargy
- Begging or collecting leftovers
- Assuming adult responsibilities
- Reporting no caretaker at home

### 4. Signs of Emotional Abuse

#### *Physical Indicators*

- Eating disorders, including obesity or anorexia
- Speech disorders (stuttering, stammering)
- Developmental delays in the acquisition of speech or motor skills
- Weight or height level substantially below norm
- Flat or bald spots on head (infants)
- Nervous disorders (rashes, hives, facial tics or spasms, stomach aches)

#### *Behavioral Indicators*

- Habit disorders (biting, rocking, head banging)

- Cruel behavior, seeming to get pleasure from hurting children, adults, or animals; seeming to get pleasure from being mistreated
- Age-inappropriate behaviors (bedwetting, wetting, soiling)
- Behavioral extremes including the following: overly compliant-demanding, withdrawn-aggressive, listless-excitabile

### Reporting Child Abuse

If Southview Baptist Church receives an allegation of child abuse, it will respond with the utmost concern to the victim, parent, or other party making such an allegation. The accused will be treated with dignity and support. Without clear and convincing evidence to the contrary, Southview Baptist Church personnel will assume that such complaints are made in good faith. Persons making such complaints should have no doubt that SBC takes them seriously and will take appropriate action.

When it becomes necessary to report suspected child abuse or neglect, the protection of children must be the most important concern. It is the legal responsibility of any person with responsibility for the care of children to report all cases of child abuse they observe, and further, to report visible signs of alleged abuse. Failure to report could lead to liability on the part of the church, the observer, or both. SBC has determined that it is the responsibility of the program staff to report all cases of suspected child abuse to the proper legal authorities. While the confidentiality of the pastor/parishioner relationship is very important, reporting reasonable suspicion of child abuse has the potential for helping individuals receive help for a previous problem and may prevent further harm to a child, that person or others.

What is reasonable suspicion? Reasonable suspicion means that there is credible evidence or a discrepant or inconsistent history in explaining a child's suspected abuse.

A report based on reasonable suspicion does not require proof of the abuse or neglect has actually occurred or that the reporter witnessed the incident in question. Reporting is not a determination that child abuse or neglect has actually occurred; rather, it is a request for an assessment of the condition of a child.

Because we believe children are our most importantly concern, SBC has adopted the following guidelines for reporting:

- A. Treat each allegation of child abuse seriously.
- B. Attempt to assure the safety and protection of persons who have been harmed.
- C. Pray for the church and all persons affected by the allegation.
- D. Immediately begin documenting all procedures observed in handling the allegation.
- E. Immediately notify the pastor and responsible leaders in the area of ministry affected by the allegation. The pastor, or designated (or delegated) leader, will initiate in internal investigation of the allegations within twenty-four (24) hours of notice and also notify the church's legal counsel.

- F. The pastor, or designated leader, shall Immediately notify the appropriate state office of the allegation.

For Cumberland County:

Cumberland County Department of Social Services  
1225 Ramsey Street  
P.O. Box 2429  
State Courier #: 14-62-41  
Fayetteville, NC 28302  
Phone: 910-323-1540  
Fax Number: 910-677-2801  
Emergency Phone: 910-323-1500  
Website: <http://www.ccdssnc.com/child-services/>

Per Cumberland County Department of Social Services' Website:

TO REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT:  
During regular business hours: Call 910-677-2450  
After hours: Call (910) 489-4583  
By Mail: CCDSS, P.O. Box 2429, Fayetteville, NC 28302  
In Person: CCDSS, 1225 Ramsey St., Fayetteville, NC 28302

Please DO NOT e-mail a report or leave a voicemail

- G. The pastor, designated leader, shall immediately notify the parents if it is not known that they have previous knowledge of the allegations.
- H. The pastor, designated leader, shall immediately notify the church's insurance company. As appropriate, the designated leader shall immediately notify the church's insurance carrier of the alleged incident.
- I. If the accused has assigned duties within the church, that person must be temporarily relieved of these duties until the investigation is concluded.
- J. The pastor, or designated leader, should extend whatever care and resources are necessary. In providing care to the principals (alleged victim and the accused) and their families, the pastor or designated leader, should under no circumstances be drawn into a discussion of the truth or falsity of the allegation which could contaminate an official investigation. Do not assign blame or take any steps that involve establishing or negating the allegation.
- K. It is appropriate and encouraged to show care and comfort for the alleged victim. This should be the pastoral objective from the moment the allegation is received or otherwise made known.
- L. Observe confidentiality for both the alleged victim and the accused until advised to the contrary by the pastor.
- M. Do not confront the accused until the safety of the child or student is secured.

- N. Do not prejudge the situation, but take the allegations seriously and reach out to the alleged victim and his or her family. Showing care and support help prevent further hurt. Extend whatever pastoral resources are needed. Remember that the care and safety of the alleged victim is the first priority. In some situations, churches have responded in a negative or non-supportive manner to the alleged victim. This can increase the anger and pain of the alleged victim and his or her family. Further reconciliation can then be more difficult and the possibility of damaging litigation increases.
- O. Treat the accused with dignity and support. If the accused is a caregiver, that person should be relieved temporarily of his or her duties until the investigation is completed.
- P. If the media or other parties contact a church official about a pending allegation of child abuse, they should be referred to the pastor. Only the pastor or his designee should make comments about the allegations. The pastor will use the text of a prepared public statement to the press and to convey news to the congregation. The prepared statement shall be made only after consultation with the church's legal counsel and will include the steps the church has taken to protect children, such as the development and implementation of this manual, and the care and concern the church has for all parties involved. The privacy and confidentiality of all involved shall continue to be of primary concern.

