

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

CENTERPOINT CHURCH

General Purpose Statement

Centerpoint Church seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for the children who participate in our programs and activities. By implementing the following practices, our goal is to protect the children of Centerpoint from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff and volunteers from false accusations.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the terms “child” or “children” include all persons under the age of 18.

Selection of Workers

All adults, staff or volunteers, who desire to work with the children participating in our programs and activities will be screened. This screening includes the following:

- a. Personal Interview: An interview with the individual will be conducted to discuss his or her suitability for the volunteer position.
- b. Criminal Background Check: A national criminal background check is required for all staff or volunteers (regardless of position) for those who will be involved in all children’s programs, including the following: Sunday School, Nursery, Children’s Church, AWANA, VBS, or any other church-sponsored activity involving children. Before a background check is run, prospective workers will be asked to give authorization allowing the church to run the check.
- c. Membership: Each adult desiring to work with the children must be a member of Centerpoint Church.
- d. Watching a child safety video: Every adult working with children will be required to watch the online video prescribed by the Children’s Pastor. Verification will be submitted to the church office.

Note: (1) What constitutes a disqualifying offense that will keep an individual from working with children will be determined by the Elders or staff member in charge on a case-by-case basis in light of all the surrounding circumstances. Generally, convictions for an offense involving children, and/or for offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude someone from being permitted to work with children. The background check authorization form and results will only be seen by the necessary Elders and pastoral staff members. (2) Minor workers may be utilized in the children’s ministry after an interview, their parent’s consent, and with adult supervision. Minor workers will not be subject to a background check.

Open Door Policy

On certain occasions, when only one adult is present with a group of children, classroom doors should remain at least partially open unless there is a window in the door. Doors should never be locked while persons are inside the room. As an extra measure of safety, security cameras have been installed throughout the church and are monitored by the church leadership.

Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse

For purposes of this policy, “child abuse” is any action (or lack of action) by an adult or another child which *endangers* or *harms* a child’s physical, psychological or emotional health and development.

In the event that an individual involved in the care of children at Centerpoint Church becomes aware of suspected child abuse of a child under his/her care, this should be reported immediately to an Elder or member of the church staff for further action. If necessary, the incident will be reported to authorities as mandated by Texas state law. All incidents will be recorded on the Centerpoint Incident Report form.

In the event that an incident of child abuse is *alleged* to have occurred at Centerpoint or during one of our sponsored programs or activities, the above notification process should be used as well.

Check in/check-out Procedure

Children in 2nd grade and younger will remain in their classroom until a parent or designated guardian comes to pick them up.

Sick Child Policy

Parents are asked not to bring their children to church if they have any of the following:

1. Runny nose with any colored discharge
2. Fever or diarrhea within the past 24 hours
3. Sore throat or cough
4. Any skin infection or unexplained rash
5. Pinkeye or other eye infection
6. If the child or anyone in their household has vomited in the past 24 hours.

If there is reason to believe that these rules are not being followed, the parents will be called to pick up their children.

Discipline Policy

It is the policy of Centerpoint Church not to administer corporal punishment, even if the parents have suggested or given permission for it. There will be no spanking, hitting, or other physical discipline of children. Workers will manage discipline through verbal warnings, timeouts, and loss of special privileges.

Restroom Guidelines

Children under 4 years old should use the classroom bathroom. Children over 4 years old should use the hall bathroom. In each case, a worker should check to see that the room is empty, then allow the child inside. The worker will remain outside the door and then escort the child back to the classroom. If the child is taking longer than seems necessary, the worker will open the door and call the child's name.

For the protection of all, workers should never be alone with a child in a bathroom with the door closed and never be in a closed bathroom stall with a child. Parents are strongly encouraged to have their children visit the bathroom prior to each class.

Accidental Injuries to Children

In the event that a child is injured or becomes ill under our care, the following steps should be followed:

1. For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide first aid (band-aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parents or guardian when the child is picked up.
2. For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple first aid, the parent or guardian will immediately be summoned.

Incident Report

A Centerpoint Incident Report should be completed for any incident requiring a written record, as deemed necessary by the leader of the activity or event. These include, but are not limited to, injury sustained during a church activity, inappropriate behavior between two or more children/youths, and issues that require parental correction or involvement.

I have read this policy and pledge to adhere to these guidelines.

Print Name

Signature

Date