

# Child Abuse Prevention Guidelines for the Church

Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church  
1151 S. Cedar Crest Blvd.  
Allentown, PA 18103

Updated July 2024  
Version 1

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## Introduction

We desire to honor Christ and reflect his love to each child who is a part of Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church and to reach the surrounding community. We greatly value the opportunity to minister to these children and invest much of our time and resources into pointing young people and their families to Jesus. It is important to us that our volunteers and staff remain above reproach, allowing no opportunity for accusations from words, actions or environment.

Because of the seriousness of this subject, Cedar Crest desires to make its places of ministry safe for all children, students, and church workers. By being proactive and taking precautionary measures that screen and train children and Student Workers and by providing guidelines and procedures that aid parents and church workers, CCBFC can hopefully prevent such atrocities from ever occurring in our church community.

The following guidelines have been established to promote the safety and spiritual growth of our kids. Our ultimate goal is to be like Christ and to model His love and grace to these young lives. If there is ever a doubt of what to do or what is appropriate, please ask the ministry director or Pastor over your area. We prefer that you err on the side of over-communicating.

Thank you for your interest in serving Christ through this ministry. We look forward to serving with you and trust that God will teach us more about Himself in the process. Please read the following guidelines carefully.

God's grace to you,

Children's and Student Ministry Team

# Child Abuse Prevention Guideline Overview

## Recruiting, Selecting, and Training Volunteers and Paid Staff

1. Minimum Qualifications: Every person (paid and unpaid) who works with children and/or students will:
  - a. Confess Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior and adhere to the affirmations of faith of Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church.
  - b. Be a member in good standing or a regular attendee for at least six months.
  - c. Have no history of being an abuser and pass a background check.
2. Procedures
  - a. Children/Student Workers and Occasional Children/Student Workers must complete an application form (found online under “Forms” on Crossroads), only viewed by the ministry head and/or Senior Pastoral Leadership Team, and will include:
    - i. Personal information: Name, address, etc.
    - ii. Ministry information: Areas of interest, ministry experience, etc.
    - iii. Professional and personal references
  - b. Children/Student Workers must agree to a confidential nationwide background check of public records, as well as an interview (if requested).
  - c. Education
    - i. Children/Student Workers will receive information on definitions and indicators of various forms of abuse (found on pages 10-15).
    - ii. Children/Student Workers will receive any additional information on the guidelines and procedures in each ministry, besides those found in this manual, if applicable.

## Procedures

1. Avoid Isolation:
  - a. Volunteers and staff are to observe the two worker rule. This requires that workers should not be in an isolated setting with children/students without another worker.
  - b. Events: When away from the church on an outing or at the church overnight, volunteers and staff are to work together as a team to not be isolated with a child or adolescent.
    - i. If it is necessary for a volunteer or staff member to meet individually with a child/student, it should be done so in a public setting or where they are clearly visible by others. Another volunteer or staff member must be notified prior to meeting.
  - c. Paid staff members should not spend time alone with a child or adolescent without the awareness and written consent of that individual’s parent/guardian.
2. Basic Bathroom Procedures (for young children)
  - a. Parents should be encouraged to take their child(ren) to the bathroom before class.
  - b. A child can be taken to the bathroom upon request by the child, if the child shows obvious signs of needing to go to the bathroom, or if an organized group of children are taken to the bathroom together.
  - c. Workers should remain in the doorway of the bathroom, if possible, not in the stall.
  - d. If a child needs assistance, keep the stall door open and ask another worker to step into the restroom.
3. Release Guidelines: Creating and following guidelines for releasing children after classes reduces the opportunities for both abuse and abduction.

- a. Two workers should remain with all children in the classroom from the time when they are dropped off until they are picked up.
  - b. Parents/guardians must present their parent pick-up tag, upon request of any child/Student Worker, before the child is released to them. The code on the parent pick-up tag must match the code on the child's name tag.
  - c. Older children and students (grades 6-12) may be released after class is over. If the parents wish their child to remain in the classroom until picked up by a parent/guardian, that information should be made known to the teacher/leader and/or Student Workers.
4. Reporting Procedures
- a. Reporting Obligations: ALL child/Student Workers are now mandated reporters. They must immediately report any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate, or any incident reported by a child or adolescent.
  - b. Line of reporting:
    - i. Workers must "report out, then report up" about the alleged abuse.
      1. Workers will report abuse directly to Child-Line (**1-800-932-0313**). Mandated reporters must identify themselves when reporting.
      2. Children's Director or Student Pastor
      3. The PLT (Pastoral Leadership Team) will be informed as soon as possible.
      4. The Baptism & Membership Committee will be notified, if necessary.

