

Child Protection Policy and Procedures for Grace Baptist Church

Adopted 13 October 2015

Child Protection Policy and Procedures for Grace Baptist Church

Introduction

Grace Baptist Church (hereafter GBC) has adopted the following Child Protection Policy to help protect children and vulnerable adults. It is important that all GBC paid staff and volunteers understand and implement this policy to help prevent abuse, or neglect of any kind, against children and vulnerable adults.

Purpose

1. Provide a safe and secure environment for children, youth, vulnerable adults, and adult workers.
2. Assist GBC in evaluating a person's suitability to supervise, oversee, the activities of children and youth and vulnerable adults.
3. Assure parents that all staff, paid and volunteers have been screened in accordance with the herein contained procedures.
4. Respond to reported incidents of sexual abuse and other types of abuse, or neglect. The response will include ministry to the victims, perpetrators, and families with an aim to restoration.
5. Minimize or eliminate the possibility of false accusations of sexual abuse, other types of abuse or neglect being made.

Definitions

The following terms used in this document are defined as follows:

1. Paid Staff:

Any GBC pastor or employee who is paid.

2. Volunteer:

Any unpaid person who is entrusted with, or directly oversees the care and supervision of children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

3. Teenage Volunteer:

Any teenager under the age of 18 desiring to work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

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4. Worker:

Paid Staff or Adult Volunteer.

5. Children/Youth/Minor:

Any person who has not reached his/her 18th birthday, or the age of majority, as defined by state law.

6. Adult:

Any person who has reached his/her 18th birthday, or as defined by state law.

7. Perpetrator:

Anyone who has been accused of, or committed any form of abuse, or neglect, involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

8. Vulnerable Adults:

Special needs adults as defined by state law.

9. Sexual Abuse:

Any form of sexual contact or exploitation in which a child is being used for sexual stimulation of the perpetrator. It may be violent or non-violent and includes behaviors that involve touching aspects (fondling, oral, genital and anal penetration, intercourse, forcible rape) and non-touching aspects (verbal comments, pornographic videos, obscene phone calls, exhibitionism and allowing children to witness sexual activity.)

10. Emotional Abuse:

Verbal or nonverbal conduct including mental exploitation, degrading communication, or humiliating or threatening conduct that may or may not include bullying, or as defined by state law.

11. Physical abuse:

Any physical injury to a child which is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, bullying and biting.

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12. Neglect:

Depriving a child of their essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.

13. Escort:

An appointed or volunteer adult who will remain with a sexual offender whenever he or she is present on the GBC property, or in attendance at a GBC sponsored event, where children, youth, or vulnerable adults are present.

14. Activity Permission:

Written authorization to attend GBC children, youth, vulnerable adult activities where the parent, guardian or sponsor is not present.

15. Officer(s) of GBC:

Any Pastor of GBC or elected officials as defined in the GBC bylaws.

Section I Policy

GBC will ensure that:

1. All people working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults at GBC shall be screened and authorized prior to working.
2. All people working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults at GBC shall follow the GBC supervision procedures.
3. Known sexual offenders shall not be allowed free access to GBC property and facilities.
4. All reported allegations of abuse or neglect at GBC or at any off site GBC sponsored children, youth, or vulnerable adults activities shall be properly investigated.

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Section II Procedures

Staff and Adult Volunteer Screening and Authorization Procedures

The following screening procedures are to be used with workers who are entrusted with the care and supervision of children, youth or vulnerable adults. All information collected will be maintained in confidence.

1. Time Requirements

No volunteer will be considered for any GBC position involving contact with children or vulnerable adults until he or she is a member in good standing or has been involved with Grace Baptist Church on a regular basis for a minimum of six (6) months. This time of interaction between GBC leadership and the applicant allows for better evaluation of suitability for working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults. These time requirements shall not be construed to disqualify anyone currently working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults at the time of adoption of these policies and procedures. Any exceptions to the time requirements shall require the approval of the Deacon Board upon the recommendation of one or more GBC Church leaders.

