



CHILD & WORKER PROTECTION POLICY

**Summit Woods Baptist Church
Lee's Summit, MO**

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MISSION STATEMENT

Summit Woods Baptist Church desires to be a safe place for all children and adults who attend any activity. Each year across our country, children are victimized by individuals they know and trust. The church is not immune to the potential for such abuse or neglect of children, either by its members or by those in leadership positions. Incidents of child abuse or neglect cut across every racial, social, economic, and religious boundary. This *Child & Worker Protection Policy* reflects Summit Woods Baptist Church's commitment to protect children from harm. The policy applies to all volunteer and compensated workers of Summit Woods Baptist Church.

Summit Woods Baptist Church will not tolerate child abuse or neglect. Cooperation in this policy not only reflects concern about children's safety in this society, but also willingness to take steps toward halting child abuse and its detrimental effects.

For the safety and protection of children and workers, all people who participate in church-sponsored activities with children will be required to comply with this policy.

Parameters for the Child and Worker Protection Policy

This protection policy applies to children (from birth to 17 years old) who are voluntarily placed by parents under the responsibility of the church for the church's public worship services or specific Children's Ministry-related church-sponsored activities. Any form of abuse, harm, neglect or other problems related to children at home, school, or in any Bible-study, activity, or venue not directly related to Children's Ministry at Summit Woods Baptist Church is not covered by this policy.

PROTECTIONS OVERVIEW STATEMENT

Our first concern is that children be safe while they are in our care. To this end we:

- Screen, perform, and keep up-to-date background checks on all children's ministry volunteers.
- Perform background checks on all full-time church staff, regardless of whether or not they have direct contact with children.
- Require training for all children's ministry staff and volunteers.
- Use a parent authentication identification system.
- Employ scheduling procedures and volunteer/child ratios that optimize safety.
- Employ welcome desk volunteers to act as hall monitors to promote and maintain safety in the building.
- Equip children's classrooms with security cameras.
- Equip each room with a first aid kit.
- Equip each room with a radio to contact the safety team.
- Educate our staff and volunteers to recognize suspected child abuse and to require them to understand and follow any applicable reporting laws and to encourage them to report suspected abuse to church staff.
- Adhere to a healthy child policy for admittance to children's ministry.
- Adhere to a two-leader room policy whenever possible.
- Equip our children's workers to know how to evacuate children safely in case of an emergency.

DEFINITIONS

In this policy the following definitions will apply:

- A. **Child:** Any person under the age of 18.
- B. **Special Needs Person:** Any adult or child requiring direct adult supervision as a result of mental or physical limitations.
- C. **Adult:** Any person age 18 and over.
- D. **Child abuse and neglect:** Physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or neglect of a child by an adult or adolescent caregiver responsible for the child's welfare.
- E. **Physical abuse:** Maltreatment which results in physical injury, including but not limited to bruises, cuts, welts, fractures, and internal injuries. This definition does not imply that all events resulting in physical injury are physical abuse. Summit Woods affirms the biblical and appropriate use of spanking/corporeal discipline by parents and when applied in biblical and appropriate ways it is not considered physical abuse.
- F. **Emotional abuse:** Maltreatment which results in impaired emotional expression and development, including, but not limited to, incessant belittling, rejection, constant unequal treatment, verbal assaults, excessive demands on child's performance, and isolation from normal social activities.
- G. **Sexual abuse:** Maltreatment which consists of sexual contact or interactions with a child, including but not limited to, physical contact (fondling, genital/oral stimulation, sexual intercourse) and non-physical contact (exhibitionism, child prostitution, pornography, and voyeurism).
- H. **Neglect:** Failure or inattention on the part of the caregiver to provide for a child's basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and supervision. This is not a strict standard but one of a reasonable person under the circumstances.
- I. **Compensated workers:** Hourly, salaried, part-time, or full-time employees who work with children at any church-sponsored activity.
- J. **Volunteer workers:** Any non-compensated individual who works with children at any church-sponsored activity.
- K. **Helpers:** Minors who are at least 12 years old and are assisting in some area of children's ministry alongside an adult. These helpers fall into two categories:
 - a. **Auxiliary Helpers** (ages 12-13) - Helpers who are coming with their parent to serve alongside of them. These helpers do not count towards the adult-to-child ratios. Helpers must be children of members; will not go through childcare training but will be vetted by the children's ministry staff. Helpers will be supervised by the adult volunteers in the same room.
 - b. **Qualified Helpers** (ages 14-18) - Helpers who have been trained by the staff to serve in children's ministry. These helpers may count towards the adult-to-child ratios if designated by the staff. Helpers must be children of members or members themselves; will go through childcare training and

will be vetted by the children's ministry staff. Helpers will be supervised by the adult volunteers in the same room. Qualified helpers can serve without their parents present.

