

BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH

FAYETTEVILLE, NC



Child Safety and Protection Guidelines

Berean Baptist Church (BBC) is committed to providing an environment which is as safe as possible for preschoolers, children, and youth who attend the church or any sponsored programs or activities, and to take the necessary precautions to protect church leaders, church staff and volunteers from accusations and/or suspicions.

Church leadership recognizes the need to have written guidelines to help prevent the opportunity for or the appearance of abuse to a minor. Abuse is defined as physical, sexual, or emotional abuse as well as neglect. The following procedures are not based on a lack of trust in a particular individual but instead are needed to protect our entire church body.

A criminal background check is required for all adults 18+ (regardless of position) prior to serving in the following ministries: Sunday School, Nursery, Children's Church, Awana, Youth Group, Church-Sponsored Children's Events (ex. Parents Night Out), and Summer Children's Programs. Parents or adults without a completed background check are not permitted to stay within the classrooms or with the children.

In extenuating circumstances when volunteers are needed and there has not been sufficient notice to submit the normal background check, a state ID can be scanned through the Raptor system to provide an immediate background check. This system is not to be used regularly in lieu of the formal submission of background check forms.

All individuals working with children must sign the written guidelines confirming they have read, understood, and will abide by the church's Child Safety and Protection Guidelines.

Definitions

- For purposes of these guidelines, the terms "child," "children," and "youth" includes all persons under the age of 18 years. The term "worker" includes both paid staff and volunteer persons who work with children.

Check-in/Check-out Guidelines

- BBC has partnered with *KidCheck* to enhance child security through the check-in process. Every child, sixth grade and younger, must be registered with *KidCheck* and be checked in by a parent or guardian. *KidCheck* registration will include information such as special needs, disabilities, allergies, medical conditions, and authorized persons for child pick up.
- For children in 6th grade and younger, a parent or guardian must drop them off and sign them in at the appropriate location. A parent or guardian with a 6th grade child or younger participating in a program must remain on the campus for the duration of the class or program unless otherwise stated, such as with a Parents Night Out event.

Child Safety and Protection Guidelines (continued)

- Only authorized individuals who are listed on a child's *KidCheck* account and have the guardian receipt sticker will be allowed to pick up a child, no exceptions. Authorized individuals must be at least 12 years of age.
- To pick up a child, authorized individuals must show their *KidCheck* tag, and the code on their *KidCheck* tag must match the code on the child's *KidCheck* sticker. If authorized individuals do not have their tag, the ministry director must authorize the individual to be able to pick up the child.

Classroom Guidelines and Adult Ratios

- It is our goal to have a minimum of two adult workers to be present in each room at all times when children are being supervised during our classes, programs, and activities. The target ratio for children's programs with small group interaction is 1 adult worker to 5 children. On occasion, some youth and older children's classes may have only one adult worker in attendance during the class session; in these instances, the classroom must have a viewing window or the door is to remain open.
- Classroom doors should be closed and locked at all times.
- BBC recognizes the importance of children below age 18 being allowed to participate in service to the church. We recognize that there may be times when it is necessary or desirable for classroom workers (paid or volunteer) who are themselves under age 18 to assist in caring for children during programs or activities. The following guidelines apply to such workers:
 - Youth workers must be at least age 12.
 - Youth workers must be informed of safety guidelines.
 - All youth workers under the age of 16 will be under direct supervision of an adult at all times.
- Classes shall remain in the assigned spaces. If there is a need to change locations, the ministry leader must be informed of the need and approve the change first. The ministry leader will inform parents of any necessary changes to drop off or pick up locations.
- Care should be taken by workers so that young children do not leave the classroom unattended. Special care will be given when children are transported to different areas of the building, such as taking children to the play area. Children will be counted by the workers before leaving and returning to the classroom to make sure no child is left unattended.
- All doors should be closed and locked by 15 minutes after the start of each service.

Restroom/Diaper Guidelines

Child Safety and Protection Guidelines (continued)

- Workers should escort children to the bathroom and allow the children inside while the worker should remain outside the door. The outer door should be propped open if using a main bathroom. If a child is taking longer than seems necessary, open the bathroom door and call the child's name. If a child requires assistance, the worker should prop open the outer bathroom door and leave the stall door open as he/she assists the child. For the protection of all, workers or other adults should never be alone with a child in a bathroom with the door closed and never be in a closed bathroom stall with a child. Parents are strongly encouraged to have their children visit the bathroom prior to each class.

Nursery Worker Specific

- No male workers will be allowed to change diapers or assist toddlers when using the restroom.
- Rubber gloves must be worn while changing soiled diapers.
- When assisting toddlers in 2s-5s, leave the top half of the bathroom door open.