2. Written Application

All persons currently working with or seeking to work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults must complete GBC's written application form. Applications will be screened by the Superintendent of Christian Education or a GBC Pastor.

3. Personal Interview

After screening, a face-to-face interview may be scheduled with the applicant by the Superintendent of Christian Education or a GBC Pastor to discuss his or her suitability for the volunteer position applied for.

4. Reference Checks

Before an applicant is permitted to work with children or vulnerable adults, at least two of the applicant's references will be checked by the Superintendent of Christian Education or a GBC Pastor. The references checked should be of a ministry or personal nature as opposed to employer or family references with priority to churches or organizations where the applicant has worked with children or vulnerable adults in the past. The reference checks shall be documented

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5. Criminal Background Check

A national criminal background check is required for all GBC paid employees (regardless of position) and for the following workers:

- Those who will be involved in any children, youth, or vulnerable adults programs. This includes, but is not limited to Sunday School, Children's Church, Clubs, Nursery, Youth Group meetings, GBC sponsored off site activities, church-sponsored athletic team coaches, and summer programs.
- Those who will be involved in overnight activities with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
- Those counseling children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

Before this check is run, applicants will be required to sign an authorization form allowing the church to request the check. Failure to sign the authorization form, or failure to disclose any criminal conviction will disqualify the applicant from working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

A copy of the results of the background check will be provided to the applicant. Generally convictions for an offense involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults or violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency, or any other conduct contrary to GBC's Constitution and Statement of Faith, will disqualify the applicant from working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

This requirement will apply to all existing workers, as well as new applicants.

Periodic updates may be required as deemed necessary by the Deacon Board.

6. Teenage Workers

- Must be at least age 13.
- Must be under the supervision of adult workers
- Shall never be left alone with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
- Prior to working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults, the teenage worker must complete an application and be screened and approved by the Superintendent of Christian Education or a GBC Pastor.
- The presence of a teenage worker at any activity shall not be used to satisfy the two adult procedures under supervision procedures.
- A teenage worker who passes his or her 18th birthday must then comply with all the requirements of GBC staff or adult volunteers to continue working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

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7. Confidentiality

All information obtained pursuant to these screening and authorization procedures shall be retained by GBC in a secure manner. Access to this information shall be limited to GBC officials, or appointed positions with supervisory, or oversight responsibility except for release to civil authorities pursuant to legal requirements.

Supervision Procedures

1. Two Adults

Whenever possible, a minimum of two unrelated adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children, youth or vulnerable adults are being supervised during GBC classes and activities. Some classes may have only one adult worker in attendance during the class session; in these instances, the Open Door Procedure will be followed.

2. Open Door

On occasions, when only one adult worker is present with one or more children, youth or vulnerable adults the doors will remain open unless there is a window in the door or a side window beside it. Doors will remain unlocked while workers and children, youth or vulnerable adults are present.

3. Activity Permission

On Site -- GBC workers will obtain written permission signed by the primary adult that includes primary adult, alternate adult and emergency adult contact information including phone number as well as any special information such as medical conditions that the workers should be aware of. GBC will provide written information about the activity.

Off Site – When the activity is a GBC sponsored off site activity the permission must be signed by a parent or legal guardian.

4. Transportation

When transporting children, youth, or vulnerable adults for GBC activities, the two worker rule shall be followed whenever possible.

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5. Nursery Check-in/Check-out Procedure

A security check-in/check-out procedure will be followed. This procedure will include completing a nursery contact information form if the information is not on file, or updating the information, if necessary. The child or vulnerable adult will only be released to one of the adults included on the child's or vulnerable adult's contact information form. In the event of an emergency where none of the adults listed on the contact information form are available, the following procedure will be followed. Two GBC staff or adult volunteers will remain with the child until the child can be returned to a valid contact, or a parent or legal guardian.

Nursery staff may photograph the child or vulnerable adult with the person bringing the child or vulnerable adult for identification purposes. This photo shall be kept on file with the other contact information.

