



REDEEMER
WINTER HAVEN

Child Protection Policy

**Guidelines to protect our children, workers, volunteers,
and church family.**

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction..... | 2 |
| Staff Contact Information..... | 2 |
| Definitions..... | 2 |
| Redeemer Winter Haven..... | 3 |
| Mission..... | 3 |
| Vision..... | 3 |
| Redeemer Church Children’s Ministry..... | 4 |
| Core Values..... | 4 |
| Vision..... | 4 |
| Mission..... | 4 |
| Our Beliefs for Ministering to Children..... | 5 |
| Conduct with Children..... | 6 |
| Worker Approval..... | 6 |
| Worker Guidelines..... | 6 |
| Classroom Procedures..... | 7 |
| Restroom Procedures..... | 7 |
| Discipline Procedures..... | 7 |
| Vehicle Policy..... | 9 |
| Photo Policy..... | 9 |
| Conduct for Workers | 10 |
| Selection of Workers | 10 |
| Paid Childcare Workers..... | 10 |
| Teacher Selection..... | 10 |
| Accidental Injuries to Children..... | 11 |
| Infection Control Policy..... | 12 |
| Security Procedures..... | 15 |
| Child Abuse & Neglect..... | 16 |
| Definitions of Child Abuse..... | 16 |
| The Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act..... | 16 |
| Signs of Child Abuse | 16 |
| Supervisory Requirements..... | 17 |
| Disqualification..... | 17 |
| Sexual Offender at Redeemer Church | 18 |
| Confidentiality | 19 |
| Response Plan..... | 19 |

REDEEMER CHURCH CHILD PROTECTION & PROCEDURES POLICY

This Child Protection Policy for is intended to safeguard the children and youth under its care. The Church loves children and desires to provide a safe environment where they can grow spiritually.

Therefore, we are committed to encouraging and supporting parents, guardians and caregivers and valuing children as instructed by God.

Knowing that child abuse occurs in our society, our policies and procedures have been established in order to protect the children placed under our care from physical and sexual abuse and misconduct. In addition, these polices are designed to protect our staff and volunteers from false accusations. These policies are necessary and will be followed to ensure that our ministries to children and youth are effective.

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Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the terms "child" or "children" include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years, and any students who are in high school and involved in Student Ministry, eighteen or older.

REDEEMER WINTER HAVEN CHURCH

Mission

Our mission is to make Jesus' invisible kingdom visible in Winter Haven and the world

This will require that we be a praying community of disciples who embody the truth of the gospel and spread the gospel in both word and deed...

one people – sharing life together
holy people – telling the story of our salvation
missional people – serving our neighbors

Vision

Community Formation: New People

We will work to cultivate such a community in our city by participation together in the practices that shape us as people who share life together, serve our neighbors, and tell the story of salvation.

Personal Transformation: New Hearts

We will work to make disciples who know, love, and rejoice in God, are committed and skilled at practicing God's ordinary means in community, and are committed and skilled to participate in His mission in the world in both word and deed.

Gospel Multiplication: New City

We hope to ignite a gospel movement of churches and ministries that will change Winter Haven and the world, a revival that comes through the power and work of the Holy Spirit

All of this is because we dream of a city filled with the knowledge and glory of God; a city where the king rules in kindness, where peace is waged and every person loves his neighbor; a city where every unwanted child has a family and a home; where orphans and widows are safe and cared for; where the poor and the hungry are fed; and the oppressed are set free... we dream of a world where every tribe and tongue and people have heard and the knees of the nations bow in worship to the true King; a world where justice, mercy, and peace is the rule of life; where every tear is wiped away by God himself, a world without AIDS and malaria, war and warlords... no crying... no pain... no death... ALL THINGS MADE NEW!

In Jesus, such a world is possible. In truth, it has already begun and it is on its way!

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

CORE VALUES

(The filter through which all decisions are made...)