## Training and Education

1. All volunteers and staff who work with children and youth will be expected to attend or review an annual Children Safety Training Presentation. Upon completion of this training, a signed copy of the Training Completion Form will be required.
2. At the beginning of each school year, a copy of the guidelines will be emailed to all staff and volunteers for their review.
3. Any changes in the policies and procedures will be communicated to all children/Student Workers by their department heads.
4. Copies of the guidelines will be available for any church attendee through the church office.

## Description of the Selection Process for Workers with Children and Student -- Paid and Unpaid

### Description of Screening Procedure

1. To be a teacher or leader of a Children/Student ministry, you must be a member in good standing at CCBFC. Other Children/Student Workers, such as helpers and occasional workers, need to attend regularly for a minimum of six months. In the case of guest ministries and new staff hires, exceptions might be made (with due diligence to background screening and references from previous churches).
2. All workers (teacher/leader, helper and occasional worker) who are serving our children and students are required to read this manual, watch the 2023 training powerpoint, sign the back page of the manual stating that they have read and will adhere to these policies, and list two references.

3. References will be checked, and a written record of results will be maintained on file, only to be viewed by necessary personnel. They must be kept in a locked file to maintain confidentiality.
4. Children/Student Workers will complete a nationwide legal background check to check for previous criminal and abuse records. Any persons who are known to have committed previous acts of child abuse of any kind, will be strictly prohibited from serving with children/students. Where serious allegations have been made but not been legally substantiated the Board of Elders will consider the situation and decide whether or not the person will be allowed to be a Children/Student Worker.
5. Confidential, personal interviews of all Children/Student Workers may be conducted and documented. We also reserve the right to interview anyone who will even be in occasional contact with children and students.

## Discipline

Discipline by a Children/Student Worker is defined as training expected to produce a specific character or pattern of behavior, especially training that produces moral or mental improvement. Punishment is a penalty imposed for wrongdoing. Our intentions are to teach through positive correction, rather than by punishing negative behavior.

When dealing with a behavioral issue, a volunteer must never spank, hit, grab or in any way physically discipline a child. Any problems should be reported to the ministry director and directly to the parents/guardians.

## Nursery Guidelines

There are three rooms that currently comprise the nursery: Baby Nursery (Room 105), Young Toddler Nursery (Room 106), and Toddler Nursery (Room 107).

The following guidelines apply to each one:

1. There should be at least two nursery workers in the room during each church event before any child is dropped off and until the last child is picked up.
2. No one other than nursery workers and their children should be allowed in the nursery area during church events. Parents MUST remain behind the counter when picking up/dropping off their child(ren).
3. Workers should not accept any child whose parent or guardian will not remain within the physical confines of the church. This is to ensure the workers can immediately contact the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) in the event of an emergency.
4. Diaper changes must be done in the nursery room according to the posted guidelines, unless by parent(s) or guardian(s).
5. All parents must check in their child(ren) using our Children's Check-In Kiosk. A name tag will be printed out and should be placed on the child. A parent pick-up tag will also print out with

a code matching the code on the child's tag. Parents MUST present this tag, if requested by the nursery worker, in order for their child to be released to them.