6. Nursery Restroom Guidelines

A worker will escort the child to the restroom, and the worker will first check that the bathroom is empty, then allow the child inside. The worker will remain outside the bathroom door and then, escort the child back to the nursery. If the child is taking longer than seems necessary, the worker will open the bathroom door and call the child's name. If a child needs assistance, the worker will leave the bathroom door and stall door open, as he or she assists the child. Parents are strongly encouraged to ensure that their children visit the bathroom prior to class.

7. Children's Church/Classes Restroom Guidelines

If the restroom door is observable from the meeting area, one children, youth or vulnerable adults at a time may be released to use the restroom; otherwise an adult worker will escort the child, youth, or vulnerable adult to the restroom and wait outside the restroom to escort the child, youth, or vulnerable adult back to the meeting area.

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8. Sick Child

To maintain a healthy and safe environment for all the children, youth, or vulnerable adults, anyone displaying the following symptoms will not be allowed to attend activities or nursery:

- Recent fever, diarrhea, or vomiting
- Green or yellow runny nose
- Eye or skin infections
- Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease

A child, youth, or vulnerable adult observed during the activity to be ill will be separated from the others and a responsible adult as listed on the permission form or nursery contact form will be contacted to pick up the child, youth, or vulnerable adult.

9. Administering Medications

GBC workers will not administer prescription or non-prescription medications to children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

10. Prohibited Products

~~Never provide~~ Alcoholic beverages, tobacco, drugs, contraband, or anything that is prohibited by law to children.

11. Co-educational events

To the extent possible, GBC events that are co-educational, will have both male and female chaperones.

12. Physical Contact with a Child, Youth, or Vulnerable Adult

All contact shall be based on the needs of the child, youth, or vulnerable adult, not on the needs of the volunteer or paid staff. In the event a minor initiates inappropriate physical contact, the worker will inform the minor that such contact is inappropriate.

13. Discipline of Children, Youth, or Vulnerable Adults

When children, youth, or vulnerable adults do not respond to verbal correction, a contact person of record, parent, or legal guardian will be contacted to resolve the situation

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14. Physical Restraint

Restraint of children, youth, or vulnerable adults shall be done to prevent them from abusing or endangering themselves or anyone else.

Known Sexual Offender Procedures

Although God can clearly forgive all sin including sexual sin, the consequences of sexual offenses, even when forgiven, can be far reaching.

Recognizing that forgiven sexual offenders may wish to attend GBC, GBC will do all possible to guarantee the safety of children, youth, or vulnerable adults when a known sexual offender is present on the property or premises of GBC.

The known offender must adhere to specific guidelines that will be established on a case by case basis by the deacons in consultation with the Pastor. As part of this process always check with the offender's probation/parole officer for any restrictions regarding attending services or other functions, where children, youth, or vulnerable adults are present. Ask the probation/parole officer to put any restrictions in writing.

GBC reserves the right to exclude any individual that presents a threat or does not adequately comply with restrictions established by GBC from participation.

If restrictions don't prohibit participation, implement the following four guidelines and any other restrictions deemed necessary.

- A known sexual offender cannot participate in any of the child or youth programs in any way.
- A known sexual offender can only participate in predetermined service(s) each week.
- A known sexual offender must report in and be assigned to an escort who will accompany him or her at all times.
- The identity of the sexual offender will be disclosed to the congregation.

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Response to Children, Youth or Vulnerable Adult Abuse or Neglect

GBC will respond promptly to investigate any accusation of abuse of any nature. All accusations of abuse will be taken seriously. It is important to be appropriately respectful to the needs and feelings of those who allege abuse, and those who have been accused of abuse. In keeping with Christian concepts of admonition and discipline, to the extent possible all parties shall maintain strict confidentiality throughout the investigation and corrective processes.