- L. **Caregiver:** Any compensated, volunteer, or temporary worker, 12 years old or older.
- M. **Mandated reporter:** Any person with responsibility for the care of children is a mandated reporter. Missouri law states that if a caregiver has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or may be subjected to abuse or neglect, or observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, that person shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Division of Family Services (800-392-3738).
- N. **Temporary Workers:** Any worker enlisted on a temporary basis to assist any compensated or voluntary worker in discharge of their duties and responsibilities.
- O. **Check in desk Volunteer:** A qualified male or female volunteer whose duties are not limited to any one classroom. These volunteers help families get checked in, generally move about the children's hallway during scheduled session times to observe any unusual activity, and be of service to volunteers (e.g., locating parents or substituting temporarily for another volunteer.) A check in volunteer is on duty during Sunday mornings.

SCREENING FOR WORKERS

The following procedures reflect our commitment to provide protective care for all children and caregivers who participate in church-sponsored activities.

1. Volunteer workers must be members of Summit Woods Baptist Church for at least six months.
2. All volunteer and compensated workers must complete the following procedures before participating in any church-sponsored children's or special needs activity.
 - A. All volunteer and compensated workers must complete an application and background check form. References, if asked for, will be checked.
 - B. Applicants must complete child safety training by Summit Woods Staff.
 - C. Applicants must sign a written acknowledgement stating they have received and reviewed a copy of the *Summit Woods Baptist Church Child & Worker Protection Policy*.
3. Any adult member of the congregation, volunteer, or compensated worker who has been convicted of a misdemeanor or higher crime against a child or a misdemeanor or higher crime against another adult, shall not provide service in any church-sponsored activity or program for children or special needs persons.

*Those who have been convicted of either sexual or physical abuse can be forgiven for and cleansed of their sin. However, sin does have consequences and while such persons may serve in certain other areas of ministry at Summit Woods Baptist Church, they will be prohibited from serving in the children's and special needs ministries.
4. All volunteer and compensated workers shall be screened by a background check for the purpose of obtaining information regarding criminal history or abuse findings.
5. This application and the results of any screening shall be kept confidential by authorized church staff (unless biblically appropriate to discuss with the elders in regard to the biblical process of church discipline, i.e., Matthew 18:15-20).

GENERAL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN MINISTRY WORKERS¹

Open Door Policy

Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door, a side window beside it, or there are cameras in the room. Doors should never be locked while persons are inside the room.

Child-to-Volunteer Ratios

Two Adult Policy

It is our goal that a minimum of two adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during our programs and activities. Some children's worship hour and student ministry classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during the class session; in these instances, doors to the classroom should remain open (if there are no windows) and there should be no fewer than three students with the adult teacher. We do not allow minors to be alone with one adult on our premises or in any sponsored activity unless in a closely supervised counseling situation.

Auxiliary helpers are always in addition to and supervised by the two adults. Auxiliary helpers are never to be left alone at any time with children without the presence of the two adult volunteers.

Two male volunteers may not serve together in the same room without a female volunteer also being present. The only exception to this rule is when a male check in volunteer temporarily substitutes for a female volunteer who is taking children to the rest room.

In addition to always having at least two volunteers present, the following ratios are maintained during regularly scheduled weekly meetings of the church:

- Children 0-11 months: One adult for every three children
- Children 12 – 35 months: One adult for every four children
- Children aged 3-5: One adult for every eight children
- Children aged 6-12: One adult for every twelve children

Once a ratio is met, additional children should not be accepted into a classroom if doing so would exceed the ratio unless and until additional volunteers are added. If for any reason the ratio is exceeded, the check in volunteer should be notified and asked for more volunteers to maintain these ratios. Whenever age-groups are combined, the ratio is determined by the age of the youngest child.