## Pre-School and Kindergarten Sunday School Class Guidelines

1. There should be at least two workers in the room during each church event before any child is dropped off and until the last child is picked up.
2. No one other than Children/Student Workers, parent(s) or guardian(s) should be allowed in the classrooms (unless previously agreed to, e.g. guest speakers or extra/alternate helpers).
3. Bathroom Guidelines:
  - a. Parents should be encouraged to take their child to the bathroom before dropping him/her off in class.
  - b. Children should be taken to the bathroom upon their request, if a child shows obvious signs of needing to go, or if the whole group is taken to the bathroom in an orderly fashion. The Children/Student Worker should give help/privacy to the toileting child appropriate for their age.
  - c. When a child is being escorted to the bathroom, the classroom will be supervised by a Children/Student Worker (at the discretion of the Teacher/Leader) so that the other children can be attended to.
  - d. If the child requests a Children/Student Worker's help in the bathroom, try to teach the child how to help him/herself as much as possible. Use the hand-over-hand method. This technique enables you to place your hands over the child's hands in helping with fastening clothes, wiping skin, and the like. Spend as little time in the bathroom as possible. If a child needs assistance, keep the stall door open and ask another worker to step into the restroom.
  - e. Both the worker and the child should wash their hands after toileting.
4. In case of discipline problems, no spanking may be used. When behavior is not acceptable, an in-room time-out period should be used (one minute per age of the child is acceptable, unless otherwise directed by the parents). If the behavioral problem persists, the Children/Student Worker will contact the parent.
5. All parents must check in their child(ren) using our Children's Check-In Kiosk. A name tag will be printed out and should be placed on the child. A parent pick-up tag will also print out with a code matching the code on the child's tag. Parents MUST present this tag, if requested by the children worker, in order for their child to be released to them.

## Elementary Sunday School Class Guidelines

1. There should be at least two workers in the room during each church event before any child is dropped off and until the last child is picked up.
2. No one other than Children/Student Workers, parent(s) or guardian(s) should be allowed in the classrooms (unless previously agreed to, e.g. guest speakers or extra/alternate helpers).

3. Children in first through fifth grades will be encouraged to go to the bathroom before the Sunday School class begins.
4. Bathroom Guidelines:
  - a. Parents should be encouraged to take their children to the bathroom before Sunday School so that they child won't have to leave the room unsupervised.
  - b. Children should be allowed to go to the bathroom only upon their request or if the child shows obvious signs of needing to go.
  - c. It is assumed in this age group that they child will not need help toileting. If they do, this should be discussed with the Child/Student Workers in advance.
  - d. The child should wash his/her hands after toileting.
6. In case of discipline problems, no spanking may be used. When behavior is not acceptable, an in-room time-out period should be used (one minute per age of the child is acceptable, unless otherwise directed by the parents). If the behavioral problem persists, the Children/Student Worker will contact the parent.
7. All parents must check in their child(ren) using our Children's Check-In Kiosk. A name tag will be printed out and should be placed on the child. A parent pick-up tag will also print out with a code matching the code on the child's tag. Parents MUST present this tag, if requested by the children worker, in order for their child to be released to them.

### Middle and High School Sunday School Class Guidelines

1. All parents or students must check in using our Check-In Kiosks before entering regularly scheduled classes such as Sunday School and Wednesday Night Youth Group. A name tag will be printed out and should be worn by the student.
2. Two students and one Student Worker or one student and two student workers should be in the classroom prior to students entering the room and until the last one leaves. One of these Workers should be the Teacher/Leader.
3. No one other than Children/Student Workers, parent(s) or guardian(s) should be allowed in the classrooms (unless previously agreed to, e.g. guest speakers or extra/alternate helpers).
4. Students should remain in the Sunday School room during class and not leave the room unless there is an emergency, or a parent/guardian gives permission, and the teacher is informed ahead of time e.g. serving.
5. Students should be allowed to go to the bathroom only upon their request or if the young person shows obvious signs of needing to go. The Children/Student Worker should decide if the young person needs to be escorted to the bathroom (so he/she does not wander).
6. In case of discipline problems, no hitting may be used. When behavior is not acceptable, an in-room cooling off period should be used. If behavioral problem persists, the Children/Student Worker



should ask the other Children/Student Worker to either find the parent or take the young person to the parent.

