

The Play Book

***Aversboro Road Baptist Church
Preschool & Kids Ministry***

General Procedures and Protection Policies
Handbook

Updated January 2020

Welcome to Aversboro Kids!

At Aversboro, we take our responsibility to care for children very seriously. These procedures and policies are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which children can grow in relationship with Jesus Christ.

The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for our Church volunteers and staff members. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for children, protecting children, you, and the mission of Aversboro Road Baptist Church.

After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page and turn into the Kids Ministry office.

YOU are heroes!

YOU are what makes Aversboro Kids work each week!

YOU are on the front lines making an eternal difference and impacting this generation's heart with the power of the gospel.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HEART TO SERVE **GOD** THROUGH INVESTING IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN! WE ARE SO GLAD TO HAVE YOU ON OUR TEAM!

Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:58

Sincerely,
Aversboro Road Baptist Church Staff

General Goals of Aversboro KIDS

- To provide a quality learning environment every time they are at church.
- Help preschoolers, kids, and their families know that church is a happy and secure place to be.
- Provide a Christian environment where the Bible is the basis of our education programs.
- Encourage family spiritual growth, worship, and service.
- Promote understanding between parents and their teachers.

Teaching Objectives of Preschool/Children's ministry are to help each child:

- Associate God, Jesus, and the Bible with positive thoughts
- Know that the Bible is a special book that tells about God and Jesus
- Think of church as my church, a place where people love me.
- Develop a positive feeling of self-worth
- Begin to show love, respect, and acceptance for others
- Give them a solid gospel centered foundation.
- Teach them the gospel and how it impacts their life.

Preschool & Kids Ministry Procedures

Volunteer Expectations

Arrive on time

All Aversboro Kids volunteers should arrive ***no later than 15 minutes*** prior to their volunteer service time. This applies to Sundays, Wednesdays, and special events. This time will allow for preparation and connection with those you are serving with and allow those serving before you to leave. We don't want to be arriving at the start time because that probably means parents are waiting on us and we are not prepared and ready for the kids to arrive.

Be prepared

Please come fully prepared and ready to go. That means lessons, skits, lyrics or whatever else is needed to present, play or teach. Please take time at home to prepare for what you are teaching so you can be ready to go when the kids arrive. If you need supplies, search for them in the cabinets, resource room, or contact your staff member.

Communicate

We want to hear from you. If you're going to be absent, please find an approved substitute, but please let your lead teacher or the ministry director know. We don't like surprises. But also, we love to hear from you and keep up with what's happening in your life.

Develop

Just as Aversboro Kids is a place where children are spiritually growing, we expect all of us volunteers to be growing spiritually as well. We expect all volunteers and leaders to growing in the following ways:

- Personal time with the Lord
 - Daily quiet time to have that vital personal relationship we need.
 - Preparation for leading kids in any type of Bible Study. Take this seriously so that we can preach the gospel to the best of our ability and give our kids a gospel centered experience.
- Be Connected
 - We believe that life-change happens best in the context of relationships. Join a small group or attend service so that you continue to grow spiritually.

Classroom Guidelines

Sharing Space

Our classrooms are used for several ministries: Sunday School, Choirs, Growing Place, preschool/kids worship, and more. Please keep the classrooms neat and orderly and clean of left over supplies, take home sheets, or other things. Please make sure you return supplies to cabinets and their proper locations.

Hanging Posters on the Wall

Please only use blue painters' tape to hang posters, pictures, etc. on the wall. Other adhesives such as masking tape or scotch tape will take the paint off the wall. Please help us keep our rooms looking neat and clean.

Two Man Rule

Make sure for your safety and for the kids, that you are never alone with a child. Go places in groups and with another adult. We have security in the hallways as well who are watching and assist as needed. Protect yourself from wrongful allegations by not allowing yourself to be left alone with a child as well as protecting the other adults you work with. Watch the Ministry Safe training for specific information.

Music

Music can be a great addition to the classroom. Please only play approved Preschool/Kids appropriate CD's/DVD's. Please do not just play the radio.

Cell Phone Usage

Please do not be on your phone while volunteering with kids, but please have it available in case of an emergency. Focus on the needs of the children and building positive relationships with them and their families.

Appearance & Hygiene

All volunteers are encouraged to wear Slacks, Jeans, shorts of appropriate length and capris are highly encouraged as well. Ladies, please refrain from wearing skirts, as it makes working with children (floor time) difficult. Please make sure your clothes are neat in appearance. Beginning in January 2020, please wear your Aversboro KIDS volunteer nametag every time you are working with kids. This is a security measure, but also allows parents to understand you are an approved worker and get to know you better.

Hygiene

Please help us prevent the spread of illnesses by washing or sanitizing your hands:

- When you first arrive in a room
- After a diaper change
- After accompanying a child to the restroom
- After contact with body fluid (wiping a child's nose, etc.)
- Before handling food
- Whenever else is needed

Please instruct children to wash their hands:

- After using the restroom
- Wiping their nose
- Before eating

Babies/Toddlers Room & Toy Cleaning Procedures- Basic Practices already in use. Cleanliness in these areas is very important. Please help us keep these areas clean for our Infants and Toddlers.

Basic Overview

- No trash cans in open area that kids can access.
- Cleaning of toys/cloths/blankets after every program use.
- Deep cleaning of entire rooms on a regular basis.
- Carpet Cleaning on a regular basis.
- Wipe down/cleaning after every diaper change, incident, etc.

Specific Cleaning Procedures in development for this area.

Classroom Evacuation (Fire).

- Evacuation Zone:
 - Preschool: Upper back corner of parking lot near claymore drive.
 - Elementary: Lower back corner of parking lot near claymore drive.
- Before evacuating, count the number of children in your group/class. Call roll again when you arrive safely in the evacuation zone.
- Babies: Place in evacuation cribs (four per crib) or carry only two per volunteer.
- Older ones – Juniors: Have them hold hands with each other and safely exit.
- Once evacuated, please wait for further instructions from a staff member or safety team.
- Please stay with your group at all times. Do not leave to get your own children, to obtain first aid or for any other reason. First Aid will be brought to the evacuation zone. Alert a staff member.
- Release children only to their parents and only after you have been given the okay to dismiss by a member of the staff. Do not dismiss any children, including elementary age, to go on their own. Do not allow parents to take their child from your care during the process of your evacuation. Remind the parents they can walk with you but you cannot release a child until you have arrived to the evacuation zone and have been authorized to release children.

Follow the Evacuation Route located on the inside of each classroom next to the door. This will lead you to the quickest exit out of the building.