Physical Contact and Discipline

- It is the policy of BBC not to administer corporal punishment as discipline, even if parents have suggested or given permission for it. Parents or legal guardians are the only persons allowed to administer corporal punishment at their own discretion on church grounds. There will be no spanking, hitting, grabbing, or other harsh physical disciplines of children by the church workers. Any verbal discipline should be done in a loving and positive manner for training and correction and will be age appropriate. No yelling, belittling, persistent teasing, or constant criticism will be tolerated. When a worker notices a child is not behaving appropriately, the problem will be explained to the child calmly and the child will be given the opportunity to correct their actions. In the event that initial steps do not remedy the problem, the Ministry Director will speak with the child. If further action is needed to correct the behavior the Ministry Director or Commander will contact the child's parent and document the incident on a Disciplinary Incident Form. In this case it is also necessary for the parent to pick up the child at that time. This is a very rare action and is only used when all other attempts to correct the behavior have been exhausted.
- Appropriate touching interaction need not be completely avoided, but workers must be aware of how it looks and how the person being touched may interpret the contact. Touch to comfort or affirm a child in an age-appropriate manner is permitted, such as a high five, pat on the shoulder or a hand shake. Side-by-side hugs are to be used instead of full body contact hugs. Unwelcomed touch of any kind is not allowed. Children of kindergarten age and older should not be permitted to sit in the lap of workers.

Child Safety and Protection Guidelines (continued)

AWANA Specific

- During Awana Clubs, we will use the “5 Count” method for gathering attention. The 5 count is used in group situations by the person responsible for the group. This person asks for quiet, then starts counting slowly. By the time the count reaches five (or before), the group should be quiet. Workers should assist the person counting by holding up their fingers, following the count, and setting the example.

Accidental Injuries to Children

In the event that a child is injured while on the church property, the steps below will be followed:

- For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, etc) as appropriate, will fill out an Accidental Injury Report and will notify the child’s parent or guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care.
- For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple first aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the worker’s immediate supervisor/Ministry Director. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called. Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an Accidental Injury report will be completed.
- In either incident, once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an accident report will be completed in the case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional, as well as the records of the church. A copy should be signed by the parent and worker, the parent should get a copy and the church keep one.

First aid kits are located at the nursery check-in desk, chapel, multi-purpose room closet, and classrooms.

Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse

- Child abuse and neglect refers to any behavior or treatment by parents, caregivers, other adults or older adolescents that results in the actual and/or likelihood of causing physical or emotional harm to a child or young person. Such behaviors may be intentional or unintentional and can include acts of omission (i.e. Neglect) or commission (i.e. Abuse). For purposes of these guidelines, “child abuse” is any action that endangers or harms a child’s physical, psychological, or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:
 - **Physical abuse** – any physical injury to a child that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.

Child Safety and Protection Guidelines (continued)

- **Sexual abuse** – any sexual activity between a child and an adult or between a child and another child at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
 - **Emotional abuse** – emotional injury when the child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling, and persistent teasing or verbal abuse.
 - **Neglect** – depriving a child of their essential needs and medical care
- Childcare workers may have the opportunity to become aware of abuse of the children under our care. In the event that a worker involved in the care of children at BBC becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a child under his/her care, he/she must immediately report it to the Ministry Director and Pastor oversight for further action, including reporting to authorities as may be mandated by state law. Any suspected abuse or neglect must be reported immediately so that an investigation can be started within 24 hours for abuse or 72 hours for neglect.

Security Protocols

- Ministry Directors keep walkie talkies in case of emergency. Please report any suspicious activity to them to follow up with security team.
- Color coded security details are kept in each classroom to reference. (Code red, blue, yellow, white, and fire alarm)
- Care should be taken while transporting children. While leaving the classroom and traveling through the building, teachers and leaders must have clipboard with class roster, count children, and have a leader in the front and in the back of the line.

Training

- BBC will provide training on these child protection guidelines to all new workers or anyone who comes into contact with children, and will strive to provide opportunities for additional training classes or events on an annual basis or as needed. All workers are strongly encouraged to attend these training events to remain current on BBC guidelines.

Child Safety and Protection Guidelines (continued)

By signing below, I hereby I acknowledge that I have completely read, fully understand, and wholeheartedly agree to abide by the August 2021 revision of the Child Safety and Protection Guidelines of Berean Baptist Church in its entirety.

Please detach this page and submit it to your ministry leader and keep the Child Safety and Protection Guidelines information for your personal records.

Print



Signature



Date