¹ Adapted from SafeChurch Child Protection Policy for Churches and from Capitol Hill Baptist Church Child Protection Policy, https://s3.amazonaws.com/account-media/13123/uploaded/c/0e4671492_1676558220_childprotectionpolicy.pdf

Check-in/Check-out Procedure

For children below third grade, a security check-in/check-out procedure will be followed. The child will be signed in by a parent or guardian, who will receive a “child check” for the child like a claim check. The parent or guardian must present the “child check” to sign out the child from our care. If a parent or guardian is unable to present the “child check,” the Children’s ministry staff will be contacted and will be responsible for releasing the child to the care of a parent or guardian after discussing the surrounding circumstances with the parent or guardian.

The Children’s ministry staff and church staff have the right to refuse any child at check-in. Some reasons might include potential illness, behavior that endangers other children, the room being closed because the adult child ratio is at maximum capacity, or anything else that might impair our ability to maintain a safe and secure environment for the children.

Parents in the Classroom

If a child would feel more at ease with a parent in the classroom, this is allowed temporarily (for a few minutes), especially for visitors or children who are having a hard time being separated from their parent. If this goes beyond a few minutes and the child cannot remain without the parents, the parents should remove the child from the classroom. While accompanying their children, a parent should be kindly but firmly dismissed if the parent is causing difficulty, presenting concerns for the welfare of the class, or remaining longer than a few minutes.

Sick Child Policy

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all the children at Summit Woods Baptist Church. Parents are encouraged to be considerate of other children when deciding whether to place a child under our care. In general, children with the following symptoms should NOT be dropped off:

- Fever, vomiting or diarrhea (Note: Children should be free of a fever, vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours before coming to children’s ministry.)
- Any symptom of scarlet fever, German measles, mumps, chicken pox, or whooping cough
- Common cold where symptoms are extreme
- Sore throat
- Croup
- Lice
- Any unexplained rash
- Any skin infection such as boils, ringworm, impetigo
- Pink eye or other eye infection
- Thick green, yellow or constant nasal discharge
- Any other communicable disease

Children who are observed by our workers to be ill will be separated from other children and the parent or guardian will be contacted to request that the child be picked up for the day.

Medications Policy

It is the policy of SWBC not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications or any kind of medical treatment to the children under our care. Medications should be administered by a parent at home. Parents are reminded of our sick child policy.

Exceptions to the medications policy may be granted to parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions). Parents of such children should address their situation with the Children's ministry staff to develop a plan of action.

Parents of children with special needs are encouraged to contact the Children's Ministry Director before signing the child into class. This allows the staff to assess the needs of the child and assist parents in transitioning their child into a classroom setting.

Food and Drink Policy

Volunteers may not bring food or drink with them when they serve. In most classrooms, allergen free cereal, veggie straws, and water are supplied for snack time. Volunteers will not provide any other food to children EVEN with parental consent. No food except for the church-supplied allergen free cereal, veggie straws, and water will be permitted to be eaten anywhere in the classrooms.

Why do we do this?

The nature of childcare is very hectic and dynamic so we cannot guarantee that:

- a child's bag will be properly marked at all times
- the childcare volunteer will reach into the correct bag
- another child won't grab food/drink and eat it
- a child won't share his food/drink with other children

Also, some children will struggle with allergies or react adversely even to mere exposure to certain foods (like peanuts). So, we need to limit the types of foods and drinks used in the children's ministry wing.

Why don't we allow children to bring their own food with them and feed themselves?

For the same reasons: we can't guarantee that volunteers will find/give the right food to the right child or that a child won't grab and eat another child's food or that a child won't share his food with other children.

So what do we do?

If a parent wants to feed their child something other than an allergen free cereal, veggie straws, or water, that parent may check out their child, feed him outside the room then return him to the childcare room. This is the policy throughout the building.

Care for Children with Allergies

Parents of children with allergies should notify the Hall Monitor on duty or the classroom teacher, and they should talk with the Children's ministry staff about how to handle any allergic reactions. Upon parental request, allergy information about children of members may be posted in the child's classroom.