- 1. Children are a gift from God.** Psalm 127:3-5 & Luke 17:2
- 2. Children are sinners in need of redemption-- as are adults.** Genesis 8:21, Psalm 51:5, & Proverbs 22:15
- 3. Children from an early age can understand deep Biblical truths.** II Timothy 3:15 & Psalm 78:1-8
- 4. Children can grow in grace and use their spiritual gifts for the glory of God.** I Peter 3:18 & Psalm 8:2
- 5. Children must be included in corporate worship.** Deuteronomy 31:12-13 & Dedication Promise
- 6. Parents have the primary responsibility for teaching God's truth to their children.** Deuteronomy 6:7
- 7. Redeemer will corporately assist parents in spiritually mentoring children.** Deuteronomy 11:18-21

VISION

Assisting parents to train up their children to see, display and declare the glory of God as their hearts are transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

MISSION

Guide our children to Christ by increasing their knowledge and understanding of God and inspire them to live God-centered lives.

Reveal the character and attributes of God and His plan for mankind through Scripture-based, age-appropriate ministry programs through experiencing God in worship and fellowship.

Affirm the uniqueness & giftedness of each child as created in the image of God, to acknowledge Christ as Savior and to grow in grace.

Create significant, lasting relationships with children, volunteers & families and help them use their spiritual gifts for the benefit of the body of Christ.

Encourage our children to serve and renew their communities through the knowledge and application of the Gospel.

OUR BELIEFS FOR MINISTERING TO CHILDREN

We desire that our children's ministry be an integral part of the total church program. If we are to effectively communicate the Gospel to the children in our fellowship and community we must recognize our dependency upon God and the importance of cooperative effort by all persons attending Redeemer.

The **PASSION** of our ministry is to be Christ-centered. We desire to lead our children into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and equip them to grow in that relationship. We want each child to understand that Jesus Christ is to be an integral part of life so that he or she will say, **"for me to live is Christ." Philippians 1:21**

The **FOUNDATION** of our ministry is God's Word. Scripture is the firm foundation for teaching and training in righteousness; it judges the thoughts and intents of the heart. It is our prayer that our children will **"delight in the law of the Lord and on His law meditate day and night." Psalm 1:2**

The **PEOPLE** who teach our children must demonstrate a life committed to Jesus Christ and a desire to model the love of God. We provide materials, curriculum, and proper training to equip teachers and helpers to successfully work with children. **"Let my teachings fall like rain on tender plants." Deuteronomy 32:2**

The **PROGRAM** is designed to be age appropriate. We desire to consider the spiritual, social, physical, and mental needs of the child. We strive toward active learning by using a variety of teaching techniques and styles. Our emphasis is not on developing great programs but developing great children of faith who will grow **"in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." Luke 2:52**

The **PLACE** we meet must provide an environment that stimulates worship, learning, security, and fun. In planning classroom arrangement, furnishings, and supplies, we must keep in mind the age-characteristics of the children in each particular room. We want our children to **"rejoice when they go into the house of the Lord." Psalm 122:1**

Our **MODEL** for teaching children is experienced and relationally based. Children learn best from those who know and love them. We want children to know they are a vital part of the Redeemer community of faith. When children see that adults are excited about Jesus, they mirror that excitement. **"What you have heard from me, keep as the pattern for sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 1:13**

CONDUCT WITH CHILDREN

Our desire is to offer a safe, secure, loving environment for the children and parents who attend our services. Therefore, we have established guidelines that reflect our objective to offer safeguards against possible harm to children as well as a venue for responding to alleged mistreatment. Each volunteer is expected to comply with the following policies. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from a ministry position and depending on the offense, a report to the authorities.

Worker Approval

- All workers must be regular attenders at Redeemer
- All adult workers must complete the following:
 - Background Screening Form (every 5 years)
 - Volunteer Application and Training
 - All **teachers** should be members who have completed membership courses.
- All workers for Student Ministry need to be members of Redeemer Winter Haven Church.

Worker Guidelines

- All workers must check in at KidCheck Station and wear nametag/aprons while serving.
- Minors may work **ONLY** when accompanied by adults they are not related to.
- Student helpers may not hold, or tickle children or assist with changing a diaper or help a child in the bathroom.
- Only female student helpers in the infant and walker rooms. Must only hold children while sitting down and an adult must be present.
- Student helpers must be 6th grade or older for infant and preschool classes, 8th grade and older for elementary classes.
- Married couples may work in children's ministry but are not allowed to be in the same classroom together. Every attempt will be made to schedule family members who help on different teams to work on the same Sundays to ensure the family can attend worship together.
- Immediate family members (including adult siblings) may work together only when accompanied by another adult and will be encouraged to consider working on the same Sunday in a different class.