Resource Room

The resource room is located on the Preschool hallway near the fellowship hall. It is shared between the church and The Growing Place. In this room is a copier that you may use anytime to make black and white copies (If you need color, please contact a staff member). Also, in this room is basic and special teaching, craft, & bulletin board supplies that you are welcome to use. If you cannot find something that you believe should be in this room, please let the perspective staff member know. This also applies to when we are running low on certain items, please let a staff member know.

This room is unlocked every day and welcome for volunteers to use for church related programs. Please keep it clean and put supplies back where you found them, this room is used every day of the week by many different people, so let's keep it organized. Please try to keep the door closed and do not leave it open —This helps with appearance and safety of our facility.

Accidents & Emergencies

Please review our policies and procedures regarding accidents, incidents and allergies, especially how we document both for occurrences and prevention.

Counting Heads

This is a vital part of safety and security with our kids. The teacher should always be aware of the number of kids in their care. Counting heads throughout the session to ensure all are accounted for. Should a child ever be missing, please contact a member of the safety team and a staff member immediately.

Injuries

In the case of an accident, regardless of child or adult, inform the Lead Teacher and staff member right away. Classrooms for children will be equipped with Basic First Aid Kits. More First Aid Supplies are located in the Education Ministry Office and the Resource Room. If there is a serious incident, please alert the appropriate staff member. Along with care, an Incident Form will need to be filled out and signed by the volunteer that witnessed the event. Please see the appropriate staff member to complete this and sign. These forms are located in the Education Ministry Office.

Small Scrapes and cuts:

First make sure you put on gloves. Wash wound with mild soap and water. Place Band-Aid over wound. Notify parents when they pick kids up of the incident and what you did to care for them.

Bruises and Bumps

When a child bumps their head, please inform a staff member. Apply ice to bump, by putting ice in a Ziplock bag and wrapping it in a paper towel. Then apply to bump.

Medication

Note that we are not authorized to administer any medications without consent of the parents.

Gloves:

As a general procedure, it is smart to wear gloves every time you are administering any type of first aid. If there is a spill of body fluid (due to cuts, nosebleeds, vomit, etc.), gloves must be worn.

In case of a serious emergency, please call a staff member immediately and a member of the safety team. Staff & Certified CPR/AED/First Aid volunteers will be charged to determine what is needed to help the child and call 911.

Location of all First Aid Kits

First aid kits can be found at the following locations:

- Basic First Aid Kits located in each classroom.
- The Resource Room. Located right beside door on the wall.
- The Education Ministry Office (This one can also be accessed for outside/off campus activities. Please make sure you always have a first aid kit accessible).

Emergencies

We are not authorized to administer any over the counter or prescription medications. In the event a child needs more attention than we can provide, the parent will be notified. Serious injuries involving broken bones, convulsions, fainting, unconsciousness or other serious bodily injury should be treated as follows:

- Remain calm and keep the children and the injured person as calm as possible. Speak calmly to the child.
- Do not move or leave the injured child alone.
- Send a fellow volunteer to find a staff member and safety member for assistance.
- The safety or staff member will call 911 if necessary.
- The staff member will contact and communicate with the parents.
- If the child is to be transported to a hospital and the parent cannot be located in time, the staff member will accompany the child to the hospital.
- The staff member will follow up with the parent as needed.
- All volunteers and staff members involved in the emergency will write out a report of what happened immediately following the emergency.

Incidents

In the case of any non-accident or injury incident that is a cause for concern, please inform a staff member right away. This may include behavior that indicates possible abuse, inappropriate talk or touch from one child to another or any other incident that a staff needs to know, or a behavior issue. If there is any issue with a child, please notify a staff member and they will determine what is necessary to address to the parents. Please do not talk to parents about issues until after you talk with a staff member.

Bathroom Procedures

Below are bathroom policies for the various bathrooms our kids use on a regular basis. **Never allow yourself to be in a bathroom with a child alone.**

Single Person Bathrooms (Preschool area)

- Only allow one child in the bathroom at a time
- If a child can go on their own, let them (just stand by the door ready to help if needed)
- If a child needs help or has hasn't finished up after some time, talk through the door or slightly crack the door so you can talk without looking.
- If your assistance is required, ask another volunteer to stand at the door and watch you as you assist the child. Never are you to be alone with a child in the bathroom.

Multiple Person Bathrooms. (Bathrooms outside kid's classrooms).

- Before allowing kids into the bathroom, check to make sure there are not adults or teenagers in the room. While kids are using the bathroom, do not allow adults or teenagers to enter.
- Line kids up along the wall outside the bathroom allowing them to take turns (if the bathroom can accommodate multiple kids, let a few in at a time).
- You must have another ADULT with you (fellow volunteer or leader)
- (Preschool only) Do not let the children close the door all the way or lock the door (Prop the door slightly ajar so you can hear what is going on).
- ONLY If a child needs urgent assistance, only enter the bathroom with another adult in the doorway watching you at all times.
- Only same gender volunteers may assist kids if necessary. The spotter(2nd person) may be of a different gender if necessary, only to observe the interaction.

Diapering/Toileting/Accident Policies (Preschool)

It is recommended the person changing diapers be an adult female. To provide the best care for the children, please check the diapers of all infants and toddlers.

When changing diapers, please do the following:

- Diapering is done at diaper stations only.
- Diapering should be done within eyesight of other caregivers
- Have all supplies ready before placing the child on the changing table
- Once the child is placed on the table, put on disposable gloves
- Always be attentive, keeping one hand on the child
- Dirty diapers are to be sealed in provided bags and placed in diaper trashcans. Wipe down changing pads with germicidal wipes and throw away the gloves. Wash and sanitize your hands.
- At end of program, be sure to empty diaper trash cans and place in dumpster.

A child of any age is never to be punished or admonished for toileting accidents. When a child who is toilet-trained has an accident, please have the lead teacher or staff member call parents so that the parent is informed and can assist their child if necessary. Let parents know that we call all parents so they can assist their child and comfort them (If parents appear upset or angry, please help diffuse the situation by reassuring parents that this happens to all children.)

More Specific Infant/Toddler care instructions are in the development process.

Food Safety

Allergies are a top priority for us in caring for kids in our ministry. We need to be aware of our kids and their needs. Some kids have certain severe allergies and we will work to make sure everyone is aware of them and we are taking the necessary steps to keeping kids safe.

Peanut Allergies

We are a Peanut FREE ministry. Because MANY children are allergic to peanuts and peanut residue, we will NOT serve any items that have any peanuts or process in a plant with peanuts. Please DOUBLE CHECK ingredients list when buying snacks or anything for your groups. The snacks we use on a regular basis are free of peanuts.