Discipline Policy and Guidelines

It is the policy of SWBC not to administer corporal punishment, even if parents have suggested or given permission for it. There should be no spanking, grabbing, hitting, or other physical discipline of children by volunteers. Workers should consult with the parents and if needed the Children's ministry staff if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues.

Appropriate Discipline

All children's ministry volunteers are responsible for providing a loving, respectful, and orderly atmosphere in which children can learn, play, and interact with others. This atmosphere should be maintained by preparing beforehand, proactively directing children towards acceptable activities, verbally encouraging positive behavior, and, when necessary, correcting or redirecting inappropriate behavior. Acceptable means of redirecting inappropriate behavior may include correcting the child verbally (telling them "no", "stop", giving positive instruction, "sit down", "quiet", etc.), withholding a certain privilege or activity for a brief time, or separating a child from the situation or problem for a brief time (particularly if their behavior is endangering or upsetting other children). During correction, a child should never be removed from the classroom. Correction should be discrete; in the classroom (not in the hallway); and never outside of the sight of others. Steps of correction might include (depending on the age of the child):

- removing the child from the situation or problem;
- pointing out the problematic behavior;
- talking to the child about his/her sin and need for Christ;
- praying for the child and redirecting to a new activity;
- helping the child to reconcile with the offended children when appropriate.

Volunteers should view misbehavior as an opportunity to introduce children to the Gospel. If a child's behavior is uncontrollable or the child does not respond to the acceptable means of discipline indicated above, volunteers or staff should ask the check in volunteer to call the parents. If the child assaults, harasses or bullies other children or volunteers, misbehaves beyond minor correction, or has a pattern of misbehavior, the parents should be immediately called so the child can be removed.

Volunteers are allowed to physically restrain a child if he/she is physically endangering other children. Please report any of these problems (as well as the appropriate response taken to deal with the behavior) to the Children's ministry staff. Once a child is removed from Children's Ministry, reinstatement is possible at the determination of the Children's ministry staff. A child may be reinstated if the risk of re-offense has been adequately reduced. For further information regarding discipline, please speak with the Children's ministry staff.

Physical Touch Policy and Guidelines

Two types of relationships are important to consider: volunteer-to-child and child/teen-to-child.

Volunteer-to-Child

While appropriate physical contact with children can be an effective means of aiding in communication, redirecting attention, calming restlessness, or showing godly love and care, it can also be misinterpreted. Particularly in our interaction with children, we want to be blameless and above reproach. The following will help workers to avoid any compromise or concerns in this area:

- Always remain in open sight of other adults.
- Appropriate touch is positive physical contact that nurtures children and develops a sense of emotional security and maturity in their interactions with adults. Appropriate touch is applied to meet the needs of children and not the adults.
- Appropriate physical contact will vary according to the age of the child. What is appropriate for nursery children (holding, rocking, sitting on laps, etc.) may not be appropriate for grade school children.
- Inappropriate touch involves but is not limited to coercion or other forms of physical contact which exploits the child's lack of knowledge, satisfies adult physical needs at the expense of the child, violates laws against sexual or physical contact between adult and child, and any attempt to modify child behavior with physical force.
- For ages 2 through 5, only women can take children to the restroom.
- Sitting on laps is only appropriate for ages 0 to 5.
- In general, a man will need to limit physical contact more than a woman in the same situation, especially when working with older children.
- Volunteers should refrain from rough-housing, wrestling, shoulder or piggy-back rides, rubbing, massaging, or any physical activity that might make a child feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Only touch children in "safe" areas and for a brief time. "Safe" areas generally include hands, arms, shoulders, upper back, or gentle pats on the top of the head. Never touch a child on or near any region that is private or personal, unless when necessary while assisting in a diaper change or restroom visit.
- Never touch a child out of frustration or anger. Physical discipline is not an appropriate means of correcting someone else's child.

Child/Teen-to-Child

- No boy or girl under thirteen should ever be alone with younger children while in children's ministry. A volunteer older than thirteen should be present.
- No inappropriate touching (as defined above and in Appendix C) of any kind will be accepted.
- Fighting will not be tolerated and any child participating in violent action will be dismissed from a class/program and placed into his or her parent's care.