## Student Ministry/Worker Guidelines

1. When possible, Children/Student Workers should not transport a student of the opposite sex alone. At least two adults or two students should be present. Exceptions can be made in the event of a medical emergency and all other options have been exhausted.
2. At least two Children/Student Workers must be present at student activities.
3. Children/Student Workers should not leave students alone at the church waiting for transportation. If only one student remains, two Children/Student Workers should remain with the young person.
4. A Children/Student Worker must not interact with a student in any sexual manner (e.g. physical, digital, verbal, or visual).
5. A Children/Student Worker under any circumstance must not engage in a romantic relationship with a child or student.
6. Children/Student Workers should avoid one-on-one meetings in private places with students (same or opposite sex). If this is unavoidable, the Student Pastor/Director should be made aware in advance and must approve when these meetings take place.
7. When a Children/Student Worker has a legitimate reason to be alone with a student, he/she must first:
  - a. Obtain the written consent (email or text suffices) of the student's parent or guardian before going out alone with or spending time with the student in an unsupervised situation. (For students who come on a regular basis, this can be done yearly).
  - b. Notify the Student Pastor/Director of such meetings in advance.
  - c. For mentoring relationships, both adults and students must fill out the appropriate mentoring forms.
8. Any non-scheduled meetings (one-on-one, etc.) should have an adult chaperone of the same sex as student participants.
9. Children/Student Workers should have parental permission for each student's involvement in church sponsored programs or activities. For students who come on a regular basis, this can be done yearly. If this is not received from a first-time student, they should bring a permission slip with them the next time they come. For overnight or out of town activities separate permission should be obtained.
10. Children/Student Workers must clear in advance all adult chaperones with proper church leaders, before scheduling them for overnight activities that involve students. These chaperones are required to have a background check before the activity.

## Overnight Activities

1. Adult chaperones should have gone through the screening and background check process that is required of all Children/Student Workers.
2. Children/Student Workers are to work together as a team and not be isolated with an adolescent.
3. The student-to-Children/Student Worker ratio should be no higher than twelve to one.
4. Care should be taken so that small numbers of students are not alone together for long periods of time.
5. Sleeping arrangements are to be separated by gender.
6. Each individual should have/sleep in his/her own bed. Written exceptions can be made by parent/guardian for students of the same gender.
7. Students should not be released from an overnight activity during the night unless there is notification of or permission by the parent/guardian.

## Church Drivers

For the protection of our students and our drivers, the following guidelines should be observed.

1. When possible, Children/Student Workers should not transport a student alone. At least two adults or at least two students should be present in the vehicle at all times.
2. If the driver of a church vehicle is not a Children/Student Worker, then he/she must fill out a Children/Student Worker Application, as well as register with the Church office so that his/her license can be added to the list of Authorized Drivers.
3. If inappropriate behavior is observed in the vehicle (e.g. sexual harassment, bullying, demeaning, or other discipline problems) the driver should reprimand the student(s) and report the behavior to the Children/Student Worker.

## Definitions and Indicators of Child Abuse

### Important Facts about Child Abuse

1. Conservative estimates are that 1 out of every 10 children are victims of abuse.
2. 85% to 90% of the abusers are known to their victims (an estimated 30% relatives, 60% trusted authority figures, 10% strangers.)

3. Abuse cuts across economics, social and racial lines.
4. Average age of the victim is about 8 years old. 15% to 25% of the victims are under age 6. There have been victims as young as 6 months old.
5. Abusers are generally not “dirty old men.” In fact, abusers usually appear “normal.” Many times, they are upstanding members of the community. Even people with strong moral and religious beliefs can be offenders.
6. Abuse is not usually an isolated incident; it usually occurs over and over again and develops over a period of time. The longer it goes on, the more serious it is likely to become.
7. Children rarely lie about sexual abuse.
8. Most abuse occurs in the child’s home or in the home of the abuser.
9. A child is more likely to be approached by an abuser than be hit by a car. Yet, parents are more likely to warn children of the dangers of crossing the street and help them take precautions.
10. Regarding sexual abuse, it is estimated that in 90% of the cases, children can stop unwanted touch by saying “no”.

## Mandated Reporting for Suspected Abuse

If you are an adult volunteer with Children or Student Ministries, **you are a mandated reporter**. If you suspect possible abuse of a child or student, you are required by law to take immediate action. The following website has up to date information regarding mandated reporting.

<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/KeepKidsSafe/Pages/Report-Abuse.aspx>

### When must a mandated reporter make a report?

A mandated reporter must make a report of suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse under any of the following circumstances:

- The mandated reporter comes into contact with the child in the course of employment, occupation and practice of a profession or through a regularly scheduled program, activity or service.
- The mandated reporter is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or training of the child, or is affiliated with an agency, institution, organization, school, regularly established church or religious organization or other entity that is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or training of the child.
- A person makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that an identifiable child is the victim of child abuse.
- An individual 14 years of age or older makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that the individual has committed child abuse.

### Must I report suspected abuse if I learn of the abuse from someone other than the child who was allegedly abused?

Yes. Nothing requires a child to come before the mandated reporter in order to make a report.