When an allegation is made involving abuse, the person reporting the complaint is to be told about the guidelines and procedures to be followed. The Pastor or an appointed person will begin investigating the allegations and may use the assistance of GBC officials, legal counsel or other consultants. If the Pastor is the individual accused of sexual abuse, then the Chairman of the Deacons will conduct, or appoint a person to conduct, the investigation.

The investigation will be conducted as follows: (some of these steps may not be needed in all cases. If in doubt, err in favor of strict compliance and/or consult with the appointing authority.)

1. Report the incident to appropriate authorities in accordance with the state mandatory reporting laws. Reference to Washington State appropriate law and/or administrative code.
2. Report the matter to GBC's insurance carrier.
3. Cooperate with authorities and the insurance carrier.
4. GBC may suspend (with pay for paid staff) the alleged offender while a confidential investigation is being conducted.
5. Upon completion of the investigation, the person conducting the investigation (and legal counsel or other consultants) will then meet with the deacon board of GBC, meeting as a prudential committee and present a report on their investigation, which will include findings and recommendations of actions.
6. Upon acceptance of the investigation report, the GBC deacon board, in consultation with a Pastor, will be responsible for ensuring the application of the recommendations.
7. Official(s) of GBC will meet with the alleged perpetrator and notify him/her of the results of the investigation and recommendations for actions.

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8. Official(s) of GBC will meet with the alleged victim, along with his/her parents or legal guardian, and notify them of the results of the investigation, and recommendations for actions.
9. During and after the investigation, Official(s) of GBC shall maintain contact with the alleged victim and his/her parents or legal guardian, and inform them of the actions taken and assist them in their process of healing.
10. Official(s) of GBC (and legal counsel or other consultants) may meet with the alleged perpetrator, the alleged victim, and any others with knowledge of relevant facts.
11. Official(s) of GBC will communicate with criminal and civil legal counsel of GBC when needed.
12. Official(s) of GBC will communicate with those affected by the ministry of the alleged perpetrator.
13. GBC may hire a consultant, or assign a spokesperson to respond to media, or prepare a statement for release to the media, if the need should arise, subject to the approval of GBC's attorney.

Training

All workers will be required to familiarize themselves with this document and annually sign an acknowledgement form.

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Do you have a regular habit of Bible reading & prayer? _____ If not, will you begin? _____

Describe how you became a Christian. _____

How has your relationship with Jesus Christ made a difference in your life? _____

Do you agree not to teach beliefs contrary to Grace Baptist Church's Constitution and Statement of Faith? _____

Do you have any physical challenges or conditions preventing you from performing any activities relating to any aspect of children, youth, or vulnerable adult ministries? _____ If yes, please explain _____

Have you ever been the subject of a child abuse investigation _____ If yes, please explain _____

Have you ever participated in, been accused or convicted of, or pled guilty or no contest to any abuse or sexual misconduct of any kind? _____ If yes, please explain _____

Have you ever been convicted of, or pled guilty or no contest to, a crime other than a minor traffic violation, or are you now under charges for any criminal offense? _____ If yes, please provide details. A criminal conviction will not necessarily disqualify you from consideration, depending on the circumstances and date of occurrence. Use additional paper or write on back if necessary.

Please list three references (not relatives or former employers):

Name	Phone	Address	How long have you known
Name	Phone	Address	How long have you known
Name	Phone	Address	How long have you known

Please list your educational background:

High School _____

College _____ Yes / No _____

Name	Graduate?	Year	Degree or Course of Study

Other, Please Specify _____

What day(s) and time(s) are you available for ministry? _____

In what area(s) of ministry are you interested in being involved? _____

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Background Check Authorization for Release of Information

I hereby authorize Grace Baptist Church, its employees, agents, professional investigators, or any representative of Grace Baptist Church, to perform investigations into my background, past behavior, character, and reputation. These investigative reports may include, but not be limited to, criminal history or arrest records, motor vehicle records, military records, or other sources of information.

I authorize custodians of the records of any agency or company as described herein to release such information upon request of any investigator, agent, or representative of Grace Baptist Church. I understand that any or all of these investigations or inquires can be performed prior to, and periodically throughout the duration, of my tenure as a volunteer or employee of Grace Baptist Church.

