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# POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR VOLUNTEER & PAID STAFF AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF TULSA, OK

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# INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your desire and heart to minister to others at First Baptist Church (FBC) of Tulsa. In our ever-changing culture it is important that FBC will try to provide a place that is safe for everyone, church attenders and volunteers alike.

FBC is committed to helping all volunteers and staff understand and use appropriate measures as outlined in this document.

FBC does not tolerate abuse in any way. We encourage adults to use wisdom and discretion when working or serving. We also ask that any account of abuse or neglect be reported immediately to your supervisor or pastoral staff. Any person who may pose a threat will be prohibited from working in any ministry. All reports of suspicious or inappropriate behavior or allegations of abuse will be taken seriously.

This manual is written to help you as you work with others. Please take time to read through our policies and apply them to your area of ministry. We ask that you understand our Procedures for Responding to Abuse and keep the phone numbers in this manual available to you. Lastly, we ask you to read, sign, and date the Code of Conduct form outlined in the back of this manual. Please return one signed copy back to your ministry supervisor. Background checks are to be completed every year. All staff, regardless of position, and all volunteers are required to complete all screening processes.

Thank you again for choosing to minister to others at FBC.

FBC Tulsa Educational Staff,

Deron Spoo, Pastor

Grant Collins, Minister to Children

Holly Sparks, First Steps Associate

Stuart Tilley, Minister to Students

Alyson Walker, Preschool Associate

Lyndsay Wagner, Women's Ministry Director

## Letter From The Pastor

Dear Staff/Volunteer,

Shepherds play a big part in Scripture. Moses was a shepherd before the Exodus. David tended sheep before he was a king. Shepherds attended the birth of Christ. Psalm 23 teaches us to pray, "The Lord is my shepherd."

A shepherd's job is to provide for the sheep, guide the sheep, and to protect the sheep. It's a simple job, but not always easy.

The New Testament uses the picture of a shepherd to define Christian leadership. 1 Peter 5:2 says, "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care." What does this mean? It means we provide whatever is needed for spiritual health. It means we offer guidance from the truth of Scripture. And it means that we do everything in our power to protect those under our care.

The purpose of this policy and procedure guide is to ensure the best level of care we can give to God's people.

You are a leader. Let's shepherd well by protecting every person who comes under our care.

*Deron, Pastor*

## **Policies Defining Qualifications to Serve:**

- *Before* serving, all potential volunteers must interview with the lead minister of the ministry they are interested in.
- Those who wish to serve in leadership must be a member of First Baptist Tulsa and/or have actively attended for at least one year. This includes VBS, camps and short-term leadership roles. For discipleship events such as BIG Weekend, retreats and speaking seminars, outside leaders/speakers must be presented in advance and approved by the Church Management Team.
- All leadership (anyone serving over minors or adults; i.e. preschool volunteer, community group leader) must submit a background check each year.
- If you served in leadership at a previous church, a written letter of approval from the lead pastor of the previous church can be taken into consideration to begin serving at FBC Tulsa earlier than the year mark.

# **POLICIES**

## **Defining Appropriate and Inappropriate Physical Interactions**

**Working With Minors: Two screened adults are required to be present at every function and in each classroom, vehicle, or other enclosed area during all activities involving minors.**

**When defining appropriate and inappropriate interactions, preschool age children may initiate or require interactions appropriate for their age and situation.**

**Some examples of appropriate interactions may include but are not limited to:**

- Side hugs.
- Shoulder to shoulder or “temple” hugs.
- Pats on the shoulder or back.
- Handshakes.
- “High-fives” and hand slapping.
- Verbal praise.
- Pats on the head when culturally appropriate.
- Touching hands, faces, shoulders, and arms.
- Arms around shoulders.
- Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations)

**Some examples of inappropriate interactions may include but are not limited to:**

- Full frontal hugs.
- Kissing
- Touching bottoms, genital areas (excludes diaper changing) and chests.
- Showing affection in isolated areas of the building, such as closets, staff only areas, or other private rooms.
- Staff/volunteers sleeping in bed with a minor.
- Touching knees or legs.
- Wrestling with minors.
- Piggyback rides.
- Tickling.
- Allowing a minor to cling to a staff/volunteer’s leg.
- Any type of massage given by a minor to a staff/volunteer.
- Any type of massage given by staff/volunteer to a minor.
- Any form of affection that is unwanted by the staff/volunteer or minor.
- Compliments that relate to physique or body development.
- Lap sitting for children above preschool age.

