

Child Protection Policy



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STATEMENT OF INTENT

Carmel Baptist Church is committed to maintaining a safe environment in which minors¹ are protected from sexual/physical abuse² and neglect. Our goals are to protect minors in church programs and activities, to educate those working with minors concerning abuse issues, and to protect employees and volunteers, as well as the church as a whole, from potential allegations of abuse and neglect.

Implementation includes:

- Selection of staff, teachers, caregivers and others involved in activities with minors
- Orientation and training of these individuals
- Supervision of these individuals
- Responding to incidents or allegations of abuse or neglect as stated in the CBC Child Protection Policy
- Monitoring the policy and procedures to ensure compliance

We recognize that minors are entrusted to the care of responsible persons in church programs and activities, both on and off the campus, and also in programs and activities operated by others on church property. We want minors to be able to participate in these programs and activities without intimidation, coercion, or abuse of any type. This general policy is applicable to all persons whether employees, volunteers, church members, visitors or guests.

¹ Refer to "minors" on Definitions page

² Refer to "Abuse" on Definitions page

Procedures for the Screening of Teachers, Employees and Volunteers

1. All paid employees and teachers of Carmel Baptist Church (including schools) shall complete the *Screening Form for Employees Who Work with Minors* and an authorization for *Criminal Background Check*.
2. All volunteers who work with minors, even in a limited capacity, are required to be active constituents³ of Carmel Baptist Church, to complete and sign the *Screening Form for Volunteers Who Work with Minors* and to complete an authorization form allowing Carmel Baptist to obtain a criminal background check which will be obtained by the Human Resources (HR) Director.
3. The confidential files of all employees and volunteers shall include the *screening form*, the criminal background check results, and the personal references as required or deemed appropriate, as well as the results of any investigations or inquiries made pursuant to the information on these forms.
4. In order to maintain confidentiality, these filed forms will be kept in the office of the HR Director. The confidentiality of all such inquiries and reports will be respected to the fullest extent possible.
5. If information is found in the course of reviewing the various screening forms or background checks that would preclude a volunteer from working with minors, the applicant will be notified by a ministry head.
6. Adult survivors of childhood sexual or physical abuse as disclosed in the screening forms need the love and acceptance of the family of Carmel Baptist Church. Individuals who have such a history will be required to discuss their desire to work with minors with the Care & Counseling Senior Pastor, or one of his designees, prior to being employed in a paid position or engaging in any volunteer service.
7. Those who have been the subject of a Department of Social Services investigation regarding sexual/physical abuse of a minor, where the case was substantiated, will be required to discuss their desire to work with minors with the Care & Counseling Senior Pastor prior to being employed in a paid position or engaging in any volunteer service. If that person has a private

³ Refer to "constituents" on Definitions page

counselor, he/she must sign a release so that the Care & Counseling Senior Pastor may consult with that person. These consultations shall also be held in confidence unless the results of such consultations need to be released to others in connection with the discipline process referenced on pages 6 and 7.

8. Those who have been the subject of a criminal investigation of sexual/physical abuse may serve in other areas of ministry at CBC, but they will be prohibited from serving in the children and youth ministries.
9. Those who have been convicted of either sexual or physical abuse can be forgiven for, and cleansed of, their sin.⁴ However, sin does have consequences, and while such persons may serve in certain other areas of ministry at CBC, they will be prohibited from serving in the children and youth ministries.
10. Other persons and organizations that provide services to minors on/off campus must complete a criminal background check. An employee must be present when an independent contractor provides such services to minors. If it is requested that an independent contractor work with minors without an employee present, then that contractor must also be interviewed by the respective ministry head and approved as an appropriate spiritual influence in accordance to the same expectation as an employee or volunteer and the contractor must agree to abide by this Child Protection Policy.