Further guidelines on appropriate and inappropriate touch can be found in Appendix C.

Diaper Changing and Restroom Policy and Guidelines²

0 Months through 2 Years Old

Parents of children with dirty diapers are asked to change their children prior to signing them into the classroom. Volunteers will change diapers at least once or as needed during service. Only women are allowed to change diapers. Diapers must be changed in the presence of another volunteer.

2 Years Old through Pre-K

Parents should take their children to the restroom prior to signing them into a class.

At check-in and drop-off, parents should let the volunteers know if their child is potty training. Children five years of age and younger should use a classroom bathroom if one is available. If a classroom bathroom is not available, workers should escort a group of children to the hallway bathroom. If needed, the volunteers will call the Hall Monitor to step into the classroom to maintain appropriate child to volunteer ratios. A female volunteer will take the child and at least one other child to the restroom (but no more than the volunteer-child ratio allows). They should always go in a group, never taking a child to the bathroom alone. The volunteer should check the bathroom first to make sure that it is empty, and then allow the children inside. The volunteer should wait outside the propped open restroom door unless the child requires assistance. If a child is taking longer than seems necessary, the worker should call the child's name. If a child requires assistance, the worker should leave the stall door open as they assist the child. The child and the volunteer must wash their hands with soap and water (or anti-bacterial hand sanitizer) before returning to the classroom.

K to 4th Grade

For all other classes up to 4th grade, any child needing to use the restroom shall go with another child of the same age and sex. At least one adult male should take boys to the restroom and at least one adult female should take girls. They will accompany the pair to the restroom, check the bathroom first to make sure that the bathroom is empty, and wait outside the propped open bathroom door until the children are finished. The children must wash their hands with soap and water (or anti-bacterial sanitizer) and return with the volunteer to their classroom. The Hall Monitor will be available to take children to the restroom or to step into a classroom, temporarily if necessary, to maintain appropriate child to volunteer ratios.

5th Grade and Above

For 5th grade and above, any child needing to use the restroom may go on his or her own. Children must wash their hands with soap and water (or anti-bacterial sanitizer) and return immediately to their classroom.

² Adapted from Safe Church and Capitol Hill Baptist guidelines

Accidental Injuries to Children

In the event that a child or youth is injured while under our care, the following steps should be followed:

1. For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First-Aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent or guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care.
2. For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First-Aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the worker's supervisor. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
3. Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed in the case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional.

Security and Emergency Response

Emergency Situations

In emergency situations, if appropriate, 911 will be called to secure help. After that, the safety team should be alerted for appropriate response.

Evacuation Procedures

In the event of a fire call 911. A safety team member should then be alerted and also assist all children in immediately evacuating the building. Staff and key responders will help keep parents away from the children's hallway. Parents should not report to the children's hallway because they risk creating chaos and blocking the exits for children. Instead, parents will meet their children in the designated areas outside of the church building.

A Live Threat

A live threat includes a shooting or some other type of security hazard.

Step 1: Volunteers and Staff Evacuate Children

- As soon as staff, elder, deacon, safety team member or a volunteer is confronted with a real threat, they respond immediately.
- If it is safe to do so, the first course of action should be to shelter in place & be prepared to evacuate once that determination is made.

Step 2: Volunteers and Staff Communicate the Danger

- When it is safe to do so, whoever sees or hears the live threat should notify a safety team member first or a deacon, Children's ministry staff, elder, or church staff if unable to reach the safety team. The staff, safety team member, Children's ministry staff, elder, or deacon will then notify the remaining volunteers about the live threat.
- Staff, elder, safety team member, deacon, or volunteer should call 911. Give the following information:
 - Church address and the nature of the threat.
 - If shots have been fired tell police we have an "active shooter."

Step 3: Hide

- If running or evacuation is not a safe option, hide in as safe a place as possible.
 - Close the doors and barricade with heavy furniture.
 - Close and lock windows and close blinds.
 - Turn off the lights.
 - Silence all electronic devices.
 - Maintain silence.
 - Have children lie or sit on the floor away from the door. If possible, stay out of sight of any interior windows.