### **How does a Mandated Reporter make a report if they suspect child abuse?**

Mandated reporters must make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine either electronically at <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home> or by calling 1-800-932-0313. Mandated reporters are strongly encouraged to file electronically.

### **Do I need to notify anyone within my institution, school, facility or agency after I make a report?**

Yes, after making the report to ChildLine, you are required to immediately notify either the Children's Ministry or Student Ministry Pastor/Director. The Director or Pastor will then notify the Pastoral Leadership Team.

### **What if a Mandated Reporter fails to follow the law?**

The penalties for a Mandated Reporter who willfully fails to report child abuse range from a misdemeanor of second degree to a felony of the second degree.

### **Can you report suspected abuse if you are not a Mandated Reporter?**

Yes. Anyone who is concerned about the safety of a child is encouraged to make a report. Individuals who are encouraged, although not required by law, to make a report of suspected child abuse, can make a report to ChildLine by calling 1-800-932-0313.

### **Am I protected from civil and criminal liability if I make a report of suspected child abuse?**

Yes, persons making a report of suspected child abuse are immune from civil and criminal liability as long as the report was made in good faith.

### **If I make a report is my identity protected?**

The identity of the person making the report is kept confidential, with the exception of law enforcement officials or the district attorney's office.

### **Definition of Child Abuse**

The following are parts of the law as it applies to children and student volunteers.

Pennsylvania Physical Abuse Citation: Cons. Stat. Tit. 23, § 6303 t

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/statutes/define/>

**23 PA. CONS. STAT. §6303 (b.1). Definitions.**

- “Intentionally” is an act that is done “for the purpose of causing” the type of harm that resulted
- “Knowingly” is understanding that the harm is “practically certain to result”
- “Recklessly” is conscious disregard for foreseeable risk
- “Recent act or failure to act” is any act or failure to act committed within 2 years of the date of the report to the Department or county agency

(b.1) Child abuse.--The term "child abuse" shall mean intentionally, knowingly or recklessly doing any of the following:

- (1) Causing bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- (2) Fabricating, feigning or intentionally exaggerating or inducing a medical symptom or disease which results in a potentially harmful medical evaluation or treatment to the child through any recent act.
- (3) Causing or substantially contributing to serious mental injury to a child through any act or failure to act or a series of such acts or failures to act.
- (4) Causing sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any act or failure to act.
- (5) Creating a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- (6) Creating a likelihood of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- (7) Causing serious physical neglect of a child.
- (8) Engaging in any of the following recent acts:
  - (i) Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing, or cutting a child in a manner that endangers the child.
  - (ii) Unreasonably restraining or confining a child, based on consideration of the method, location or the duration of the restraint or confinement.
  - (iii) Forcefully shaking a child under one year of age.
  - (iv) Forcefully slapping or otherwise striking a child under one year of age.
  - (v) Interfering with the breathing of a child.
  - (vi) Causing a child to be present at a location while a violation of 18 Pa.C.S. § 7508.2 (relating to operation of methamphetamine laboratory) is occurring, provided that the violation is being investigated by law enforcement.
  - (vii) Leaving a child unsupervised with an individual, other than the child's parent, who the actor knows or reasonably should have known:
    - (A) Is required to register as a Tier II or Tier III sexual offender under 42 Pa.C.S. Ch. 97

Subch. H (relating to registration of sexual offenders), where the victim of the sexual offense was under 18 years of age when the crime was committed.

(B) Has been determined to be a sexually violent predator under 42 Pa.C.S. § 9799.24 (relating to assessments) or any of its predecessors.

(C) Has been determined to be a sexually violent delinquent child as defined in 42 Pa.C.S. § 9799.12 (relating to definitions).

(9) Causing the death of the child through any act or failure to act.

(c) Restatement of culpability.--Conduct that causes injury or harm to a child or creates a risk of injury or harm to a child shall not be considered child abuse if there is no evidence that the person acted intentionally, knowingly or recklessly when causing the injury or harm to the child or creating a risk of injury or harm to the child.

(d) Child abuse exclusions. --The term "child abuse" does not include any conduct for which an exclusion is provided in section 6304 (relating to exclusions from child abuse).

**Standards for Reporting Citation: Cons. Stat. Tit. 23, § 6311**

- A report is required when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of abuse.