⁴ I Corinthians 6:11; I John 1:9

Policies, Training and Supervision Procedures

1. It shall be the responsibility of the Carmel Baptist Church ministry head accountable for any CBC program or activity that involves minors to implement appropriate practices within those programs and activities to reduce the risk of abuse. The specific circumstances of each program shall be considered in the development of those program-specific practices.
2. An education program on abuse issues involving minors shall be used at CBC that addresses these goals.
 - Protection of minors in CBC programs and activities provided at or sponsored by CBC.
 - Protection of employees and volunteers from exposure to “high-risk” situations and false accusations.
 - Awareness of the symptoms of abuse.
 - Understanding of the incidents or reasonably suspected incidents of abuse.
3. This educational program is available to all adult members of CBC and is required training for all employees and constituents working with minors.
4. Employees and constituents shall observe the “two adult/visual access” rules at all times, which requires an adult working with minors to be accompanied by an adult partner or to provide visual access to the room. Exception: Those who work with Middle and High School students may have a closed door if the “counseling” is taking place in the office area where observation is mandatory and during regular office hours. Unless prior written permission is obtained from the youth’s parent, at no time shall an adult be in the office with a youth during off hours.
5. Employees and volunteers shall have no one-on-one contact with minors. Exception: Employees or constituents shall be allowed one-on-one time with minors for the purposes of discipleship, mentoring or tutoring under the following guidelines:
 - a. Student ministry-related meetings (middle school and high school) shall take place at the church during regular office hours with people in close proximity. CCS-related meetings (K-12) shall take place at the church with people in close proximity and between 7:15 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. WEE School-related meetings shall take place at the church with people in close proximity and between 8:15 a.m. and 1:45 p.m.

- b. The employee or constituent shall obtain written permission from the parent for meetings that take place in a location or time other than prescribed in (a) above.
6. Appropriate touch guidelines include but are not limited to: Giving kisses is unacceptable for any age minor. Front hugs should not be given to minors in middle or high school. If a student initiates a hug, it should be very brief (do not linger) and move to a public place if not already in one.
7. Whenever practical, the “two-adult” rule applies to vehicles used to transport minors to and from activities that are not conducted on the property of CBC. In those situations, where two adults are not present in each vehicle, in no case shall only one minor be present in the same vehicle (to prevent a one adult/one minor situation). Also, that solo adult driver must try to establish a caravan with at least one other driver with the understanding that the two or more vehicles are always within eyesight of each other. (This is intended to prevent a solo adult from getting lost or placed in a high-risk situation during transit to or from an activity). Exception: In those cases where two adults cannot be present, an employee or constituent may be one-on-one for the purpose of picking up the first minor or dropping off the last one during an event. Written permission from a parent must be obtained for the minor to ride in the car with the leader. The same-sex rule applies here with no exceptions.
8. CBC ministry heads, CCS ministry principals and WEE School directors or their designees shall make random visits to all scheduled classroom situations.
9. Whenever possible, all individuals who work with minors must be screened before being involved in any activity or program. Whenever not possible, a temporary worker will never be left alone or with an individual who has not been cleared according to the provision of the Child Protection Policy.
10. The parent or guardian is responsible for ensuring that the minor is not left alone in an unsupervised area. On Sunday mornings, drop off and pick up of minors up to and including 2nd grade shall only be by the parent or guardian unless written, signed notification is provided for other arrangements. PLEASE NOTE: The drop off and pick up arrangements for the minors involved in the various ministries are described on the page 9 of this manual.

11. Counselors of the Carmel Counseling Center are exempt from the “two adult” rule provided that he/she has obtained the written consult of the minor’s parent/guardian prior to beginning any counseling.
12. When using a restroom during the school day (7:45 a.m. - 4:45 p.m.) and at after-school activities (like sports or club events), male employees and volunteers shall refrain from using urinals and instead should use bathroom stalls.
13. If an employee or volunteer is found to be in violation of these policies and procedures, the matter will be reviewed by the ministry head and Church Administrator for appropriate action.

Procedure for Reporting and Responding to Incidents and Allegations of Abuse of a Minor

I. By a Parent, Guardian, Custodian or Caretaker

1. If a worker suspects that a minor has been abused or neglected by his/her parent, guardian, custodian or caretaker, the worker will contact the CBC pastoral staff or ministry head directly responsible for the area of ministry or education where the observation occurred. The pastoral staff or ministry head shall notify the Church Administrator and they shall apply the guidelines set forth in Matthew 18. The safety and protection of the minor remains paramount.
2. If the CBC pastoral staff or ministry head determines that an incident has occurred, an attitude of Christian kindness and forbearance, guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment, will be used. An oral report shall be made to the civil authorities advising them of the incident. A written report describing the incident shall be forwarded within 24 hours to the Church Administrator.
3. If the incident or reasonably suspected incident of abuse, or neglect is against a parent, guardian, custodian or caretaker, based upon the reporter's and ministry head's conversation with the civil authorities, the Church Administrator shall make decisions to ensure the minor's safety.
4. The action of the CBC pastoral staff or ministry head shall not prohibit the worker from making a report to the civil authorities.

