

FAITH COVENANT CHURCH CHILD & ADOLESCENT PROTECTION PROGRAM

The administration and supervision of the Child & Adolescent Protection Program (CAPP) for Faith Covenant Church shall be the responsibility of the Senior Pastor or designee who will ensure that the requirements of this policy are followed in all programs/events sponsored by Faith Covenant Church.

Faith Covenant Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for children and youth under the age of 18 who participate in our ministries. We also seek to minimize any vulnerability to unwarranted accusations of improper behavior that our organization, volunteers and employees may experience as they fulfill their ministerial duties. To fulfill these commitments as fully as possible, our leadership team has adopted the following procedures to be used when selecting ministry workers.

VOLUNTEER SCREENING PROCEDURES

1. All candidates seeking a position that involves working with children and youth under the age of 18 will complete and return a Child Care/Youth Worker Application.
2. The CAPP Coordinator will
 - a. carefully review the application and store all application materials.
 - b. check at least two references to confirm the information provided on the Child Care/Youth Worker Application
 - c. secure permission to conduct a criminal background check through a state law enforcement agency or other provider of such services and then order the background check.
 - d. provide the Senior Pastor or his/her designee with all information when a reference and/or background check reveals the candidate may pose a threat to others or have a prior history of physical or sexual abuse directed against another person.
 - i. The responsible party will make the decision whether or not the candidate will be removed from consideration for ministry positions anywhere within the church. The Senior Pastor has ultimate authority to approve or reject the application.
 - ii. In the event that an application is rejected after it has been reviewed, the applicant shall be contacted and offered an opportunity to clarify or refute the information gathered during the verification process. The applicant will be given an opportunity to withdraw the application. No other explanation or information will be disclosed.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Applicants should be regularly involved in the church for three months or more before they will be considered for any ministry position with children/youth under the age of 18. This waiting period may be shortened or lengthened when considering each individual.

Applicants who wish to help in weekday programs, and do not normally attend Faith Covenant Church, shall complete the same application process as those who regularly attend Faith Covenant Church. These applicants shall work with at least one other worker who does attend Faith Covenant Church.

APPLICATION RENEWAL

1. The Child Care/Youth Worker Application shall be considered to be active for a period of three years.
2. Workers will be required to complete a brief Re-Application form every three years.
3. If a background check is ordered during re-application, a new consent form shall be signed.

PROCEDURES

As a caring congregation sensitive to the needs of our members and friends, we must be vigilant in our attempt to prevent and detect instances of abuse and take appropriate action to protect children and youth. In order to provide a safe environment for children and youth, and to reduce or eliminate the likelihood of false claims being filed, the following procedures are to be used.

SUPERVISION

1. Employees and volunteers who work with children and youth shall observe the “two-person rule” or the “open door policy” at ALL times. The “two-person rule” requires that employees and volunteers and supervisors shall make every reasonable effort to avoid situations where an employed or volunteer worker is alone with children or youth without a partner. The “open door policy” requires the door be open at all times. The “TWO-PERSON RULE” will be MANDATORY for all employees and volunteers with our NURSERY, PRESCHOOL, and

KINDERGARTEN AGE CHILDREN.

2. Workers must remain at their assigned post until all young children in their care have been picked up by an authorized person.

STUDENT HELPERS

1. Student Helpers must be supervised by an adult.
2. Student helpers will complete a brief CAPP application and training process and receive a copy of "Classroom Guidelines" to inform them what is expected of them.
3. Student Helpers who are themselves under 18 will not undergo a background check, as it is not allowable by law.

GUIDELINES

1. Children age 5 or younger (boys and girls) should be assisted as needed in the restroom.
2. Older children should accompany each other to the restroom.
3. There should be no touching of a child's breasts, buttocks, genital area, inner thigh, or the clothing covering those parts of the body.
4. The touching of children as required for hygienic care (e.g. changing a diaper) is permitted.
5. Workers should avoid the appearance of impropriety – such as sitting older children on their lap, kissing or embracing others, etc.
6. Workers are to release children in their care only to parents, guardians or persons specifically authorized to pick up the child.
7. Workers should avoid off-church site one-on-one meetings with a child unless there is express approval from the child's parents or guardians.
8. Workers should avoid one-on-one encounters that occur when others cannot see what is taking place.

DISCIPLINE

1. Workers should never physically discipline anyone. Physical restraint should only be used in a situation where it is reasonably necessary to prevent an individual from physically harming himself or another individual.
2. Discipline problems should be reported to the ministry activity coordinator and to a parent or guardian.

INJURIES OR ILLNESS

1. Workers who are ill (with a fever or a communicable disease that can be transmitted by cough or by touch) may not be permitted to participate.
2. Children/youth participants should be returned to their parent or guardian as soon as illness is discovered.
3. Workers should make themselves aware of any food allergies of children in their care.
4. Take reasonable steps to avoid contact with blood, saliva or other bodily fluids.
5. Minor injuries should be treated immediately. Parents or guardians should be notified of the injury.
6. In the event of serious injury parents or guardians should be notified immediately and appropriate help sought.
7. A written Notice of Injury report is to be prepared whenever an injury occurs during a ministry function. Promptly forward the incident report to the Senior Pastor or Church Administrator.

NOTICE OF INJURY, ABUSE OR MOLESTATION

1. If there is reasonable cause to suspect that child abuse has occurred, notify a pastor or the church chair.
2. It shall be the responsibility of the pastor to:
 - a. Contact the County Department of Social Services.
 - b. Inform the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) of the situation.
 - c. Contact the church's attorney.
3. After consultation with the County Department of Social Services and the church's attorney, the senior pastor or his/her designee will serve as the liaison with the Department.
4. The senior pastor or the pastor's designee shall coordinate efforts to obtain counseling and support for all parties involved.
5. The church administrator must promptly notify the church's insurance carrier upon notice of abuse or molestation. Denominational authorities will be notified as required.
6. Internal Investigation
 - a. Faith Covenant Church considers any allegation of abuse or molestation a serious matter. Each situation will be fully investigated, always with the assistance of legal counsel and civil authorities.
 - b. Workers who are the subject of an investigation will be removed from their position, pending completion of the investigation.

- c. Workers will be permanently removed from their duties if they are found guilty of abuse or molestation.
7. Dealing with Law Enforcement, News Media
- a. Law enforcement or governmental agencies investigating allegations of injury, abuse or molestation will receive our full cooperation.
 - b. One individual will be the designated spokesperson to handle all inquiries from the news media. They will be the only person to convey information concerning the situation, doing so in a prudent manner to avoid compromising an ongoing investigation and to maintain the privacy of the individuals involved.

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact a pastor or ministry leader.