



C E N T R A L B A P T I S T  
C H U R C H

**CHILD & VULNERABLE ADULT  
PROTECTION POLICY**

Submitted & confirmed by the congregation on October 25, 2020

## **GENERAL**

### **I. Goal**

It shall be the goal of Central Baptist Church to provide a safe environment for the physical and emotional wellbeing of all children participating in church activities. The church's goal is to inform workers and enforce policies to ensure that all children and vulnerable adults are safe and well-protected while attending scheduled activities.

Central Baptist Church has a zero-tolerance policy that prohibits any act of sexual, emotional or physical abuse. This zero-tolerance policy requires all Central Baptist employees and volunteers to immediately report any occurrence (or suspected occurrence) of child abuse to the Pastor, Children's Coordinator, and/or appropriate authorities. The Pastor and/or Children's Coordinator must immediately contact the proper authorities.

Future revisions to this policy may be made with the authorization of both the Pastor and the Children's Coordinator.

### **II. Definition of "Children"**

The term "child" or "children" shall include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years.

### **III. Definition of "Vulnerable Adult"**

As defined in the psychology, sociology, social work and legal fields, a vulnerable adult, or an adult at risk, is a person over the age of 18 who is unable to take care of him or herself. It can also refer to one who is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

### **IV. Zero Tolerance**

We are committed to protecting the preschoolers, children, youth and vulnerable adults of our church from any form of abuse. Central Baptist Church has a zero-tolerance policy that prohibits any act of sexual, emotional or physical abuse. All reports will be taken seriously, and police can and will be notified immediately.

### **V. Parental Involvement**

Parents have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in which their child is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their child's program must abide by the Child Protection Policies and screening process.

## **VOLUNTEER SELECTION PROCESS**

### **VI. Pre-employment procedures for paid and volunteer workers**

It is the goal of Central Baptist Church to adequately screen the applications of persons desiring to work with children participating in all church programs.

## **VII. Volunteers must be active participants of the church**

All volunteers who work with children must be active participants of Central Baptist Church. Under certain circumstances, the Pastor and Children's Coordinator may authorize an exception to this rule for a specific planned event.

## **VIII. Minimum Age**

All primary volunteer workers must be 18 years of age or older. Younger persons may assist adults but may not take the place of adult workers.

## **IX. Six-month rule**

No volunteer will be allowed to work with children in any capacity until they have been an active participant of Central Baptist Church for a minimum of six (6) months. The applicant must have been a regular attendee and involved in church activities for that period of time. This time of interaction between our leadership and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant for working with children.

The six-month rule may be waived with the authorization of the Pastor and Children's Coordinator.

## **X. Volunteer applications**

Volunteer applicants may be asked to complete and sign an *Application for Volunteer Workers Who Will Work with Children*

Applications should be submitted to the church office. If an applicant needs additional confidentiality, they may choose to submit their application directly to the Pastor.

If the church learns of false, misleading or amended information on an application that could cause potential danger to children or liability to the church, that person will be terminated.

## **XI. Criminal background check**

A criminal background check and child abuse registry check may be required for all children's worker positions, both employee and volunteer workers. No one who has been convicted of a crime involving misconduct with children will be allowed to work with children.

Completing the *Application for Volunteer Workers Who Will Work with Children* authorizes the church to conduct these checks. Background checks will be kept confidential and access afforded only to appropriate church personnel on a need-to-know basis.

## **XII. Acknowledgement of church policies**

All volunteers, teachers, and leaders must acknowledge in writing that they understand the church's policies pertaining to the protection of children and that they agree to abide by them. This requirement will be met by having applicants sign the *Acknowledgement of Receipt Form*.

## **SAFEGUARDS**

### **XIII. Safety of Children**

It is the responsibility of all adults having contact with children participating in church programs to promote the emotional and physical safety of the participants giving regard to all factors and circumstances known to them.

If in his/her opinion, an unsafe condition exists; such persons shall immediately take appropriate precautions under the circumstances to protect all children. Nothing contained in any other church policy, procedure, or instruction shall be construed to relieve persons having contact with children from this responsibility.

### **XIV. Nursery/Preschool Department**

At any time that a child has been entrusted to the nursery/preschool department staff members or volunteers, the Church incurs responsibility for the safety and welfare of the child. Staff members and volunteers must act to ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of children in their charge.

### **XV. Nursery Toileting and Diapering**

- a. Because nursery/preschool children may require complete assistance with their bathroom activities, all staff members and volunteers will observe the following policies:
  - Only nursery workers or the child's parents (or legal guardian) will undertake the diapering of children of either sex.
  - Changing of diapers should be done in plain sight of other nursery workers.
  - Children will never be left unattended on changing tables.

### **XVI. Identification System for check-in/checkout**

To reduce the possibility of kidnapping, the church shall have in place an identification system so that the adults who drop off a small child are the same adults who pick up the child.

The ministry leader in charge shall maintain the system to identify persons authorized to pick up and take responsibility for preschool children leaving a church activity.

The identification system will not be necessary for children above the grade of Kindergarten unless a parent specifically requests it in writing.

### **XVII. Two Adult Rule**

It shall be the goal of Central Baptist Church that a minimum of two workers (or at least two persons) will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during a church activity regardless of the number of participants, location, or activity. These two workers cannot be related to one another. At no time should an adult ever be in a room or an enclosed area alone with a non-related child.

### **XVIII. Visibility of children and volunteers**

Staff members and volunteers should never have one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interaction with children while participating in children's/youth ministry activities or programs. Another trained, screened adult should always be present.

- a. Volunteers should always be visible when working with children
- b. New glass doors have been installed in all children's rooms
- c. The doors and line of sight should not be obstructed
- d. If a closed-door meeting must occur with a child, this should be done in a room/office where there is proper visibility at the church (never in a private residence) and staff/volunteer member must inform a staff member and ensure the door remains unlocked.

### **XIX. Monitoring**

The church reserves the right to use video cameras recording for any church activity involving children.

### **XX. Physical Contact**

Central Baptist Church is committed to protecting children, youth and vulnerable adults in its care. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by those working in our programs.

- a. Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other children, staff members and volunteers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation.
- b. Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of staff members or volunteers must always foster trust. Personal conduct must be above reproach.
- c. Do not force physical contact, touch or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.

### **XXI. Food**

- a. Nursery and preschool rooms shall only have cheerios, goldfish, animal crackers and/or water – to maintain allergy free space. Parents and children may bring other snacks for personal consumption— but should seek to avoid common allergens.
- b. Older kids (K-5<sup>th</sup> grade) will be closely monitored for safety if Central Baptist Church is aware of any known allergies.
- c. Youth should be able to discern their own allergies.

### **XXII. Intoxicants**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug (including marijuana, regardless of legality) while in or on any church property. This includes use of church property for a private event, while traveling with children, or while working with or supervising children during any church program or activity.

### **XXIII. Medications**

A staff member or volunteer should not administer medication to any child while serving in Children's Ministry. Only in cases of life-threatening emergencies, volunteers may administer life-saving medical care.

### **XXIV. Transportation**

Staff members and volunteers may from time to time provide transportation for children. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of children:

- a. Children, youth and vulnerable adults should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one child or student in transport.
- b. Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children, youth and vulnerable adults while in vehicles.
- c. No cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving church bus. Using phone only for GPS is acceptable.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF  
CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH  
CHILD & VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY**

I have been given and acknowledge a copy of the Central Baptist Church *Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy*.

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by this policy.

I understand that my work as an employee and/or volunteer of Central Baptist Church is dependent upon my strict adherence to these policies.

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

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_