**Persons Responsible for the Child Citation: Cons. Stat. Tit. 23, § 6303**

A perpetrator is a person who has committed child abuse and is:

- A parent of a child
- A person responsible for the welfare of a child
- An individual residing in the same home as a child
- A paramour of a child's parent

'Person responsible for the child's welfare' means a person who provides permanent or temporary care, supervision, mental health diagnosis or treatment, training, or control of a child in lieu of parental care, supervision, and control.

**Exceptions Citation: Cons. Stat. Tit. 23, § 6303**

No child shall be deemed to be physically or mentally abused based on injuries that result solely from environmental factors that are beyond the control of the parent or person responsible for the child's welfare, such as inadequate housing, furnishings, income, clothing, and medical care.

If, upon investigation, the county agency determines that a child has not been provided needed medical or surgical care because of seriously held religious beliefs of the child's parents, and such beliefs are consistent with those of a bona fide religion, the child shall not be deemed to be physically or mentally abused. The county agency shall closely monitor the child and shall seek court-ordered medical intervention when the lack of medical or surgical care threatens the child's life or long-term health.

In cases involving religious circumstances, all correspondence with a subject of the report and the records of the Department of Public Welfare and the county agency shall not reference 'child abuse' and shall acknowledge the religious basis for the child's condition, and the family shall be referred for general protective services, if appropriate.

### Possible Indicators of Child Sexual Abuse

Most cases of child sexual abuse go undetected. There may be no apparent physical signs, or there may be physical signs that are detected only through a medical examination. However, there are some signals that a worker may observe that will indicate whether sexual abuse is occurring.

High indicators of abuse which may warrant a report are:

1. A child reports being abused.
2. A child has unusual and repeated bruises, welts, or burns. A child gives varied or different reasons for the same injury.
3. A child has explicit sexual knowledge above age expectations. This includes extensive knowledge of sexual acts, slang/technical terms and/or demonstrated sexual behavior in conversation or play.

The following should raise your concern for the possibility of abuse and could suggest the need to explore further. **The presence of several of these could warrant your making a report.**

Child's Appearance	Child's Behavior	Caretaker's Behavior
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty in walking or sitting</li> <li>• Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing</li> <li>• Pain, bleeding or swollen genitalia</li> <li>• Semen around mouth, genitalia or on clothing</li> <li>• Venereal disease, especially in preteens</li> <li>• Pregnancy</li> <li>• Lacerations around mouth</li> <li>• Warts around genital area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suddenly withdrawn; engages in fantasy or infantile behavior</li> <li>• Poor peer relationships</li> <li>• Unwilling to participate in physical activities</li> <li>• Engages in delinquent acts or runs away</li> <li>• States he/she has been sexually assaulted by parent/caregiver</li> <li>• Fear of restrooms, a particular place, or being left alone</li> <li>• Unusual sexual knowledge</li> <li>• Does not want to go home from church</li> <li>• Becomes self-abusive: pulling hair out, banging head, cutting themselves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extremely protective or jealous of child</li> <li>• Experiencing marital difficulties</li> <li>• Misuses alcohol/drugs</li> <li>• Frequently absent from home</li> <li>• Experienced sexual abuse as a child</li> </ul>

### Response Plan: Steps to Take if Child Sexual Abuse is Suspected

The primary responsibility of someone reporting suspected sexual abuse is to ensure the safety of the child while attending Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church or church sponsored activities. Discrete and confidential reporting of suspected sexual abuse is critical to abuse prevention. Please understand that reporting abuse

reflects caring and is not an act of disloyalty. If you witness or hear about an abusive situation and do not report it, the safety of our children may be compromised. *You are legally required to report child abuse.* As long as the report is based on a good faith suspicion that abuse is occurring, the reporter will be immune from any civil and criminal proceedings that could result. **ALL** Child/Student Workers are legally mandated to report. The church worker must make this report immediately by phone and in writing within forty-eight hours. It is considered an obligation of all our Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church Child/Student Workers to follow these guidelines.