## **Defining Appropriate and Inappropriate Verbal Interactions**

**Some examples of appropriate verbal interactions may include but are not limited to:**

- Positive reinforcement.
- Appropriate jokes.
- Encouragement.
- Praise.

**Some examples of inappropriate verbal interactions may include but are not limited to:**

- Name calling.
- Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving minor in the personal problems or issues of staff.
- Telling secrets.
- Cursing.
- Telling off color or sexualized jokes.
- Shaming.
- Belittling.
- Derogatory remarks.
- Harsh language that may frighten, threaten, or humiliate minor.
- Making derogatory remarks about the minor or about their family

## **Defining Appropriate and Inappropriate Electronic Communications Between Staff/Volunteers and Minors**

### **Children and Preschool Ministry**

All children and preschool volunteers and staff are prohibited from engaging in any form of personal electronic communication with minors. This includes, but is not limited to, social networking websites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and WhatsApp, instant messaging, texting and email.

### **Student Ministry**

While we understand that electronic communication with minors comes with certain inherent challenges, we also recognize its value when working specifically with teenagers. It is the policy of FBC to allow student ministry volunteers and staff to communicate electronically with junior high and high school students so long as it is not done in a private manner. All communication must be presented in an open format and accessible to the student ministry staff. For example, texting must be done in a group format that includes at least two adults, which may include staff and/or parents, and Facebook messages must copy the student ministry office. Direct messaging on any social networking platform without including another adult in the communication is strictly prohibited. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to maintain private social networking profiles which minors cannot access and may not request to be friends with or approve friend requests from minors.

Staff/volunteers may not use personal electronic communication devices to contact (via voice, text, or pictures/video) minors for personal or inappropriate reasons. Staff/volunteers may not engage in sexually oriented communication with minors. Staff/volunteers should also refrain from posting pictures of minors on social media sites unless parents have signed a Media Release.

FBC encourages all adult volunteers and staff to be thoughtful and use appropriate content when communicating with minors, remembering to exercise diligence and maturity in these areas.

FBC reserves the right to remove any staff/volunteers from their position working with minors if they do not adhere to the electronic communication policy.

## **Gift Giving**

Staff and volunteers should only give gifts to groups of minors, and only under the following circumstances:

- 1 Administration must be made aware of and approve the gift.
- 2 Parents must be notified.

## **Procedures Governing Interactions Between Staff/Volunteers and Minors Outside of Regularly Scheduled Program Activities**

Staff/volunteers are required to gain permission of parent/guardian and notify supervising minister of outside activities with minors.

**Some examples of appropriate outside contact may include but are not limited to:**

- Taking groups of minors out for dinner.
- Taking groups of minors out to a movie.
- Taking groups of minors to a sporting activity.

**Some examples of inappropriate outside contact may include but are not limited to:**

- Taking one or more minors on an outing without the guardian's permission and FBC's knowledge.
- Entertaining one minor in the home of a staff/volunteer.
- Individual minor spending the night with a staff/volunteer.

## **Monitoring & Supervision Guidelines**

Staff/volunteers must always remain in line-of-site of minors, especially when in mixed-age groups. Staff/volunteers will maintain a minimum adult to minor ratio. Ensure some form of attendance or “roll call” is taken periodically.

### **Authorized & unauthorized areas:**

- Set boundaries on site. Tell minors where they can and cannot go.
- Staff/volunteers must routinely monitor the campus, with attention to out-of-the-way or “unauthorized” locations, such as bathrooms, unused rooms, and stairwells.

### **Supervision standards for authorized areas:**

- Determine how frequently authorized areas should be monitored by staff.
- Assign staff/volunteers specific supervision responsibilities over authorized areas (zone monitoring).
- Require staff/volunteers to report when they monitor authorized areas.

### **Bathroom Activities:**

When supervising restroom use, staff/volunteers should first quickly scan the bathroom before allowing minors to enter.