Milk Allergies

This is another item that children are highly allergic to. Some cannot consume products made with milk. Please be aware of this allergy.

Allergy Alert

When having any special snack please be sure to post an **Allergy Alert poster** on the door outside your room. This is so parents can be aware of what you are having and can let you know if their child is allergic. Have the ingredients list available so that parents can view it if they have questions.

Positive Interactions with Children:

The steps below outline a process to help all workers maintain positive interactions with children during childcare. There must always be two people present when supervising one or more children.

Classroom Rules:

- Hands to yourself
- Walk, don't run
- Listen when your teacher is talking
- Participate in class
- Have fun!

Ways to Avoid Problem Behaviors:

- Come prepared by Praying before childcare begins.
- Be sensitive to the moods of the children in the group
- Set clear and age appropriate expectations with the children

When Kids Require Discipline or Guidance:

- Use a firm but gentle voice to address the behavior.
- Remove the child from the activity.
- Focus your remarks on the behavior you want to see; "Please walk" or "Please listen" not "Stop running" or "Be quiet".
- Do not use words or a tone of voice that shames or frightens a child/student.
- Do not use sarcasm or scream at a child/student
- Never make remarks that put down the individual as a person or make negative references about appearance, race or gender.
- Never use corporal punishment or spanking of any kind.
- Use touch in affirming ways: Appropriate examples: high fives, pat on the back or shoulders, etc. Inappropriate examples: demanding/expecting hugs, slapping on buttocks, kissing, etc....
- Contact the appropriate staff member if assistance is needed.
- If necessary, a confidential parental discussion will occur with the Aversboro staff member, lead teacher, and parents.

Discipline Guidelines in Childcare:

Discipline must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control

A worker may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- Praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing on unacceptable behavior

- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements
- Brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
- Punishment associated with food, or toilet training
- Pinching, shaking or biting a child
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive or profane language
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Procedure for Dealing with Aggressive Behavior:

- If there is a child who shows continuous (more than 2 times) aggressive behavior that puts another child at risk, please contact the staff member and they will help determine if contact with parent is necessary.
- If another child is injured, both parents should be notified by the staff member.
- When a child shows aggressive behavior, he/she should be separated from the group and if it continues, call a staff member.

Volunteer Identification & Visiting Adults

We make every effort to keep Aversboro Kids secure and safe. Below are our procedures concerning adults in our programs.

Volunteer Identification

- All volunteers are required to wear a nametag while in a classroom. This applies even if you serve in multiple different capacities each week. Please keep up with it and wear it each time.
- Approved volunteers will get their nametags from the staff member when they are cleared to volunteer with kids. It is your responsibility to keep up with your nametag. There are hooks on the inside of cabinets in classrooms that you can store your nametag on or you can keep it with you (car, purse, etc.).
- If you lose your nametag or need one reprinted, please notify the staff member.

Visiting Adults

- Unauthorized adults are never allowed into a classroom.
- If an adult is interested in observing, they must register as a visitor at the Check-in area and check-in with the appropriate staff member prior to observing.
- Only authorized adults may be in the classroom once the program begins.

Parents

- Parents are discouraged from entering early preschool classrooms (on some occasions a parent can stay for a few minutes to help their child settle in – this must be approved by staff)
- Once the service is over, parents with a claim ticket are allowed to enter some of our older early childhood rooms and elementary rooms to get their children. Their tags will be checked once they enter the room and as they leave the room with their children.
- Nursing moms are allowed in the back baby classroom only to nurse. They must check-in with lead teacher prior to nursing.
- We want to encourage parents to get to service/Bible study on time and so we want to make it a quick, easy, and safe check-in and drop off of their child. Please welcome them, but help encourage parents to get to service on time.

Child Check-In

General Check In for all preschoolers and Kids

- Members and regular attendees will check in at the check-in station on an IPAD. They will check in all of their kids and each specific program their child is attending that day.
- Once they submit their check in, their child's nametag and security badge will print from the printer. The check-In attendant will help gather their stickers and hand them to them. Parents will place badges on their kids.
- After checking in, parents will drop their child off at their classroom. Lead teachers will double check that child has their nametag on and parents have their security badge.
- **First Time Visitors**, will check in with the attendant on the computer. Attendants will ask them the needed questions and assign them to the appropriate classes or programs. The attendant will welcome the visitors and point them in the direction of their classroom.

Babies-Twos

- **Babies**, nametags will be put on Baby's diaper bags.
- **Pagers- ALL Babies, Ones, and Twos** will receive a pager at the check-in station. Attendant will be observant to give pagers to parents. The Check-In attendant will write the pager number on their pager sheet and on the child's nametag.
- **Pagers-** will be returned to child's classroom upon pickup of their child.

Child Drop Off

Preschool

- Drop-off needs to be done at the door/window in Preschool rooms.
- Make sure parents have checked their child in at Check-In station and make sure each child has their name tag on & parent has their security badge. Check the child off on your classroom roll sheet.
- Lead Teachers need to be at the window/door, checking in children and greeting parents. Assistants are to be available to receive the children as they come into the room. Room Leaders need to be attentive to parents at the window/door dropping off children later in the service.
- Never let unauthorized adults in the room. Parents may enter only for a few minutes to get their child settled, but encourage parents to go on to service or their program.
- Only allow children into the room if their nametag matches the room you are in. Otherwise, direct the family to the correct location. If the child was assigned the wrong room, contact the Check-In attendant before admitting them to your room.
- If you suspect that a child is in the wrong age group, or you are concerned with the amount of children in your class, admit them to your room and then contact the staff member who will work out the details and alert the parents if the child needs to be moved.
- If you are teaching the second hour, as kids enter, please ensure everyone has a nametag on and has successfully checked in. If a parent is only dropping off for the

second hour, please send them to the check-In area prior to admitting the kids in your class.

Elementary

- Greet families at the door and ensure that children have been assigned to the correct group (get down to their level and say, “Hey there, so you’re in the first grade, huh?” This will ensure that they were assigned to the correct group).
- Never let unauthorized adults in the room.
- Escort new children to their appropriate small group.
- If you are teaching the second hour, as kids enter, please ensure everyone has a nametag on and has successfully checked in. If a parent is only dropping off for the second hour, please send them to the check-In area prior to admitting the kids in your class.

Paging Parents

If you should need to call a parent at any time during a service, only the lead teacher for that room must make the call. If you are paging a parent, please contact a staff member as well to help with the situation.

- A child is upset and cannot be consoled after much attempt.
- A child is sick or injured.
- A child is being disruptive and you are unable to redirect them.