II. By a Worker or Constituent

1. If the incident or reasonably suspected incident of abuse is by a worker or constituent, the incident shall be reported as soon as possible and at least within 24 hours to the CBC Pastoral Staff or Ministry Head directly responsible for the area of ministry or education where the incident occurred and the Church Administrator. The Church Administrator shall, upon making a reasonable investigation, determine if such

incident occurred. If an incident of abuse is believed to have occurred, the Church Administrator shall contact the parent, guardian, custodian or caretaker of the minor and upon further discussion with the parent, guardian, custodian or caretaker, shall make a report to the police if deemed necessary.

III. General Procedures

1. If the incident involves a worker/constituent, the person accused shall be immediately relieved of further responsibilities involving direct contact with minors until the investigation is completed and allegations are cleared.
2. All adult members of CBC, employees and other adults participating in programs of CBC are to be sensitive to the potential for abuse of minors. They are to report any activities they observe that are, or appear to be, inappropriate to the ministry head or the Church Administrator.
3. Organizations that use CBC facilities that have reporting procedures of their own shall follow those established reporting practices. In addition to following their notification procedures, the organization that uses CBC facilities shall also notify the Church Administrator within 24 hours of any incident or suspected incident involving any person affiliated with that arm of the organization that uses CBC facilities.
4. Incidents/reasonably suspected incidents shall be reported by the Church Administrator to church legal counsel and to the liability insurer for the church.
5. All steps taken in the course of handling the incident or report shall be documented.
6. The confidentiality of all such inquiries and reports will be respected to the fullest extent possible. Employees and volunteers will not be retaliated against in any manner for reporting abuse (actual or perceived) or participating in an investigation pursuant to this policy.
7. The Executive Pastor or Church Administrator shall be the spokesmen for the church insofar as media inquiries are concerned.

ADDENDUM

Drop-Off/Pick-Up Policy for Minors

WEE School – In September, as parties responsible for pick-up are being identified by the teachers, each student will be signed in upon arrival and signed out at pick-up time. Parents indicate on sign-in sheet the party responsible for picking up the student. Beginning in October, if someone other than the responsible party picks up, the teacher is notified and requires proper identification before dismissing the student.

Carmel Christian School – Students are picked up at their designated central location. Students are to stay with a teacher until released to parents or responsible parties. Written notes are required if pick-up arrangements are changed. Proper identification must be shown by parties we cannot identify.

Preschool Department:

Sundays & Wednesdays: Every preschool child, birth through kindergarten, will be checked in at the Preschool check-in station and brought to their classroom by their parents. Parents will print a security badge which will be required for pick-up.

Other events where childcare is provided: Parents will take the child to the classroom and sign them in. They will be required to sign the child out when they return to pick them up. If someone other than the parent who dropped the child off comes to pick the child up, they will be required to show identification.

Children's Department:

Sundays: All children, grades 1-6 check in at the CarmelKidz check-in stations and print a name tag. Parents are to take their children to their classes during the first month of the new school year. Parents of children, grades 1-4, also need to print a security badge at the check-in stations to present to the teacher when they pick up their child. Parents of fifth and sixth graders do not need a security badge. After the first month, fifth and sixth graders do not need to be escorted to class and are dismissed on their own. Third and fourth graders may be released on their own, after the first month, with permission from their parents. First and second graders must be picked up by a parent with a security tag from all activities.

Wednesday Nights: All children, grades 1-5 must be brought to and picked up from classes by their parents. Children are to check in at the CarmelKidz check-in stations and parents are to print a security badge for pick-up. Parents of sixth grade students are not required to check in or pick up their students.

Definitions

Minor(s), Children and Youth: Any person under 18 years of age, involved in programs provided at or sponsored by Carmel Baptist Church.

Abuse: For purposes of this policy, “abuse” is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a child’s physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:

- Physical abuse - any physical injury to a child that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.
- Emotional abuse - emotional injury when the child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, yelling, belittling, or persistent degrading teasing.
- Sexual abuse - any sexual activity between a child and an adult or between a child and another child at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
- Neglect - depriving a child of his or her essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.

Constituent: A volunteer who works with minors and who is a member of the church or has requested membership and has been actively involved at the church for minimum of six (6) months (documented attendance at a discipleship ministry at Carmel). Or a person who is a parent, guardian, custodian or caretaker of a student in WEE School or Carmel Christian School.