*The following steps should be taken upon receiving allegations or observing sexual abuse: **Remember you are to report out, then Report up.***

1. Anyone who becomes aware of suspected sexual abuse by a Children/Student Worker or other volunteer is required to file a report and to report it directly to the Children's Director or Student Pastor. The Children's Director or Student Pastor is required to report this information to his/her direct supervisor. The suspected perpetrator of abuse will be removed from proximity to children at Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church during the investigation for the safety of all.
2. If a Children/Student Worker suspects abuse or hears an allegation of abuse occurring in the home of one of the children or students, **the Children/Student Worker is mandated to file a report as detailed below.** In this case no one in the church is required to be notified, unless the alleged perpetrator is a is affiliated with Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church (e.g. church volunteer, attender, or member). It is permissible to make a report on a reasonable suspicion. You do not need actual evidence to call. Give the information you have, and the authorities will determine if the suspicion warrants an investigation. You may call Child-Line just to ask if the information you have warrants a report.
3. The report is to be filed within 24-48 hours to Child-Line: **1-800-932-0313**. This toll-free number is staffed twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week by Pennsylvania's Department of Public Welfare. This is the number to call for child abuse in the state of Pennsylvania, regardless of the county the child lives. If the alleged perpetrator is not related to the victim, Child-Line will direct the reporting party to call the police department where the alleged crime took place. Be prepared to answer as many of the following types of questions as possible:
  - \*Why do you suspect abuse has occurred?
  - \*Name of the child.
  - \*Address, phone, school - as much information as you have so that the child can be reached in the next 24 hours.
  - You may remain anonymous, but your name must be given to ChildLine.
  - Who is the alleged perpetrator of abuse?
  - How did you find out?
  - Is there a weapon in the house?
  - Who else knows about the abuse?
  - Parents names and address(es).
  - Any siblings in the home?

\* Most important information. The rest is helpful but not necessary to make a report.



As a mandated reporter you must identify yourself when reporting suspected child abuse. A County Department of Children and Youth Investigator and/or Police has the option to call you in order to clarify any information that you give. They will keep your name and information confidential from the child, the child's family, and the alleged perpetrator. The Investigator is obligated to see the child within 24 hours of receiving the report.

## Intervention Plan

If charges of child abuse by a volunteer, regular attender or member of the church are reported to the Pastor/Director, the following actions will be taken:

A Crisis Task Force must convene, being comprised of a Pastor, an Elder, Church Attorney (via Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company), Counselor, and Student Pastor or Children's Director.

This Task Force will outline the necessary steps in response to the filed report. It will not attempt an in-depth investigation. That will be left to the appropriate government authorities.

It is recommended that this task force:

1. Document all efforts at handling the incident (e.g. who was contacted and when, using specific times and dates) while maintaining strict confidentiality.
2. Notify Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church's liability insurance carrier.
3. Take the advice of the police or Child-Line (for the specific situation) as to whether to notify the parents or guardians.
4. Confront the accused after the safety of the child or student member is secured.
5. Designate a specific spokesperson for the church if media become involved.
6. Discretely remove the alleged offender from their Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church position(s) while the investigation is being conducted.

If the allegations become legally **unsubstantiated**:

1. The accused person will need to provide official evidence, if he/she can obtain this, that he/she was innocent. This information would be placed in the accused person's file along with his/her application. Once the investigation has begun by civil authorities, the details and information are kept confidential from the public, including Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church. In the very small minority of cases, the allegations become unsubstantiated from a legal standpoint. If this occurs, but the accuser remains steadfast in his/her allegation, the volunteer, regular attender or member of the church may be prohibited from working with children at Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church.
1. If the accuser recants the allegation, then every effort will be made to exonerate, reconcile and restore the accused person. Also, a public statement by the Crisis Task Force will be made if the accused person desires.

- a. The Task Force will respond with concern, care and love for the complainant(s), for the congregation, and for the accused and his/her family.
  - b. The accused will be notified in writing that a copy of the filed report and investigation's findings will be retained for legal purposes by the church. The report will be confidential and only appropriate church staff will have access to the file.
2. If the accused is guilty but no charges were filed with the police. Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church reserves the right to apply the task force restrictions found under the intervention plan.

If the allegations and investigations substantiate abuse:

1. The offender will be permanently removed from susceptible environments and offices in the Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church ministry. *Victim and offender may not be present together.*
2. The victim(s) and his/her (their) family/families will be given utmost consideration and pastoral care.
3. Continued pastoral care and counseling can be extended to the offender and family during rehabilitation; however, it will be recommended that on-going counseling for the offender be pursued with professional counselors who have adequate experience in this type of counseling.
4. The Elders will weigh the risks and make a determination regarding church membership status of the offender and following the set Church Discipline policies.