Child Pick Up

Preschool and Elementary kids

- Lead teachers greet parents at the door (at the window for Babies-Twos). All classroom volunteers must oversee the departure of children.
- Room leaders must check the parent’s security tag and match it to the child’s tag number. You will take the child’s nametag off and attach it to the security badge. Stick these together and then clip them to the clipboard, do not throw away.
- Never allow access to a child until the Security Tag match has been made and you have both stickers for the child.
- Children’s nametags are to be collected at the door and attached to security badge (Children are not permitted to keep their nametag after leaving their room).
- If a parent does not have their Security Tag, ask them if they can find it. If they are not the parent who dropped their kids off, they may show you a picture of the security badge, but the security badge code must match their child’s nametag. If a parent does not have their badge, please contact a staff member to come and talk with parents.
- If anyone ever pushes their way in at any time, or takes a child without permission, call staff member for help immediately.

Lost Tag/No Tag Procedure

If a parent has lost his/her tag, contact the staff member. Your initial response can be something like:

“I am not authorized to release children to parents without a receipt. I will find my staff member and they will be able to help you out. We have security processes in place to protect your children and I am sure you understand the importance of your child’s safety .”

The staff member or leader will come and address the situation to dismiss the child.

Consistency

This procedure is designed to protect children as well as the volunteer. Volunteers sometimes compromise on this procedure when facing an impatient/angry parent or if they know the parent. Compromise once and you’ll end up compromising every time. Hold the line and we will have a safe environment that our parents can trust. Please contact the staff member if there is an issue.

Overview of Aversboro's Kids Safety System

Because we love children and desire to protect them, Aversboro Road Baptist Church will require all staff members and volunteers working with children or students (and other vulnerable populations) to complete **4 SAFETY STEPS** before ministry work or volunteer placements begin.

STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

Aversboro Road Baptist Church 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 staff member. 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 Aversboro Road Baptist Church staff members and volunteers with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, Aversboro is beginning to require all staff members and volunteers to complete *MinistrySafe* sexual abuse awareness training (online at www.MinistrySafe.com). This training will be renewed every three years. Link will be sent by your department staff member.

STEP TWO: Screening Process

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

-Complete a ministry placement interview with staff member prior to service in ministry
*a volunteer must attend Aversboro Road Baptist Church for six months before being eligible to serve in positions providing access to children, students or vulnerable populations.

STEP THREE: Policies & Procedures

Staff members and volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and the Policies and Procedures of ARBC.

STEP FOUR: Criminal Background Check & Ministry Application

Aversboro Road Baptist Church requires that all staff members and volunteers working or volunteering in children's or student activities or programming undergo a criminal background check and ministry application. This form will be reviewed by Aversboro Staff prior to serving with our kids or students. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required. The background check will be renewed every 3 years.

Protection Policy for Children, Students, Special Needs

1. Background Statement

We live in an age where abuse of children and other vulnerable members of our society is a reality. The church must deal with this issue as a "good shepherd" by taking steps to protect our children, teenagers (students) and individuals with special needs. Aversboro Road Baptist Church has implemented this policy to safeguard our children, students and special needs while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. We pray for God's blessings and protection for these persons, parents and for those who work to minister to them through the ministries of our church.

Protecting our Children, Students, Special Needs

The greatest priority of Aversboro Road Baptist Church children's, students and special needs programs is to minister through the Gospel and ministry of Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Jesus Christ, we must strive to be worthy of a very high standard of trust. It is obvious that any sexual exploitation, abuse, or endangerment directly contradicts this priority and the values of Aversboro Road Baptist Church. For this reason, every worker at Aversboro Road Baptist Church must avoid even the appearance of inappropriate behavior. All workers must diligently avoid any conduct that appears wrong to a reasonable observer, even if no actual misconduct takes place. Employees, parents, volunteers and workers in children, student and special needs ministries are expected to observe these policies and guidelines, as well as other Christian standards of moral behavior found in the Scriptures and adopted by the church membership.

Document History

This policy was developed using sample policies and forms from *The Good Shepherd Program* by Nexus Solutions. During the process, feedback was solicited and incorporated into the present document from our Student Leadership Team, Parents of Students, Children's Ministry Council, Parents of Children, Minister to Children, Minister to Students, Special Needs Ministry, Policy, Procedure and Bylaws Committee and others.

II. Purpose and Policy Statement

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." (Matthew 19:14)

Protection Policy for Children, Students, Special Needs

Purpose

As a church, we believe that the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of children and other vulnerable members is vital. This policy is intended to ensure that church activities involving children, students and special needs are consistent with the teachings and example of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the Christian tradition of nurturing vulnerable persons. The primary purpose of this policy is to promote the safety and well-being of preschoolers, children, students, special needs and the adults who serve by providing clear standards to guide our ministries. The leaders of Aversboro Road Baptist Church sincerely request the cooperation of the adults, parents, students, children and special needs in our church who must abide by the guidelines of this policy.

This policy also serves to establish guidelines, practices and procedures for the prevention of child predatory practices in our preschool, children, student and special needs ministry programs. The establishment of proactive screening and monitoring practices contained herein is to ensure that no approved volunteer, staff member or church worker, while acting within the scope of their duties, is placed in a position where the abuse of a person under their care can be carried out.

Policy Statement

It is the goal of Aversboro Road Baptist Church to provide for the spiritual growth of our members, visitors and guests in a manner that will foster an atmosphere which proactively addresses personal safety issues related to preschool, children, student and special needs ministries. Therefore, we establish these policies and guidelines to guide our efforts to recognize and prevent predatory practices and conditions within our ministries. If in the course of screening an applicant, information gives evidence that an individual has mistreated children, been convicted of a criminal offense, or otherwise indicates a risk to the welfare of children or the ministry of the church, that individual will not be authorized to serve in our ministries to preschoolers, children, students, or special needs.

Activities Covered by This Policy

The scope of this policy shall apply to all current as well as future ministry programs and activities that involve preschoolers, children, students and special needs as directed by Aversboro Road Baptist Church. Ministries included in this policy: Preschool Ministry, The Growing Place, Extended Session, Children’s Ministry, Student Ministry, Music Ministry, Sunday School and Special Needs Ministry of Aversboro Road Baptist Church.

Protection Policy for Children, Students, Special Needs

III. A Glossary of Frequently Used Terms

Abused or neglected child - a child whose mental or physical health is endangered or threatened by the actions or failure to act by people responsible for the child's care.