Classroom Procedures

- All workers must wear identification nametags/aprons while serving.
- All workers need to be present at least 15 minutes before to the start of the worship service (9AM or 1030AM). This is to ensure the Two-Person Rule and to ensure workers are present as parents tend to drop off children before the worship service start times.
- At least one adult must be in every room at all times, and at least two workers must be in every room with children at all times.
- The "Two Person Rule" is a good safety guide to follow at all times. At no time

should a child be away from public view and alone with a worker.

- All children should be registered and checked in at the KidCheck Kiosk.
- Please ensure that all children entering the classroom have a Kid Check nametag on. If not, refer the parent to the kiosk to get one.
- Children should not sit on a worker's lap while the room is darkened.
- Dismissal procedures: All children must be picked up by their parent or caregiver. The guardian picking up should display the Kid Check Guardian Receipt and the security codes should be matched.
- For special larger church events, such as Easter and Christmas Eve, stickers need to be placed on sheets and parents need to turn in their sticker when picking up children to ensure security codes are matched up correctly.

Restroom Procedures

- Workers should not take a child alone to the restroom; go by groups of two or more.
- When you are assisting young children to the restroom, enter a stall only when necessary and keep the stall door open.
- Children should have as much privacy as possible.

Discipline Procedures

It is the policy of the church not to administer corporal punishment, even if parents have suggested or given permission for it. There shall be no spanking, grabbing, hitting, or other discipline of children. Workers should consult with the Children's Ministry Director or the Student Ministry Director if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues not covered below.

Guidelines for Effective Discipline – Preschool through 5th Grade

We use the **IDEAL** approach from *The Connected Child* by Karen Purvis

- **I** – You respond **immediately**- within three seconds of misbehavior
- **D** – You respond **directly** to the child by making eye contact, giving him undivided attention, and bringing the child nearer to you in order to better teach and guide.
- **E** – The response is **efficient** and measured. You use the least amount of firmness and corrective effort necessary. You also use the least amount of words possible to make the point clear.
- **A**- The response is **action-based**. Your child is actively redirected to better behavior. He is physically led through a real-life “do-over,” so that this time he can get right what he had earlier done wrong. Once his “re-do” is successful (because he used the appropriate alternative behavior), he is praised.
- **L** – You **level** the response at the behavior, not at the child. Your child is never rejected, even when behavior is rejected.
- Workers will never restrict food or keep food away as a punishment.
- **Time outs** – Select an area of the room to be used as time-out. It should be away from the class activity. When a child is disruptive, aggressive, rude, or in any way disobeys the class rules, send him/her to time-out.
 - 1 minute per age of the child is appropriate for the length of a timeout. For example, a 3-year-old should be in timeout for no longer than 3 minutes.
 - Explain to him/her that (s)he must remain in time-out until (s)he is calm and quiet, she must tell you what (s)he did wrong and how (s)he could do it

differently next time. For younger children who can't talk, explain to them why their behavior was wrong and invite them to rejoin the group.

- **After all of these steps with a child, if the unwelcome behavior continues** – Contact parents and let them know they need to come get their child. In this event, the teacher needs to explain to the parents and the Children's Ministry Director what happened.

Two-Person Policy

- Minimum of two approved workers/volunteers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during our programs and activities.
- In the unscheduled event where a class may have only one adult teacher in attendance during the class session; in these instances, doors to the classroom shall remain open and there shall never be fewer than two children alone with the teacher or worker.
- In the event where there is only one worker and one child/student, then the worker needs to go out in the hallway where others are present or go to another classroom where there are others present. **You should never be alone with a child or a student in private. This is for both the child's protection, as well as the adult.**

Social Activities

- Special events outside regularly scheduled programs must be pre-approved by the church staff.
- All activities must include more than one adult.
- All minors must provide parental permission forms in order to participate in activities outside of regularly scheduled programs.