Step 4: Staff or Volunteers Fight the Live Threat

- If neither running nor hiding is a safe option, as a last resort, when confronted by a shooter or some other danger, adults in immediate danger should consider trying to disrupt or incapacitate the shooter by using aggressive force and items in their environment, such as a fire extinguisher or chairs.
- Under no circumstances will a child be allowed to confront the potential danger.

After the area has been made safe and secure by police, the Children's ministry staff or staff will communicate an "all clear" sign to anyone who is in lock-down mode.

Missing Child or Kidnapping

In the case of a missing child, the children's ministry staff will first do a thorough check of the children's wing to make sure the child is not in another part of the building. If the child is not found after a thorough check of the children's ministry wing then summon the church's safety team, each of whom will then block their assigned door until otherwise notified by staff or the Children's ministry staff. Hall monitors and other volunteers will continue to search for the child until they are found. If the child is not found, the staff or elders will call the police to secure further help.

In the case of a kidnapping, the Children's ministry staff, staff, or deacons should call 911 to secure help from the police and summon the church's safety team, each of whom will then block their assigned door until otherwise notified by staff or an elder.

Parent involvement in Emergency Procedures

The Children's ministry staff will decide how and when to notify parents about security or emergency situations. Involving parents too early might cause unnecessary fears or panic. If an emergency does happen, parents will need guidance, pastoral care and counseling, so we rely on an elder or staff to walk with parents through difficult situations.

Use of Technology While Serving in Children's Ministry

Volunteers and helpers will only use technology that has been previously approved by the Children's ministry staff. Out of respect for parents and their personal decisions related to technology, volunteers and helpers will refrain from any use of unauthorized technology in the classroom. Volunteers are prohibited from photographing children while serving in Children's Ministry. This is for the protection of children and privacy of families.

REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Summit Woods Baptist Church has determined that it is the responsibility of the ministry staff to report all cases of suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper legal authorities within 24 hours of it being discovered. When it becomes necessary to report suspected child abuse or neglect, the protection of children must be the most important concern.

As a caregiver, you are a mandated reporter of child abuse or neglect. It is the legal responsibility of a mandated reporter to report all cases of child abuse or neglect they observe, and further, to report visible signs of alleged abuse or neglect. Failure to report could lead to liability on the part of the church, the observer, or both. The confidentiality of the minister/member relationship is very important. Reporting probable cause of child abuse or neglect has the potential for helping individuals receive help for a previous problem and may prevent further harm to self and others.

What is probable cause?

Probable cause means that the available facts when viewed in the light of the surrounding circumstances would cause a reasonable person to believe a child was abused or neglected. A report based on probable cause does not require proof that abuse or neglect has actually occurred; rather, it is a request for an assessment of the condition of a child.

Because we believe children are our most important concern, Summit Woods Baptist Church has adopted the following guidelines for reporting suspected abuse:

1. Upon observing or suspecting abuse, the caregiver shall immediately do the following:
 - A. Make sure the child's safety and comfort are secured.
 - B. Make sure the suspected abuser is safely away from the child/children
2. Report the abuse or neglect promptly to the authorized staff person in your area listed below:
 - A. Pastor/Elder
 - B. Pastoral Assistant
 - C. Ministry Assistant

To preserve confidentiality, it is important to discuss the incident only with your authorized staff person.

RESPONSE OF SUMMIT WOODS BAPTIST CHURCH

Summit Woods Baptist Church's primary function in responding to allegations of sexual abuse or neglect are to attempt to provide pastoral care to all who are affected, to attempt to ensure the safety and protection of persons who have been or may be harmed, to seek healing by providing pastoral care and other needed assistance to all who are affected, and, to the extent possible, to respect the privacy and rights of the parties involved and the confidentiality of communications.

If Summit Woods Baptist Church receives an allegation of child abuse or neglect, the staff will respond with the utmost concern to the victim, parent, or other party making such an allegation. The accused will be treated with dignity and support. Without clear and convincing evidence to the contrary, Summit Woods Baptist Church will assume that such complaints are made in good faith. Persons making such complaints should have no doubt that Summit Woods Baptist Church takes them seriously and will take appropriate action.