I understand that the information requested is for the use by Grace Baptist Church and may not be disclosed except as authorized by law. I understand that I will receive a copy of any investigative report results when received by Grace Baptist Church.

I believe to the best of my knowledge that all information I have provided on my application is accurate, true and correct, and that I fully understand the terms of this Release. I indemnify, release, and hold harmless Grace Baptist Church, and any agents of Grace Baptist Church, or others reporting to or for Grace Baptist Church, any investigators, reporting agencies, and all those supplying references and character references, from any and all claims, defamation, demands, and/or liabilities arising out of, or related to, such investigators, disclosures, or admissions.

Copies and facsimile transmissions of this authorization that show my signature are as valid as the original release signed by me.

Print Name (Last, First, Middle)

Social Security Number

Birth Date (Month, Day, Year)

Telephone Number

Applicants Signature

Date

Grace Baptist Church Representative Signature

Date

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Nursery Contact Information

Child's Name	/ /	Boy	Girl
	Date of Birth (Year/Month/Day)	Circle One	

Address	City	Zip	Phone #
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Parent's Name	Phone #
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Please include the name, relationship and phone # of a person who can be contacted in the event you cannot be reached.

Please list any allergies, disabilities or medical information of which we should be aware.

Signature	Phone #	Cell # if available
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Activities Permission/Medical Release and Contact Information



Insert information specific to the Activity.

Time and date, Title, Registration info, etc.

Name of Minor Child <i>(please complete separate forms for each minor child)</i>		Grade Level <i>(please circle one)</i>
		Student: K 1 2 3 4 5 6 Youth or Volunteer: 7 8 9 10 11 12
Address <i>(include city and zip code)</i>	Home Phone:	Email:
	Cell Phone:	
Name(s) of Parent(s) or Guardian(s)		
Father's Work Phone:	Mother's Work Phone:	
Please list Allergies, Physical Limitations and any other Medical Conditions we should know.		

I hereby state that I am the parent or legal guardian of the above named minor child. I hereby give my permission for _____ to participate in **(insert activity title)**, which is scheduled for **(insert the times and dates)**.

It is my understanding that adult leadership from Grace Baptist Church will be supervising all activities. I also understand and agree that I will forever hold Grace Baptist Church and/or its representatives harmless from any liability or claim which may arise from said child's participation in these activities.

I further understand and agree by signing this form, that I am giving my permission to Grace Baptist Church and/or its representatives to obtain emergency medical treatment from a licensed medical doctor or emergency aid workers should the herein named child become ill, or be involved in an accident requiring emergency care. I understand that Grace Baptist Church will attempt to contact me first. However, in an emergency situation, Grace Baptist Church will act in the interest of the child and call for emergency medical assistance immediately. **I also understand and agree that I will be responsible for any and all fees and charges that may be incurred from obtaining emergency medical treatment.**

Understood and agreed this _____ day of _____, **(insert year)**.

Signature of parent or legal guardian

The following persons are allowed to pick my child in the event I cannot: *(please include Names and Phone Numbers)*.

1.	2.	3.

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Child Protection Policy Acknowledgment

These policies and procedures have been designed to guide and assist you when working with minors. The information establishes general practices and guidelines and should not be construed in any way as a contract of employment or continued employment. Grace Baptist Church reserves the right to make changes in the content or application of this program, and to implement those changes, with or without notice.

The terms defined herein are defined for the purposes of the program and do not suppose or establish a legal relationship. These terms are not defined for the purposes of creating a legal relationship with Grace Baptist Church, or any related or associated entity, and instead, are to be used with this document.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to adhere to the GBC Declaration of Faith and refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of Grace Baptist Church.

I have received a copy of Grace Baptist Church's Child Protection Policy and Procedures. I understand it is my responsibility to become familiar with and adhere to the information contained herein. I understand that these policies are the property of Grace Baptist Church.

Print Name

Signature

Date