Vehicle Policy

- Drivers must be at least 21 years old
- All drivers are required to have a current driver's license and proof of insurance on file prior to transporting children for any church activity.
- Drivers transporting children of others must have a basic background check at RWH's expense.
- As a general rule, adults and volunteers are not permitted to be alone in a car with a minor. If there is a situation that calls for this, specific parental approval is required stating the name of the approved staff member. In an unscheduled event of this happening, the adult needs to notify the parents immediately for their approval, and also let the RC staff know as well.
- Seat belts must be worn by all occupants.
- When driving in a caravan, a vehicle cannot make an unscheduled stop or take an alternate route unless specifically approved by the adult in charge of the caravan.

Photo Policy

- In order to protect our children and families, no photos or videos of children are permitted without the written consent of the parents or guardian.
- This includes all forms of photography, such as SnapChat and other apps.
- No pictures or videos can be posted to social media or church website without the written consent of a parent or guardian.

CONDUCT FOR WORKERS

Our desire is to offer a safe, secure, loving environment for the children and parents who attend our services. Therefore, we have established guidelines that reflect our objective to offer safeguards against possible harm to children as well as a venue for responding to alleged mistreatment. Each volunteer is expected to comply with the following policies. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from a ministry position.

Selection of Workers

All employees and all persons who desire to work with the children, students, or participate in the programs, including special instruction vendors, counselors, and tutors will be trained in our policies and procedures and screened in accordance with this guidance. They will normally be parents, church members, or regular attendees.

Paid Childcare Workers

- Paid childcare workers are generally hired by our Children's Ministry Coordinator. Workers currently do not fill out a formal application. Most of our current workers are either personally known to the Children's Ministry Coordinator or are members/regular attenders at RWH.
- All workers must sign the Childcare Workers Info Sheet attached as Exhibit B and fill out forms W-4 and I-9, along with providing copies of their Driver's License and Social Security Card.
- **Background checks are done through a professional service on all paid childcare workers.**

Teacher Selection

- Teachers for RWH Sunday school classes are chosen from our members. Sunday school lead teachers are members of RWH and are personally known by RWH Staff and have been approved to serve in this capacity.
- All teachers fill out an application to work with children and go through an orientation. The relevant portion of the orientation handout, including a teacher contract and expectations, is attached as Exhibit A. At the Orientation, the teachers are given a copy of this policy manual and are asked to read it and sign an acknowledgement.
- **Background checks are done through a professional service on all paid and volunteer workers.**

Open Door Policy

- Classroom doors shall remain unlocked at all times. If your door has a separate top that can be opened, then this should remain open when possible.
- Doors shall never be locked (except during actual lockdown or drills) while persons are inside the room.

Diaper Changing Policy

- Diapers will not be changed by our workers in the Children's Ministry unless the parents have filled out a form giving permission for the volunteers to do so. (See exhibit C.)
- Diapers will only be changed by women and only when there are two people present in a room.

Drop Off & Pick Up Policy

- Parents will sign in their child at the Kid Check kiosk in the children's hallway.
- Children and parents will receive an ID sticker.
- Parents must pick up children at their classrooms by showing their ID sticker to match their child's sticker.

Restroom Policy

- Children five years and younger should utilize a classroom bathroom, if one is available.
- If a classroom bathroom is not available, the worker(s) should escort a group of children to the hallway bathroom.
- They should always go in a group, never taking a child to the bathroom alone. The worker(s) should check the bathroom first to make sure that it is empty, and then allow the children inside.
- The worker should then remain outside the bathroom door and escort the children back to the classroom.
- If a child is taking longer than seems necessary, the worker should open the bathroom door and call the child's name. If a child requires assistance, the worker should summon another approved assistant, prop open the bathroom door, and leave the stall door open as he/she assists the child.
- **For the protection of all, workers should never be alone with a child in the 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.
- At the parents' request, they can be notified when bathroom use is needed by child.