## Ministry and Support

To the victim and his/her family:

1. A person from Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church will serve as an advocate and a support to the victim(s) and their family/families.
2. Sensitivity, care and love will be extended to the victim(s) and his/her (their) family/families.
3. A list of qualified counselors will be provided.
4. In case of multiple victims, opportunities will be offered for these persons to meet together for support, prayer, healing and encouragement.

To the accused and his/her family:

1. A person from Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church will serve as an advocate and support to the accused and their family.
2. A list of qualified counselors will be provided.
3. Sensitivity, care and love will be extended to the accused and his/her family.

4. If the perpetrator is found guilty or pleads guilty in the court of law to any charge of child sexual abuse, the church will not intercede on the perpetrator's behalf, by letter or by personal appearance in court, to influence the court's decision concerning sentencing.
5. If both the perpetrator and victim and their families are members or regular attendees of Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church, it is understood that for the victim's emotional recovery the perpetrator and perpetrator's immediate family may be asked to attend another church.

To the church family:

1. If the perpetrator is found guilty, or pleads guilty, in a court of law to child sexual abuse, his/her identity and the charges to which he/she were found guilty will be announced to the membership of the church.
2. An admonition to be wise concerning dealings with this person will be made as per church discipline policies and procedures by the Pastor or elder making the admonition.

## Review of CAP Manual

- On an annual basis this Child Abuse Policy Manual shall be thoroughly looked through by an Elder, a Pastor, the Youth Pastor, and the Children's Ministry Director.
- All additions or deletions shall be approved by the Board of Elders.



Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church  
Children/Student Worker Form – CAP Guidelines Manual  
Please detach this signature page and return to the church office.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the Child Abuse Prevention Guidelines and information stated in this manual and agree to adhere to these set guidelines as they apply to the ministry I will be working with. I understand that as a Children/Student Worker I am a Mandated Reporter and therefore must report any suspected abuse. I understand that if I knowingly do not follow in full compliance with this manual that church discipline may be issued or my job may be terminated if employed by the church.

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

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

References: Only new volunteers are required to provide references. Please include 2.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>Relationship to You</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY GENERAL INFORMATION

### Fire Safety –Emergency Evacuation

- Note the evacuation plan posted in your classroom.
  - The Children's Ministry leader and volunteers should lead the children out of their class in an orderly fashion – quickly and calmly. Once everyone is out of the building and in their specified location, the leader should make sure all children and volunteers are present. Children should remain with the leader and volunteers until:
    1. It is safe to return to the building or
    2. Parents are released to come pick up their children.
  - Children should only be released to their parent/guardian.
  - Meeting locations:
    - Activity Center – Church office parking lot
    - Classrooms (Rooms 141-147) – Church office parking lot
    - Classrooms (Rooms 101-102) – Cedar Crest Blvd parking lot
    - Nursery (Rooms 106, 107) – Church office parking lot
    - Nursery (Room 105) – Cedar Crest Blvd parking lot
      - The nurseries are equipped with rolling cribs, to be used for emergencies. Nursery workers should place children in the cribs and roll them out of the nursery and exit the building using the Children's Ministry Entrance.

### Giving Medication

- No volunteer is permitted to give medication to a child without written consent from a parent/guardian.

### Treating Injuries

- If injury is life threatening, call 911 immediately and then notify the Children's Ministry Director or Student Ministry Pastor.
- If there is a medical need beyond basic first aid that is not life-threatening, contact the Children's Ministry Director or Student Ministry Pastor immediately.
- Band aids and other first aid materials are located in the Nursery, Activity Center, Overflow B, and the Hub kitchen.
- You MUST complete an Injury Report Form in the church office if a child is ever seriously hurt (bleeding, bruises, etc.).

### Discipline

Discipline is defined as training expected to produce a specific character or pattern of behavior, especially training that produces moral or mental improvement. Punishment is a penalty imposed for wrongdoing. Our intentions are to teach through positive correction, rather than by punishing negative behavior.

When dealing with a behavioral issue, a volunteer must never spank, hit, grab or in any way physically discipline a child. Any problems should be reported to the ministry director and directly to the parents/guardians.