1. For “Group Bathroom Breaks”:
  - a. Staff/volunteers should take groups of two or more minors to the bathroom – following the “rule of three” or more.
  - b. If the bathroom only has one stall, only one minor should enter the restroom while the others wait outside with staff/volunteers.
  - c. If there are multiple stalls, only send in as many minors as there are stalls.
  - d. Minimize minors of different ages using the bathroom at the same time.
  - e. Staff should stand outside the bathroom door but remain within earshot.
2. For single use restrooms:
  - a. Require minors to ask permission to use the bathroom.
  - b. Staff/volunteers should frequently check bathrooms.
  - c. Staff/volunteers are prohibited from using the bathroom at the same time as minors.
  - d. If assisting young children in the stalls, the staff should keep the door to the stall open.

### **Child Care:**

- Staff/volunteers will follow designated check in/out procedures for attendance & conduct frequent headcounts.
- Staff/volunteers will create and adhere to structured activity schedules which allow for more direct supervision.
- Staff/volunteers will utilize a standard Incident Report Form to document any policy violation, behavioral incident, or unusual occurrences.
- Diapering & toileting—utilize “rule of three” when accompanying minors to bathroom or during diapering; if assisting very young children in the bathroom, staff should keep the stall door open.

# **PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO ABUSE**

## **Responding to Reports of Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors**

### **A. STAFF/VOLUNTEER RESPONSE**

**If a staff/volunteer witnesses suspicious or inappropriate behaviors or policy violations from a co-worker, the staff/volunteer is instructed to do the following:**

1. Interrupt the inappropriate behavior and remind the co-worker of the correct policy or procedure for interacting with minors.
2. Report the behavior to a supervisor and/or make an anonymous report.
3. If no action is taken in response to the report, keep reporting to the same supervisor and to the next level of management.

### **B. SUPERVISOR RESPONSE**

**If a supervisor receives a report of suspicious or inappropriate behaviors or policy violations from a staff/volunteer, the supervisor, Senior Pastor or Church Management Team are instructed to do the following:**

1. Determine the appropriate administrator to respond to the behavior.
2. Review the staff/volunteer's file and determine if similar complaints exist about the staff/volunteer.
3. Document the behavior and submit it to the appropriate supervisor.
4. Determine what action is required:

Increase monitoring or supervision of the staff/volunteer or program.

- i. Speak with the staff/volunteer.
  - ii. Interview and/or survey others:
    - Co-workers.
    - Members.
  - iii. Report concern to the next level of management.
  - iv. Conduct a formal internal incident review.
  - v. If at any point a concern arises about possible abuse, contact the state authorities,
  - vi. including police and/or child protection, and file a report.
  - vii. If appropriate, notify parents and/or legal guardians.
  - viii. Initiate the progressive disciplinary process as follows. If policy violations with minors are confirmed, the staff or volunteer could be subject to disciplinary action which could include counseling, dismissal, termination and/or prosecution.
5. Follow-up with the staff/volunteer who reported the behavior to let the staff/volunteer know that the report is being taken seriously.

### **C. ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSE**

**After the internal review of the suspicious or inappropriate behaviors or policy violations, the organization is instructed to do the following:**

- 1 Review the need for additional supervision.
- 2 Review the need for revised policies or procedures.
- 3 Review the need for additional training.

## **Responding to Allegation or Incident of Suspected Abuse**

Staff and volunteers must report any suspected abuse or neglect of a youth—whether on or off organization property or whether perpetrated by staff, volunteers, or others—to state authorities. Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. A person who mistakenly reports suspected abuse is immune from civil or criminal liability if the report was made in good faith and without malice.

Mandatory Reporting Law in Oklahoma dictates that: “Every person having reason to believe that a child under age 18 is a victim of abuse or neglect shall report the matter promptly to the Department of Human Services. No privilege or contract shall relieve any person from the requirement of reporting pursuant to this section.”

3. In addition to reporting to state authorities, employees and volunteers are required to report any suspected or known abuse of students perpetrated by employees or volunteers directly to the program leadership so that immediate and proper steps may be taken to ensure the safety of alleged victims and others who may be at risk.

### **A. STAFF/VOLUNTEER RESPONSE**

1. Interrupt if witnessing.
2. Correctly respond to the person disclosing. Pay attention to the safety and comfort of the guest: Remain calm. Listen without blame, criticism, or judgment. Reassure the youth that he/she was correct to tell you. Document his/her exact words. Protect the youth from intimidation, retribution, or further abuse.
3. Follow organization policy.
  - i. Call authorities.
  - ii. Notify supervisors.
4. Document/write a statement of the incident. It is not your job to investigate the incident, but it is your job to report the incident to your supervisor and follow all mandated reporting procedures in a timely manner.