Accidental Injuries to Children

In the event that a child or student is injured while under our care, use the first aid kit in your classroom and the following steps shall be taken:

1. An "Ouch" Report must be filled out, signed, and submitted to the parents of the injured child and the Director of Ministries for any injuries that occur on church property. This form will be in the classroom binder. (See exhibit E.)
2. For minor injuries, scrapes and bruises, workers will provide first aid (Band-aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parents or guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care.
3. For accidental injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple first aid, the Children's Ministry Director or the Student Ministry Director will be notified. The

Children's Ministry Director or the Student Ministry Director will then inform the parents or guardian. If the circumstance warrants, an ambulance will be called.

4. If the injury is deemed to be the result of abuse refer to the section on responding to Allegations of Child Abuse above.

INFECTION CONTROL POLICY

Introduction

In order to minimize the spread of any infectious diseases within the Nursery and to insure the health and safety of our children and caregivers, we have adopted the following policies and procedures. By the very nature of diapered infants, runny-nosed toddlers, and inquisitive preschoolers, we realize that children in these age groups have the potential of being exposed to a higher rate of infection than are older children. For example:

- A fecal/oral route primarily spreads infections such as **diarrhea and Hepatitis-A**; meaning that there is a higher spread among children who are in diapers.
- Infections such as serious forms of **meningitis, influenza**, and most *respiratory infections* are spread by contact with respiratory secretions.
- Infections such as **pinkeye, impetigo, scabies, lice, ringworm, and chicken pox** are spread by person-to-person contact.
- **Fever blisters** (Herpes) are spread by contact with saliva.
- **Cytomegalovirus**, a viral infection often without symptoms in children, but one, which can cause birth defects in unborn babies, is spread through urine and saliva.
- So far as is now known by medical science, **Hepatitis B and AIDS** are spread by contact with blood (transfusions across the placenta in the unborn baby and through the birth process) and intimate contact (sexual intercourse and possibly breast feeding). There have been no known cases of Hepatitis B or AIDS spread in day care centers and no documented cases spread through daily living activities within families.

Special Procedures

Diapers shall be changed at the changing table or on a non-porous surface, which must be sanitized after each use. Only women in the presence of another approved volunteer may change diapers. All parents need to fill out a form giving us their consent to change the diapers of their children. This form will be kept in the classroom binder to inform the workers. There will be a spreadsheet in the binder that will designate the information needed on one page for the workers.

Strict hand washing is of utmost importance in the prevention of the spread of infection. Caregivers are required to wash hands after each diaper change, after accompanying a child to the toilet, after assisting a child to wipe his/her nose, after contact with blood (e.g.,

a cut or bloody nose), after toileting, after contact with his/her own nasal secretions, and before food preparation. Caregivers should make sure that a child's hands are washed after toileting, after use of tissues for wiping eyes and nose, and before eating.

Toys that have been "tasted" by an infant or toddler shall be cleaned with a disinfecting solution before being returned to the "clean toy" bin.

A disinfecting solution, which is available in the early childhood classroom, shall be used for wiping up all spills, soiling of blood, urine, and feces, cleaning of diaper changing tables, cleaning of play equipment and toys, and cleaning of all equipment used by children in the preschool area.

All infant and toddler toys and all play equipment in the early childhood area shall be cleaned with the disinfecting solution after each session. All equipment in infant and toddler rooms (e.g., cribs, swings, and walkers) shall be wiped thoroughly with the disinfecting solution after each session.

Universal precautions, with every child and caregiver, shall be taken with handling of blood, urine, and feces. All persons cleaning bathrooms and disposing of trash shall wear disposable gloves. Gloves are strongly recommended for use by any caregiver while changing diapers and should be changed after each use. (In the event an emergency precludes the use of gloves in contact with blood, cleaning of skin with soap and water or disinfectant should be done as soon as possible). A disinfectant, waterless hand cleanser is available in every classroom, along with a small standard first aid kit.

General principle, if the injury is bigger than what a Band-Aid can cover or if the blood from scrape is seeping through Band-Aid, then the parents need to be notified immediately.

All diapers and items contaminated with blood, urine, and feces shall be placed in covered trashcans, which are lined with disposable liners and kept out of reach of children.