Boundaries -Property boundaries are the limits or dividing lines between pieces of real estate. Likewise, people have boundaries that guide our physical and emotional relations. Personal boundaries are like fences, separating appropriate behavior from inappropriate behavior. The lines change according to the child's age and the relationship between the child and the adult. In a physical sense, boundaries govern appropriate behavior. For example, it is acceptable for a four-year-old to sit on the lap of her Sunday School teacher, but not for her 14-year-old sister to sit on the lap of her student ministry sponsor. Any child with weak boundaries is more vulnerable to sexual molestation. Healthy boundaries enable a child to recognize and reject inappropriate behavior.

Child molester - a person who has sexually violated children.

Child sexual abuse - includes but is not limited to any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consent is given by the child or student or whether initiated by the child or student.

Children and/or student - generally anyone less than 18 years of age. This category may also include persons over 18 years of age who are not able to fully protect themselves from exploitation or give consent for sexual activity (due to age, intellectual or physical impairments, or other incapacities).

Further interpretation of these policies is guided by these specific definitions:

Preschool/Preschooler/Preschool Ministry - newborn through age five (kindergarten)

Children/Children's Ministry – Children in Grades 1-5

Student/Student Ministry –A student in Grades 6-12

Special Needs Ministry– regardless of gender, or age an individual that has been identified or has identified themselves as having a special need and as such may not be able to fully protect themselves from exploitation or give consent for sexual activity (due to age, intellectual or physical impairments, or other incapacities.)

Protection Policy for Children, Students, Special Needs

Staff Minister (Pastoral Staff)– Minister for these policies will refer to any full-time, part-time, or ministry intern position (paid or volunteer) who has ministry responsibilities as defined by the Personnel Polices, Constitution and By-laws.

Ministry Leader – Ministry Leader for these policies will refer to any volunteer leadership position as defined by the Constitution and By-laws.

Minor – anyone under the age of 18, whether member or visitor

Workers by classification-

Primary workers - All paid staff and those volunteers in roles with greater responsibility and contact hours or risk shall be classified as primary workers and shall meet the primary screening standards. (examples include: Sunday School Teacher, GA/RA Leader, Student Worker, Special Needs Worker)

Secondary workers - Secondary workers are people who occasionally interact with minors and do so in less risky circumstances. For example, a volunteer who sees children only in a ministry setting, on church premises, and with a ministry leader present may be classified as a secondary worker. This category includes parents of participants who supervise activities while under the supervision of Primary Workers. (Examples Include: Extended Session Worker, VBS Worker)

IV. Program Administration and Procedures

To ensure effective administration of this policy the following practices and procedures are included herein.

Responsible Parties for Implementation, Administration and Supervision

Under the supervision of the Senior Pastor, the staff ministers shall assist with the implementation, administration and supervision of the Protection Policy for Children, Students, Special Needs.

Applicability

Policies, procedures, guidelines and practices herein are applicable to and shall govern all church programs, ministries and activities in which preschoolers, children, students less than eighteen years of age and individuals that are a part of the special needs ministry are involved.

Protection Policy for Children, Students, Special Needs

Records Checks for Staff Ministers

The Personnel Committee shall be responsible for completing criminal records checks for the Staff Ministers prior to their selection and recommendation to the church.

Annual Review of Protection Policy for Children, Students, Special Needs

On an annual basis, each staff minister will review their area of responsibility for compliance with these policies and assess for any potential risks, and provide a brief written report of their assessment to the Senior Pastor and the Diaconate by December 31.

The compliance review will include:

- A review of any newly proposed programs or program changes and the additional risks these changes may incur.
- A brief summary of policy violations (real and alleged) and the program leader's response to these violations while maintaining confidentiality.

Waiver of Specific Procedure

The goal of Aversboro Road Baptist Church is to promote safety while maintaining practical flexibility in children's, student and special needs ministry. Specific procedures may be waived for special circumstances, such as the six-month rule for summer/semester interns, college students assisting in leading a weekend retreat, or other special situations. All waivers will be of a limited nature and must be authorized in advance by the Minister to Students and at least one of the following: The Minister to Children; The Senior Pastor; and in situations involving special needs - The Associate Pastor for Adults.

Modification of the Policy

Changes in this policy should be evaluated and recommended by the Children's Ministry Council and/or Student Leadership Team, and/or the Special Needs Ministry and will follow the process for policy review and acceptance as noted in the church Policies and Procedures Manual.

V. Policies on Leadership Selection, Screening, and Supervision

General Qualifications

Every volunteer and staff person who works with preschoolers, children, students and special needs shall:

1. Confess Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord
2. Affirm the Articles of Faith of our Church

Protection Policy for Children, Students, Special Needs

General Qualifications (cont.)

3. Be a member in good standing for at least six months
4. Be approved in accordance with these policies
5. Evidence the skills, attitude and Christian maturity appropriate to the ministry with preschoolers, children, students or special needs
6. Agree to adhere to the church’s ministry philosophies, policies and guidelines for work with children, students and special needs.
7. Have no history of being an abuser or have a criminal record inconsistent with the ministry responsibility

Minimum Age

All primary workers must be 18 years of age or older.

Secondary workers in the preschool, children and special needs area must be at least 13 years of age. Secondary workers ages 13 to 18 must have successfully completed an approved babysitting/child-care training (i.e., Safe Kids, American Red Cross, American Heart Association, National Safety Council).

Application Requirements

Applicants must complete and sign an application with the related forms granting permission to check references and background information, including, but not limited to a Criminal Record Check and a Motor Vehicle Records Check. Failure to sign all forms will automatically disqualify an applicant.

Church Membership/Attendance Requirement

All primary workers must be a member in good standing for at least six months prior to applying for a volunteer position. This time of interaction between ministry leaders and the applicant allows leaders to better evaluate the suitability of an applicant. In some situations, this rule is not feasible and may be waived. If the six-month rule is waived, it must be approved by the Minister to Students and at least one of the following: The Minister to Children, The Senior Pastor or for special needs, the Associate Pastor for Adults. The reasons for the exception must be documented and filed with the application. All other steps in the screening process must be followed.

Interviews

All applicants must be interviewed for suitability for the work they desire to perform. Interviews will be conducted by the staff minister, or designee, of the program in which the applicant will work. Church policy and guidelines shall be shared with applicants during the interview.

Protection Policy for Children, Students, Special Needs

Reference Checks

An application form, complete with references, must be submitted by all individuals who wish to work with preschoolers/children/students/or in our special need's ministry – both volunteer and paid. The respective Ministry leader will check at least three references for each worker. Reference checks may be completed by phone, mail, or in person. References should include: one person who has known the applicant well for a minimum of one year, a current or former supervisor or teacher, and a member of the applicant's immediate family (other than a spouse).