### **B. SUPERVISOR RESPONSE**

1. Suspend the accused. Remove from access to the minor.
2. Pull the staff file. Gather and document as much information about the allegation as you can.
3. Contact authorities and follow their recommendations.
  - If authorities request that you not do anything, proceed with internal follow-up and documentation. Communicate with the authorities as to the timing of the internal investigation.
4. Notify your Church Management Team and follow your crisis management plan.
5. Direct all media and communications to Deron Spoo, Senior Pastor. In his absence, direct to Church Management Team.
6. The Senior Pastor or Church Management Team will notify the minor's parent/guardian.

## **Responding to Inappropriate Peer to Peer Interactions and Abuse**

### **A. PROHIBITED CONDUCT**

Most serious incidents of peer to peer abuse are preceded by more subtle incidents such as name-calling, taunting, or roughhousing. Interrupting these interactions early and establishing and communicating standards of conduct can keep the program environment safe. FBC recognizes that the following interactions are high risk and should be prohibited:

1. Hazing
2. Bullying
3. Derogatory name-calling
4. Games of Truth or Dare or Never Have I Ever
5. Singling out one minor for different treatment
6. Ridicule or humiliation.

Additional examples would include all sexual activity concerning minors are prohibited including: inappropriate touching, exposed body parts, using sexualized language, making threats of sexual activity, engaging in sexual activity, and similar types of interactions.

### **B. STAFF/VOLUNTEER RESPONSE**

**If a staff/volunteer witnesses peer to peer abuse or sexual behaviors regarding minors, the staff/volunteer is instructed to do the following:**

1. Interrupt the abuse and separate the minors.
2. Calmly redirect the minors: explain what behavior was inappropriate and what behaviors are expected instead.
3. Report the activity to a supervisor.
4. Document the incident, including all known circumstances and individuals involved, necessary follow-up items, and future action items.
5. Follow your supervisors' instructions regarding notifying the authorities and informing the parents of the minors involved.

### **C. SUPERVISOR RESPONSE**

**If a supervisor receives a report of peer to peer abuse, the supervisor is instructed to do the following:**

1. Meet with staff/volunteer who made the report & ensure minors are separated and appropriately supervised.
2. Report to Church Management Team to conduct the internal review of the incident.

3. The Senior Pastor or Church Management Team will notify the minor's parent/guardian.
4. Notify the authorities if required by the mandated reporting procedures.
5. Document the incident and the organization's response.
6. Determine if the minor exhibited similar behaviors in the past (review the minor's file, incident reports involving the minor, meet with the staff/volunteer(s)).
7. Determine if the program has had similar incidents in the past.
8. Determine if the staff/volunteer on duty violated supervision procedures and if they have violated similar procedures in the past.
9. Develop a written correction action or safety plan, including assessing the suitability of the program for the minors involved.
10. The Senior Pastor or Church Management Team will determine how the findings of the investigation be disseminated and who should be notified. If anything arises to a level that people need to be notified, the Senior Pastor or Church Management Team will communicate to the necessary parties.

#### **D. ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSE**

**After the internal review of the peer to peer abuse, the organization is instructed to do the following:**

1. Review the need for additional supervision.
2. Review the need for revised policies or procedures.
3. Review the need for additional training.
4. The Senior Pastor or Church Management Team will alert others in the organization.

## **REPORTING TO STAFF SUPERVISORS**

**Report abuse immediately to the following appropriate supervisor:**

		<b>Office</b>
Preschool	Alyson Walker	918-594-5024
First Steps	Holly Sparks	918-594-5096
Children	Grant Collins	918-594-5023
Students	Stuart Tilley	918-594-5022
Caring Centers	Mike Hart	918-594-5015
Adult Discipleship	Deron Spoo	918-594-5019
Women's Ministry	Lyndsay Wagner	918-594-5001
Main Church		918-587-1571

Church Management Team members:  
Deron Spoo, Jeff Elkins, Rusty McGhee and Lyndsay Wagner.

**In a case where supervisors are not reporting the incident or if a supervisor is involved, please contact the Senior Pastor or a member of the Church Management Team. The Main Church number can be used to receive the appropriate contact information.**

**OKLAHOMA CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE      1-800-522-3511**