Implementation

To ensure that these guidelines are implemented, the Ministry Director shall arrange for initial and for periodic continuing training in infection control procedures for church workers serving in various program activities, which will take place at least once a year in the annual training. The Classroom Coordinator of each individual ministry shall be responsible for the day-to-day observance of these guidelines.

Parental Responsibility

For the overall health of our children as well as our workers, parents will be requested to refrain from bringing their children to any activity if they have been sick within the last 24 hours. Symptoms may include but will not be limited to:

- temperature greater than 100 degrees
- illness-related diarrhea
- vomiting
- cold or flu
- yellow or green runny nose

- persistent, productive cough
- head lice
- body rash
- evidence of conjunctivitis (pinkeye)

If a child exhibits any of these symptoms while in the nursery, the parents will be paged and asked to keep the child with them.

Parents are asked to bring disposable diapers each time their babies are left in our care as well as a labeled sippy cup or bottle. If your child uses a pacifier, please label it as well. Please do not bring toys or snacks from home.

If any child exhibits persistent biting behavior, his/her parents will be asked by a ministry staff member to remove that child from activities until such behavior ceases.

Parents are responsible for notifying the Children's Ministry Coordinator and staff of any allergies a child has.

Confidentiality of Medical Information

If information regarding a child who has an immunodeficiency, whatever the cause, is available to the Redeemer Children's Ministry staff, the staff will make this information available only to those caregivers who need to know in order to protect the child against other infections. This need to know, however, does not require the knowledge of HIV status. Parents of children enrolled in any Redeemer Children's Ministry shall not be privy to any confidential information.

*We will eventually be faced with making policy decisions regarding unvaccinated children. It is a sensitive and divisive issue.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

Unidentified Persons

If you see an unidentified person wandering the hallways during the service or during class time, when appropriate, ask the person, 'May I help you find the sanctuary/a specific classroom?' or simply 'May I help you?'

If this does not resolve the situation or if you are not comfortable that the person is no longer wandering the hallways, please contact the hallway assistant. They will need to notify the security volunteer for the day and a deacon to monitor the person. Confirm a response. If you cannot reach a deacon, contact the Children's Ministry Director to find help.

Contact phone numbers can be found in the classroom binder. Please add them to your own phone contacts.

Safety Team

The deacons have established a safety team. This will consist only of men who are members of RWH. It will be their responsibility to walk the grounds, ensure children and parents get to their classrooms and sanctuary, and make sure doors are locked from the outside in the fellowship hall.

****Secure and lock doors to the outside playground area when returning from the playground.**

Lockdown Procedure

- In the event that there is a lockdown procedure, all workers will be notified as quickly as possible by the Children's Ministry Director or Church Staff or a church officer to return to your classrooms, lock the doors, turn out the lights, stay out of sight of door windows, and close blinds. Once this has happened, then confirm that all the children are present and accounted for. The Staff member or church officer needs to make sure all outside doors are locked.
- It is important for you to stay calm and collected at this time as this will help keep the children calm as well.
- You will be notified by one of the above people when it is safe to unlock your doors.

Fire Procedure

- In the event of a fire, it is important for you to remain calm.
- If you are able to extinguish the fire with a fire extinguisher, then do so.
- If you are unable to put the fire out quickly by any means, then please pull the fire alarm if you are able to do so.
- In most cases, exiting the building is the safest plan of action. In this event:
 - Make sure all children are present and accounted for.
 - Test the surface of exit doors with the back of your hands.
 - If the door is warm, try another escape route.
 - If it is cool, open it slowly. Close it quickly if smoke pours through.
- In the event it is not safest to exit the building:
 - Have all the children stay away from the doors.
 - Use cloths, damp, if possible, to fill cracks around doors to keep smoke out
 - Use a phone to call 911 immediately

Power Outage Procedure

- In the event of a power outage, it is important for you to remain calm.
- You need to keep all the children safely in the classroom until parents come to pick them up or the power is restored.
- There will be a flashlight in each classroom with the first aid kit that can be used at this time if needed. (Most cell phones have flashlights on them as well.)