Criminal Record Check

A Criminal Record Check is required for all applicants. The Criminal Record Check will cover a minimum of the preceding five (5) years of the applicant's residence. An online check of the State Sex Offender Registry for the applicant's state of residency for the ten years prior to hiring shall be accessed and searched. In addition, all volunteers and staff are subject to random Criminal Records Checks to ensure the safety of our children, students, special needs

Applicants discovered to have had documented or known incidents of sexual misconduct, or who have a criminal background which may have a negative impact on our ministry, may not be a Ministry Leader (volunteer or employee) or serve in any capacity of the Preschool/Children/Student/Special Needs Ministry at **AVERSBORO ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH**.

Confidentiality of Information

The church will keep confidential all information received in the applicant selection process. Application information will be marked as such and stored with limited access afforded only to the Staff Ministers. The details discovered during the screening process will remain confidential; only an approval will be communicated to ministry leaders. Information that is a matter of public record is not considered confidential under these guidelines.

Note: An outside contractor may be used to assist in the screening process.

Delay in Receiving Information

The application, screening, and background checks must be completed on each volunteer or employee before they begin to serve in our ministries. Every effort will be made to complete the process in a timely manner.

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Survivors of Child Abuse

Any applicant who is a survivor of childhood sexual or physical abuse needs the love and acceptance of the Aversboro Road Baptist Church family. A person's experience with abuse and their recovery process may be pertinent to their suitability as ministry workers. Applicants who are survivors of abuse should discuss this in confidence with the Staff Minister who conducts the confidential interview. When evaluating candidates, the following factors will be considered if an applicant is a survivor of child abuse:

- the extent of professional counseling the applicant has received
- the opinion of references, especially professional counselors who have served the applicant
- the opinion of leaders in other churches or student organizations in which the applicant has been involved
- the extent to which the church is able to supervise and monitor the position

Approval Authority

The Minister to Students or staff minister designee shall verify that all screening procedures have been completed and shall communicate an applicant's formal approval to the appropriate program leaders.

VI. General Guidelines for our Ministries

These guidelines are provided to reduce the risk of child abuse, to assure the parents of children and students of a safe environment, and to protect workers from false allegations or unwarranted suspicions.

Supervision

Church staff members, children's workers and volunteers who supervise students and/or children and/or special needs are charged with the diligent enforcement of these policies. Program leaders and all student/children's/special needs workers who suspect any unhealthy or abusive activity must promptly discuss their suspicion with the appropriate staff minister and the Senior Pastor. Violation of these policies is considered grounds for immediate dismissal from work in the children and/or student and/or special needs ministries.

Vehicle Safety

All Ministry Leaders who will be driving children or students, whether using a church vehicle or their person vehicle, must be an approved driver as outlined in the church Transportation and Vehicle Policy as well as an approved worker. See The Transportation and Vehicle Policy in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

Protection Policy for Children, Students, Special Needs

Overnight Activities

At least two adults who have been approved under this policy will supervise overnight activities. If the participants are male and female, then male and female chaperones must be present. If these conditions cannot be met, then the event shall be postponed. It is never appropriate for an adult chaperone to share a bed with a student. (Exception: Family members of the same gender may share a bed in situations where there is a need to do so due to a lack of space.) Males and females attending events should not share the same sleeping quarters and should have separate restroom facilities. In the absence of separate facilities, restrooms shall not be accessed by members of the opposite gender at the same time (i.e., rotate usage). Experienced adult workers should be included with adults who are newcomers to ministry when planning overnight activities.

Corporal Punishment

Hitting, spanking and other forms of punishment involving physical pain are never appropriate in Aversboro Road Baptist Church activities. This rule holds true even if parents have suggested, or given permission for, corporal punishment. Workers must consult a program leader or other church leader or staff if they need help with discipline techniques.

Informal Contact (Independent of Church Activities)

Informal contact refers to phone calls, email, Facebook/Myspace, letters, or face-to-face contact between an adult worker and a child/student/special needs that is not connected to official church activities. The church recognizes that informal contact between workers and children/students/special needs will frequently occur. For example, workers may hire teens as baby sitters for their own children, or workers may see children/students/special needs during social events with the child/student's/special needs family. This interaction is certainly legitimate and beneficial. Workers should seek permission of, or inform the parent(s) before having informal contact with their child/student/special needs. The worker should clearly let the parent know the nature of the contact and that it is not part of church activity. Parents are encouraged to monitor informal contacts of their children with adults.

Transportation To and From Meetings

Transportation to and from meetings is not part of church or Student Ministry activities. Parents are responsible for providing or arranging for this transportation. Parents are discouraged from asking leaders to transport children. However, if a leader does transport a child at the parent's request, this is recognized as informal contact (not a part of church activities), and the guidelines for informal contact should be followed (see paragraph above). *Note: This practice is discouraged because it frequently leads to problems.*

Protection Policy for Children, Students, Special Needs

Touching Guidelines

This policy includes guidelines on touching that will safeguard our children/students/special needs while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. The guidelines below are to be carefully followed by anyone working with children, students, special needs.

1. Hugging and other forms of appropriate physical affection between workers and children/students/special needs are important for wholesome development and are generally suitable in our church setting.
2. Physical affection shall be appropriate to the age of the child or student or special needs. (For example, it is generally appropriate for a four-year-old to sit in a preschool worker's lap, but it is not appropriate for a teenager and student leader to behave this way.)
3. Touching should be initiated as a response to the child/students/special needs person's need for comforting and encouragement. It should not be based upon the adult's emotional need.
4. Touching and affection should be given when in the presence of other children's ministry, student or special needs workers. It is much less likely that a touch will be inappropriate or misconstrued as such when two adult workers are present and the touching is open to observation.
5. Touching behavior should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. As ministry workers our behavior must foster trust at all times; it should be above reproach.
6. A child/students/special needs preference not to be touched shall be respected.
7. All workers are responsible for protecting children/students/special needs under their supervision from inappropriate touching by others.
8. All workers must promptly discuss inappropriate touching or other questionable behavior by other workers with ministry leaders.

Specific Guidelines for our Ministries to Preschoolers and Children

(These guidelines refer to ministries with newborns through fifth grade)

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Two Adult Rule

Two approved workers shall be present in all programs and activities involving preschoolers and children – preferably not from the same immediate family. This shall apply to classes, transportation, and other activities. In the absence of two workers, the classes shall be combined, or meet in a common larger room, or cancelled.

Preschool Release

Workers should release preschoolers only when presented with the proper pager/ID tag - which are issued as preschoolers are dropped off for a program/event.

