

## **Church and School Volunteer Policy and Guidelines**

Churches and schools have both a moral and civil duty to protect the children entrusted to their care from harm caused by abuse. The work of volunteers is essential to the successful accomplishment of the church's and school's mission and ministry. In selecting individuals for volunteer positions, only those who support the mission of the organization will be recruited. The policies and procedures for supervision of volunteers are designed to be consistent with the mission of the church and school and support its achievement. Individuals unwilling to support these policies and practices will not be allowed to serve.

To accomplish this goal the church has established the following guidelines:

1. The church and/or school will conduct an orientation program regarding child protection for church and school leaders and volunteers at least annually.
2. Appropriate training will be provided for leaders and volunteers to properly supervise the ministry or activity.
3. Each volunteer will receive a written copy of the code of conduct required by the church and/or school.
4. All volunteers will be screened through Verified Volunteers before they are allowed to serve in ministry to children.
5. No adult may be considered for a volunteer role in a church or school-sponsored ministry or activity until he/she has held membership in the congregation or has been known by the principal or teacher for a minimum of six (6) months.
6. Appropriate levels of adult supervision will be provided at all times.
7. Children will never be left alone without supervision.
8. Wherever possible, a minimum of two adults will be present to supervise activities involving minor-aged children.
9. All incidents of suspected child abuse will be reported in accordance with the law.
10. An individual's failure to comply with the volunteer guidelines and code of conduct will result in the leader of the ministry or activity informing the individual they can no longer participate in the ministry or activity.

***My Commitment to Volunteer Ministry***

I will,

- Never leave a child or group of children for whom I am responsible unattended. I will provide appropriate supervision at all times.
- Always have at least one other adult, eighteen (18) years of age or older, to help with the supervision of children. If I find myself in a situation where I am the only adult present, **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES** will I allow myself to be alone with one child.
- Always ask a child’s permission before physically touching him/her anywhere, even when responding to an injury or problem. This is especially true for any areas that would normally be covered by a T-shirt and/or shorts. (If an injury is within this area, I will make sure another adult works with me as care is provided.)
- Refrain from physical and verbal attacks and corporal punishment which are inappropriate and should never be used as discipline. (“Time outs” or “sit-in-that-chair” may be helpful discipline methods to use with children.)
- Affirm children with appropriate touching by keeping hugs brief and “shoulder-to-shoulder” or “side-to-side.” For small children who like to sit on laps, I will encourage them to sit next to me. (Always keep hands at (not below) the shoulder level. A caregiver’s kiss should be to the forehead or cheek only – not elsewhere.)
- Provide extra care when taking small children to the restroom. I will take another adult along or leave the door open.
- Avoid conducting activities in rooms that do not have any way for people to see what is going on in that room or I will leave the door open during the activity to allow easy observation by others.
- Cooperate with the volunteer screening process and complete the Verified Volunteer training and background check as required by the church.
- Be aware of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and aware of the legal requirements for reporting suspected cases of abuse.
- Cooperate with church leadership in conducting children and youth ministries. I will be loving, kind, firm, and always a thoroughly professional person.
- Participate in orientation and training programs conducted by the church
- I recognize that working with children and youth is not only a privilege; it is also a serious responsibility that must be approached with utmost care.

I, the undersigned, have read this document and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct and Volunteer Guidelines outlined above. I will retain a copy of this document and keep it for reference.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Name (please print)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*