#### **Important Contacts and Phone Numbers**

- National Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-4-A-CHILD
- State Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-859-0829
- County Child Protective Services 910-677-2450

## Appendix 1: North Carolina Definitions of Physical, Sexual, and Emotion Abuse; and Neglect

### **Physical Abuse**

Citation: Gen. Stat. § 7B-101

'Abused juvenile' means any child younger than age 18 who is found to be a minor victim of human trafficking under § 14-43.15 or whose parent, guardian, custodian, or caregiver does any of the following:

- Inflicts or allows to be inflicted upon the child a serious physical injury by other than accidental means
- Creates or allows to be created a substantial risk of serious physical injury to the child by other than accidental means
- Uses or allows to be used upon the child cruel or grossly inappropriate procedures or cruel or grossly inappropriate devices to modify behavior
- Encourages, directs, or approves of delinquent acts involving moral turpitude committed by the juvenile
- Commits or allows to be committed the offense of human trafficking, involuntary servitude, or sexual servitude against the child

This term includes any juvenile younger than age 18 who is a victim or is alleged to be a victim of human trafficking, involuntary servitude, or sexual servitude, regardless of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator.

### **Neglect**

Citation: Gen. Stat. § 7B-101

'Neglected juvenile' means a child younger than age 18 who is found to be a minor victim of human trafficking or whose parent, guardian, custodian, or caregiver acts as follows:

- Does not provide proper care, supervision, or discipline
- Does not provide necessary medical care or remedial care
- Allows the child to live in an environment injurious to the child's welfare
- Unlawfully transfers custody of the child under § 14-321.2
- Places the child for care or adoption in violation of law

In determining whether a child is a neglected juvenile, it is relevant whether that child lives in a home where another child has died as a result of suspected abuse or neglect or has been subjected to abuse or neglect by an adult who regularly lives in the home.

'Serious neglect' means conduct, behavior, or inaction of the juvenile's parent, guardian, custodian, or caregiver that evidences a disregard of consequences of such magnitude that the conduct, behavior, or inaction constitutes an unequivocal danger to the juvenile's health, welfare, or safety but does not constitute abuse.

A 'dependent juvenile' is a juvenile in need of assistance or placement because of either of the following:

- The juvenile has no parent, guardian, or custodian responsible for the juvenile's care or supervision.
- The juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian is unable to provide for the juvenile's care or supervision and lacks an appropriate alternative child care arrangement.

### **Sexual Abuse/Exploitation**

Citation: Gen. Stat. § 7B-101

The term 'abused juvenile' includes any child younger than age 18 who is found to be a minor victim of human trafficking, under § 14-43.15, or whose parent, guardian, custodian, or caregiver commits, permits, or encourages the commission of a violation of the following laws regarding sexual offenses by, with, or upon the child:

- Forcible rape, statutory rape of a child by an adult, or first-degree statutory rape
- A forcible sex offense, statutory sexual offense with a child by an adult, or first-degree statutory sexual offense
- Sexual activity by a substitute parent or custodian
- Sexual activity with a student
- Unlawful sale, surrender, or purchase of a minor
- A crime against nature or incest
- Preparation of obscene photographs, slides, or motion pictures of the juvenile
- Employing or permitting the juvenile to assist in a violation of the obscenity laws
- Dissemination of obscene material to the juvenile
- Displaying or disseminating material harmful to the juvenile
- First- and second-degree sexual exploitation of the juvenile
- Promoting the prostitution of the juvenile
- Taking indecent liberties with the juvenile

### **Emotional Abuse**

Citation: Gen. Stat. § 7B-101

The term 'abused juvenile' includes any child younger than age 18 whose parent, guardian, custodian, or caregiver creates or allows to be created serious emotional damage to the child. Serious emotional damage is evidenced by a child's severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or aggressive behavior toward him- or herself or others.

**Abandonment**

**Citation: Gen. Stat. § 7B-101**

The term 'neglected juvenile' includes a child who has been abandoned.

**Standards for Reporting**

**Citation: Gen. Stat. § 7B-301**

A report is required when any person has cause to suspect that any juvenile is abused, neglected, or dependent or has died as the result of maltreatment.

**Persons Responsible for the Child**

Citation: Gen. Stat. § 7B-101

'Responsible individual' means a parent, guardian, custodian, or caretaker who abuses or seriously neglects a juvenile.

The term 'caretaker' means any person other than a parent, guardian, or custodian who has responsibility for the health and welfare of a juvenile in a residential setting, including any of the following:

- A stepparent, foster parent, or an adult member of the juvenile's household
- An adult relative entrusted with the juvenile's care
- A potential adoptive parent during a visit or trial placement with a juvenile in the custody of a county child welfare agency
- Any person such as a house parent or cottage parent who has primary responsibility for supervising a juvenile's health and welfare in a residential child care facility or residential educational facility
- Any employee or volunteer of a division, institution, or school operated by the Department of Health and Human Services

**Exceptions**

No exceptions are specified in statute.