Specific Guidelines for Student Ministry Leader's

(These guidelines refer to ministries with Students in Grades 6-12)

Team Leadership

As a general rule, most student events will be under care of two approved workers. This team leadership portion of the policy has three purposes: it provides for more than one adult to help ensure appropriate levels of supervision, it protects adults from unfounded allegations, and it lessens the possibility of emotional codependency between an adult leader and student.

Individual Counseling

Team counseling is preferable whenever possible. When team counseling sessions are not feasible, notify another adult of the location and with whom you are meeting. Counseling should be done in a public place where private conversations are possible but occur in full view of others. Guard carefully to avoid seclusion. If possible, have a female counsel a female student and a male counsel a male student. A male/female team is generally appropriate for counseling either gender. Any exception must have prior approval of the Minister to Students

High Adventure Activities

Special precautions must be taken on high adventure activities, such as rock climbing, hiking, camping, rafting trips, snow skiing, swimming, water sports, water skiing, boating or the like. Both physical safety and safety from abuse are at risk in high adventure situations. A ratio of one adult to five students is required (1:5 for males and 1:5 for females). Guides for high adventure activities should be licensed by a nationally recognized or state certified sports governing body or government entity. *High adventure camping often raises unique circumstances involving individual privacy, sleeping arrangements, restroom facilities, and so on. Student Ministry Leaders must be vigilant to avoid suspicious or misinterpreted behavior in these circumstances.*

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Confidentiality

Student Ministry Leaders must report to the Minister to Students and/or the Senior Pastor any time a minor discusses harming himself or others, committing a crime, or being abused. There are limits to confidentiality when working with students. Questions about such cases or other issues of confidentiality should be discussed promptly with the Minister to Students and/or the Senior Pastor. Any serious issues discussed in confidence shall be reviewed with one of the ministers, who will also protect the confidential nature of the discussion to the best of their ability. Conferring with a minister, medical or mental health professional on sensitive issues is not considered breaking a confidence.

Dating or Sexual Involvement

No adult Student Ministry Leader (volunteer or employee) is to date a student or be romantically or sexually involved with any student. There are **no** exceptions to this policy.

VII. Health and Safety

First Aid Training

Church employees who supervise young people should maintain current certification in basic first aid and basic CPR (or their equivalent if offered in the church's locality). Cost for this training will be paid by the church or The Growing Place. New employees must get this certification within 90 days of the start of their employment. Preschool workers and others serving young children will also need training in infant and toddler CPR. Other workers/volunteers are encouraged, to get training if they frequently accompany children or students on adventure activities, such as water sports, camping, home-building mission trips, etc. At least one person trained in CPR & First Aid shall accompany our students on adventure activities. Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) training will be provided on the use of AEDs located in the church building. This training may be part of a CPR class or through a staff member trained on the use of the specific AED.

VIII. Training and Reporting Strategies for Prevention of Abuse

Aversboro Road Baptist Church will provide resources for age-appropriate training for children, students and their parents for the purpose of prevention of abuse. The objectives of training are to enable children, students, and parents to:

- recognize abuse,
- resist abuse,

Protection Policy for Children, Students, Special Needs

- report abuse or attempted abuse, and
- reduce any shame, stigma, and confusion with open discussion, clear information, and unconditional support for children.

Training for Children's, Student, Special Needs Ministry Workers

Aversboro Road Baptist Church will train workers to keep young people safe. This training is mandatory for primary workers and recommended for secondary workers selected to work in preschool, children, student, special needs ministries.

The training will include the following information.

1. the nature of the problem, especially child sexual abuse
2. recognition of abuse indicators in children and in adults who may be abusers
3. explanation verbally and in writing of policies and rules that apply to each category of worker
4. discussion of expectations
 - avoiding the appearance of misconduct
 - monitoring coworkers' behavior
 - accountability for violation of rules
5. recognizing inappropriate behavior and situations open to problems or misunderstandings
6. reporting requirements (*Civil and Criminal*)
7. how to respond to an incident or an emergency
 - what to do when you believe a child is the victim of inappropriate conduct by a church worker
 - what to do when you believe a child in your program is a victim of abuse by family members or others
 - what to do when you believe that two children in your program are involved in inappropriate sexual activities
 - what to do when two adult church workers are engaged in an inappropriate sexual relationship
8. the church's touching policy
9. appropriate discipline techniques
10. who to turn to for advice or help

We will practice the following steps toward preventing sexual abuse:

1. Selection and screening

- Church membership requirement
- Completing the interview, screening, and background check process

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2. Supervision

- New volunteers are paired with veterans for 30 days of orientation
- New volunteers are specifically evaluated at 30, 60, and 90 days
- Ministry Leaders will provide ongoing supervision of all workers

3. Specific reporting process

Basic steps to be followed in possible abuse cases:

- All efforts to handle the incident will be well documented immediately
- The incident will immediately be reported to ministry supervisors and, very likely, an attorney
- We will contact the proper authorities—they, not our ministry, will handle the investigation
- We will notify the parents
- We will take allegations seriously; reach out to the victim and his or her family; and treat the accused with dignity and support
- If the accused is a church worker, that person will be relieved temporarily of his or her duties until the investigation is completed.
- The Senior Pastor and/or Chair of The Deaconate, utilizing the services of the Community Relations Committee, will use the text of a prepared public statement to answer the press and convey news to the congregation. Safeguarding the privacy and confidentiality of all involved will be our priority.

4. The following are reporting procedures for volunteer staff:

- If a child, student, special needs person is observed to have signs of physical abuse (bruises caused by hitting, unexplainable injuries, etc.), volunteer staff should call these things to the attention of the Minister to Children, Minister to Students and/or Senior Pastor or for special needs the Associate Pastor for Adults immediately. State law requires individuals to make a report to the proper authorities. (Report pursuant to 7B-301 “any person..who has cause to suspect...”)
- If a child, student, special needs verbally accuses a family member or other person of abusing them in some way, the volunteer staff member should call these things to the attention of the Minister to Children, Minister to Students and/or Senior Pastor immediately or for special needs the Associate Pastor for Adults. State law requires individuals to make a report to the proper authorities. (Report pursuant to 7B-301 “any person..who has cause to suspect...”)
- Whether clearly true or questionable in the estimation of the volunteer staff member, the allegations or observations should put in writing on the day of the incident, including a verbatim/exact account of the observation and/or accusation. Every detail of the events—including date, time of day, names of persons involved, etc.—should be included in this report. The person making the report should keep one copy, and one copy should be given to the Staff Minister who oversees that area of ministry, and a copy given to the Senior Pastor. These reports must be kept safe and confidential. The Staff Minister will be responsible for following church policy.

