



Child Safety Guidelines



Purpose: To provide clear guidelines for appropriate behavior when working with children and youth To help protect workers from false accusations

Who this is for: Anyone who regularly works with children and youth between the ages of infant to 18 years old. This also includes those who have decision-making authority over them such as pastors, elders and deacons

Code of Conduct: All workers with children and youth shall agree to the following:

- To prevent abuse and neglect of children and youth in all church sponsored activities
- To not physically, sexually and emotionally harm children
- To comply with all church policies
- To report all violations of church policy

Types of Abuse:

PHYSICAL - intentional injury of a physical nature

SEXUAL - abuse of a sexual nature occurring TO the child/youth by an adult abuse BY a child/youth –contact of a sexual nature between children and youth without consent

EMOTIONAL - emotional or mental injury that results impairment of the child's/youth's development

NEGLECT- a failure to provide for the child's basic needs or to protect them from harm

Examples of appropriate touches:

Brief hugs, quick pats on the shoulder or back, handshakes, high-fives and hand slapping, verbal praise, touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms, arms around the shoulders, holding hands while walking with young children, kneeling down or bending for hugs with smaller children, holding hands while praying and pats on the head when culturally appropriate.

Examples of inappropriate touches:

Inappropriate or lengthy embraces, kisses on the mouth, holding children over 3 years old on your lap, touching bottoms, chest or genital areas other than for appropriate diapering or toileting of infants and children, showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff only areas, or private rooms, wrestling with children/youth, tickling, piggy back rides, any type of massage, any form of unwanted affection, comments or compliments that relate to physique or body development (such as — “you look hot in those jeans” or snapping bras or giving wedgies) or sharing a bed with a youth.

General guidelines for Children/Youth Workers:

- Workers with minors must have been an active participant in the life of the church for at least 6 months
- There should be 2 workers with all minors in any ministry, with the exception of same-sex mentoring in public places with parental permission
- Windowless doors should be left open if a worker must be alone with a minor
- Workers should avoid being alone with a minor in the bathroom
- Workers should not give rides to teens of the opposite sex if alone, and all rides should include parental permission
- Workers should not give gifts or money to an individual minor
- Workers should not share meals in a private setting with individual minors
- Married couples may serve together but must have a third person in the room
- The parent or guardian should retrieve the child from the room—no wandering children