Tornado/Storm Procedure

- In the event of a tornado or storm, it is important for you to remain calm.

- All the children need to be underneath a table or chairs, looking down, with their hands covering their neck.
- If there are big windows in your classroom, then quickly move the children in the hallway. They need to take the same position up against the wall closest to the center of the hallway as possible to be farthest away from doors

Photography Procedure

There will be no photos or videos taken of children or students without the parent or guardian's permission. Photos and videos are so normal and a regular part of our daily use, but we do not need to be taken these photos or videos without parental consent.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect

Child – Any born, unmarried person less than 18 years old who has not been emancipated by order of the court (FL legal definition).

Child Abuse or Neglect – Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent, guardian, or caretaker which presents an imminent risk of, or results in, death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation.

Child Sexual Abuse – The employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in any sexually explicit conduct or a visual depiction of such conduct. This includes rape and in cases of caretaker or inter-familial relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation of children. Verbal comments of a sexual nature pornographic material and exhibitionism directed at children and allowing children to witness sexual activity are also included.

The Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act

Prohibited Acts – Based on the definitions above, the following acts are prohibited during any activity for children and youth:

- Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or evidence of abusive conduct by an adult toward a child.
- Sexual advances of sexual activity of any kind between any adult and a child.
- Infliction of physically abusive behavior or bodily injury to a child.
- Physical neglect of a child or youth, including failure to provide adequate supervision in relation to planned activities. Adequate supervision means the type of supervision a reasonable person would provide in the same or similar situation.
- Causing mental or emotional injury to a child.
- Possessing or accessing obscene pornographic materials at any activity.
- Possessing illegal drugs or being under the influence of any illegal drugs.
- Consuming tobacco or alcohol or being under the influence of alcohol while participating in any activity designed for children.

Signs of Child Abuse

Children suffering from abuse will quite commonly not tell others. They frequently blame themselves for the abuse. The list below is not all-inclusive but includes common indicators of abuse. Also, any change in appearance or behavior in a child should serve as a warning sign. You should also keep in mind that a sign by itself may not indicate abuse but could have a number of other causes. These should serve as a warning however that further investigation may be necessary

If you observe any of the following in a child, report it immediately to the Children's Ministry Director or pastoral staff.

Physical Abuse

- Injuries such as burns or bruises in a pattern, cuts, black eyes, or other serious injuries.
- Aggressive, disruptive, or destructive behavior
- Fear of parents or other adults
- Frequent complaints of pain or lack of reaction to pain.
- Passive, withdrawn, or emotionless behavior

Signs of Neglect

- Appears malnourished
- Stealing or begging for food
- Fatigue or listlessness
- Depression
- Lack of personal cleanliness
- Clothes that are torn or dirty or inappropriate for climate
- Medical conditions that are not treated

Sexual Abuse

- Knowledge about sexual relations beyond what is appropriate for the child's age
- Difficulty sitting or walking
- Sexually suggestive or promiscuous behavior
- Acting or play-acting sexual activity
- Evidence of injury to genital area (should only be observed when changing diapers)
- Complains of painful urination
- Hostility towards adults, fear of being alone with adults.

Supervisory Requirements

In addition to proper screening of staff, you should provide guidance for the day-to-day operations that involve children and youth. These requirements are designed to safeguard the children under your care but also avoid situations where children can become isolated in a one-on-one situation with staff or supervised by underage volunteers. In addition, the physical safety of the children is also your responsibility, and your staff should be prepared to respond to an emergency.

Disqualification

No person may be entrusted with the care and supervision of minors or may directly oversee and/or exert control or oversight over minors who has been convicted of the

offenses outlined below, been on a probated sentence or received deferred adjudication for any offense outlined below or has presently pending any criminal charges for any offense outlined below until a determination of guilt or innocence has been made, including any person who is presently on deferred adjudication. The following offenses disqualify a person from care, supervision, control, or oversight of minors:

1. Any offense against minors as defined by state law.
2. A misdemeanor or felony offense as defined by state law that is classified as sexual assault, indecency with a minor or adult, assault of a minor or adult, injury to a minor or adult, abandoning or endangering a minor, sexual performance with a minor or adult, possession or promoting child pornography, enticing a minor, bigamy, incest, drug-related offenses, or family violence.
3. A prior criminal history of an offense against minors.