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5. Defining Sexual Abuse

- A. Inappropriate Touching
 - 1. Fondling—touching the body on private parts
 - 2. Inappropriate kissing
 - 3. Intercourse (consensual or non-consensual)
 - 4. Oral or anal intercourse

- B. Non-touching
 - 1. Sexual remarks
 - 2. Showing pornography
 - 3. Watching any sexual activity
 - 4. Exhibitionism

6. Detecting sexual abuse

- Most cases of sexual abuse go undetected. In addition, there may be no apparent physical signs.
- The cases that *are* reported are generally reported by abused children to their parents, siblings, or other caretakers—often in the form of casual remarks that lead the listener to query further.
- Most children say nothing. They may not realize that what was done to them was wrong, or they may be too embarrassed or frightened to speak up. They may not want to get the offender in trouble—especially if a friendship has developed between offender and victim.
- In some cases, telltale physical or emotional signs may arouse your suspicion. In its publication *The Educator's Role in the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect*, the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect outlines certain indicators of sexual abuse.

Physical indicators

- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing
- Pain or itching in the genital area
- Bruises or bleeding in external genitalia, vaginal or anal area
- Venereal disease, especially in preteens
- Pregnancy

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Behavioral indicators

- Unwilling to change for gym or participate in physical education class
- Withdrawal, fantasy or infantile behavior
- Bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge
- Poor peer relationships
- Delinquency or running away
- Reports sexual assault by caretaker

These signs can be indicative of other problems and are not exclusively tied to sexual abuse. But the repeated occurrence of an indicator, or the presence of several indicators, warrants further investigation.

Response Procedures for Allegations of Abuse

A Team of the Church Leadership will be convened by the Senior Pastor to respond to alleged abuse. The team is to determine the appropriate action and guide the church in responding appropriately. Team shall consist of: The Senior Pastor, Minister to Children, Minister to Students, Associate Pastor for Adults if special needs is involved, Chair of Deacons, and the Chair of the Personnel Committee. In addition, the team may include any other person/s that the team feels is needed to help them respond quickly and appropriately.

Duties shall include

1. Clarify and evaluate the report with the person(s) who heard the initial report and with the victim as appropriate.
2. Ensure that reports to the appropriate authorities are made in accordance with state law.
3. Consult with an attorney as necessary.
4. Report the allegation to the church's insurance carrier.
5. Minister to the needs of both the accused and the accuser
6. Take appropriate actions on behalf of the church to protect the accused, the accuser, and the church and its ministries.
7. The Senior Pastor and/or Chair of Deacons shall serve as the spokesperson/s.

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General Principles

When responding to allegations of abuse, the church and its representatives will keep several key principles in mind:

1. Reports shall be taken seriously.
2. Allegations should be handled with sensitivity for people's privacy and confidentiality.
3. During a criminal investigation the church shall cooperate with law enforcement and social services as directed by its legal counsel. (*An attorney will be retained to guide the church in this area.*)
4. The alleged victim/accuser/accused will not be blamed.
5. The church should seek to provide support as appropriate for alleged victims, alleged offenders, and their families during this period of great stress.
6. The insurance carrier shall be contacted as soon as possible.

Reports of questionable behavior must be taken seriously.

They should not be ignored or allowed to circulate without concern for the integrity and reputation of the accuser, the accused, and the church.

Allegations may occur in a variety of ways.

Since the church cannot control how a report will surface, it is important that officers, employees, and volunteers follow the steps described below. These steps will ensure that the allegation is channeled to the appropriate person and that the problem is not compounded by an improper response.

Non-church related allegations must be taken seriously.

Young people frequently choose to confide in both children and student workers about abuse happening outside of the church. It is important that reports of this type are also handled sensitively and appropriately. The church's policies also apply to reported allegations not related to church activities or workers. These policies are appropriate for allegations involving church activities **and** non-church related reports of abuse.

When Someone Reports Abuse

State law requires individuals to make a report to the proper authorities.

(Report pursuant to 7B-301 "any person..who has cause to suspect..")

- **Listen supportively.**
- **Let the individual talk openly**-- do not minimize or discount the allegation.
- **Do not judge** the allegation negatively or positively.

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- Ask basic questions to clarify facts if needed, but do not try to investigate or verify the allegations of the report.
- Note the pertinent details in writing as soon as possible after hearing the details provided by the individual(s). Taking notes while interviewing witnesses is acceptable. However, do not take notes when the alleged victim is giving their account to you.
- Contact the Minister to Children, Minister to Students, Associate Pastor for Adults if special needs is involved, and the Senior Pastor immediately. They will help decide on the next step, consult with legal counsel, and make the report to law enforcement if necessary.
- If the Senior Pastor is being accused, the person receiving the initial report shall contact the Chair of Deacons.
- If a staff member is being accused, the person receiving the initial report should contact the Senior Pastor.
- Do not discuss the allegation with anyone except those who have a need to know and are helping to respond.
- If the safety of the child is an issue, the worker must use his or her own judgment to decide the best way to proceed. Student workers may contact law enforcement directly if timing is critical and church leaders are unavailable for consultation.

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES IN WAKE COUNTY – 919-212-7000
AFTER BUSINESS HOURS 919-829-1911
POLICE/SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT - CALL 911

Effective Date of this Policy

The **Protection Policy for Children, Students, Special Needs** shall be fully effective on and after January 1, 2010. Preparation, training, random sampling records checks for existing workers, contracting, budgeting, etc. shall begin upon policy adoption by the church in conference.

Forms

(subject to revision as needed/required when using an outside consultant for background checks)

1. Document Checklist
2. Application for Workers with Preschoolers, Children, Students, and Special Needs Ministries
3. Personal Reference Forms
4. Prior Service Reference Form
5. Authorization and Release of Liability
6. Personal Interview Form
7. Background Check Forms (as provided by outside consultant)

Aversboro Kids General Procedures & Protection Policy Handbook
Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement

I have received and read a copy of Aversboro Road Baptist Church’s Children’s Ministries Policies and General Procedures and understand the importance of the material in the manual. I agree to abide by these guidelines while serving at Aversboro Road Baptist Church.

I understand the manual may be modified, and that any procedure or policy may be amended, revised, or eliminated by Aversboro Road Baptist Church staff and Policy & Procedures Committee.

I have reviewed the duties listed in this handbook, and I agree to fulfill these duties.

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 Aversboro Road Baptist Church.

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

I acknowledge receipt of Aversboro Road Baptist Church Kids policies and procedures manual.

Volunteer’s name (please print)

Volunteer’s signature

Date: _____

[This page to be detached and turned into Aversboro Kids Ministry Office]