Sexual Offender at Redeemer Winter Haven

Redeemer Winter Haven Church, at its discretion, may choose either of the following options when a known sexual offender wishes to attend worship, Bible study, or any other church sponsored event, whether that event be held at the church building location, or any other location the church may designate as a meeting place.

Option 1

Redeemer Winter Haven Church will not allow a person known to be a sexual offender to attend or become a member of the congregation. This would be in the case of an ongoing investigation or if the Session of RC does not believe this individual is ready for membership or in a place where they should be attending our church activities, which are usually geared towards families, such as corporate worship.

OR

Option 2

Redeemer Winter Haven Church may allow a person known to be a sexual offender to attend worship service, but they must adhere to specific guidelines:

1. A known sexual offender cannot participate in any of the child or student ministries in any way.
2. A known sexual offender can only participate in a predetermined service each week.
3. A known sexual offender must report in and be assigned to an escort who will accompany him or her at all times.
4. The identity of the sexual offender will be disclosed to the congregation.

Reporting & Responding to Child Abuse

Childcare workers, while at the church, may have the opportunity to become aware of abuse or neglect of the children under our care. In the event that an individual involved in the care of children becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect (whether in or out of the sphere of RWH), they shall follow these steps:

1. Make sure the child is safe from further harm.
2. Do not leave the child alone to report the incident.
3. Do not attempt to confront an alleged violator.
4. Report the incident immediately to the ministry leader or Pastoral Staff.

5. Complete a Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse and present it to the ministry leader or Pastoral Staff.

The RWH Pastoral Staff and Session will be notified, and the Pastoral Staff will take the following steps immediately:

1. The parents or guardian of the child will be notified.
2. The worker alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave from working with children pending an investigation.
3. We will comply with the state's requirement regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists. Chapter 39 of the Florida Statutes (F.S.) mandates that any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, neglected or abandoned by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver or other person(s) responsible for the welfare shall **immediately report** such knowledge or suspicion to the **Florida Abuse Hotline of the Department of Children and Families**.
Additional information can be found online at:
<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/publications/mandatedreporters.pdf>.
4. Our insurance company will be notified, and we will complete an incident report.
5. We will cooperate with any investigation of the incident by state or local authorities. In the event there is no investigation of the incident by state or local authorities, the Session will investigate the circumstances of the incident. The Session should act only in consultation with our insurance company and/or attorney.
6. Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position with children or students.
7. The Pastoral Staff will be our spokesman to the media concerning incidents of abuse or neglect, unless he is alleged to be involved. All other workers should refrain from speaking to the media.
8. A pastoral visit will be arranged for those who desire it.
9. The primary goal of this policy is always going to be the protection of the children and defenseless, but also the restoration of the repentant sinner as given in the Book of Church Order chapters 27, 29 and 30.

Confidentiality

All reports of child abuse will be held in absolute confidence. No communication by any person is allowed concerning the alleged event except as necessary to cooperate with an official investigation. In no case will the identity of the victim or the accused be disclosed except as required by law.

Response Plan

Any person who is accused or suspected of abusing a child, whether a volunteer or employee, will be suspended automatically from any further participation in any of Redeemer Winter Haven Church activities that involve children and students. The suspension will continue until results of any investigation by Redeemer Winter Haven Church or law enforcement and any resulting legal proceedings are concluded.

The Redeemer Church Session will be involved in the investigation and will determine based on the results of the investigation whether to return the person to their prior position, if the allegations are found to be untrue, or take other action, including termination for an employee if found guilty.

Once an incident has been properly resolved, the **Report of Suspected Incident** form, **Contact Log**, and the **Operations Team Follow-Up** form, should all be kept as part of the Session notes. When action of the larger congregation has been necessary, and the **Redeemer Winter Haven Church** congregation has been called into a proper Business Session according to the church by-laws, then a copy of these forms will be included in the Church Business Meeting Minutes and also in the Session Notes.