If an alleged abuser contacts the church officials about a complaint, Summit Woods Baptist Church personnel may confirm that they have received such a complaint only if they are certain the alleged abuser already knows this. They should avoid discussing the allegations or making any further comments until the proper authorities have an opportunity to conduct their investigation. They should not identify the alleged victim or complainant during an investigation.

If the media or other parties contact a church official about a pending allegation of child abuse, they should be referred to the pastor-teacher. Only the pastor-teacher or his designee shall make comments about the allegation.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Church Administrator or designated staff member shall be responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTRY STAFF

In accordance with Summit Woods Baptist Church's position that child abuse and neglect shall not be tolerated, the ministry staff shall do the following:

1. Take all allegations of child abuse and/or neglect seriously.
2. Document all efforts at handling the incident.
3. Contact the Missouri Division of Family Service within 24 hours. Do not attempt an in-depth investigation. This should be left to professionals who are familiar with these cases.
4. Report the incident immediately to the church insurance company and attorney. Do not try to handle this without professional outside assistance.
5. Notify the parents or guardians.
6. Do not confront the accused until the safety of the child or special needs person is secured.
7. Do not prejudge the situation but take the allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and the victim's family. Showing care and support will help to prevent further hurt. Extend whatever pastoral resources are needed. Remember that the care and safety of the victim is the first priority.

8. Treat the accused with dignity and support. If the accused is a caregiver, that person should be relieved temporarily of his or her duties until the investigation is finished.
9. Use the text of a prepared public statement to answer the press and to convey news to the congregation. Be careful to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.

RESPONSE TO CHILD PORNOGRAPHY AND SEXUAL OFFENDERS IN THE CHURCH³

If an elder, staff member, deacon, volunteer, helper or any member of Summit Woods Baptist Church is suspected of or admits viewing, producing or distributing child pornography:

- He or she will be immediately removed from all children's ministry related activities or programs.
- Allegations or self-admission will be immediately reported to the Children's ministry staff or any elder of SWBC.
- Appropriate response steps will be outlined and implemented by the elders.

Sexual Offenders in the Church

When an alleged or convicted offender attends SWBC or a SWBC related activity:

If SWBC's elders or Children's ministry staff learns in advance that an alleged or convicted sexual offender is wanting to attend an SWBC service:

- The elders must decide whether to admit him or her to church services or SWBC related activities. Admission of the offender will be based on factors such as extent of prior convictions, and his or her willingness to follow guidelines set out by this policy. This is not a comprehensive list of admission criteria.
- A designated member of SWBC will contact the offender letting him or her know that he or she must be accompanied at all times while on SWBC's property.

If an alleged or convicted sexual offender participates in any SWBC related activity or public service that has the possibility of children being present:

- The Children's ministry staff and hall monitor should be notified.
- The elders will designate SWBC members or staff who will accompany the alleged perpetrator or criminal offender at all times while he or she is on SWBC's property or anywhere in SWBC's buildings.
- He or she must stay away from the wing of the church where the nursery and children's classes meet.
- The elders will work with members to come up with guidelines for SWBC related activities that are not on church property, but elsewhere.

When An Alleged or Convicted Offender Attends Regularly:

If he/she chooses to attend regularly:

- The elders will be notified.
- The congregation may be notified in a public service of the church, most likely the members' meeting. SWBC reserves the right to forbid someone from coming to the church for worship services, programs or activities. When participating in church activities outside of the church building, the same guidelines apply.

³ Adapted from Capitol Hill Baptist Church Child Protection Policy, https://s3.amazonaws.com/account-media/13123/uploaded/c/0e4671492_1676558220_childprotectionpolicy.pdf

- The sexual offender should provide the children's ministry staff with the name of his/her probation officer. A designated member of SWBC will contact the probation officer and find out 1) more about the underlying offense – offenders may tend to minimize their offenses, and 2) the specific terms of the probation in order to make sure the offender stays in compliance while at the church.

When A Sexual Offender Seeks Membership at SWBC:

If the offender seeks membership at SWBC, the elders retain a right to refuse membership. If the elders recommend membership for the offender, it will be conditional on his or her agreement to:

- Verify the history of offenses, convictions, and adjudication of sexual offenses and disclose them to the SWBC elders.
- A designated member contacting his/her probation officer to find out the underlying offense and the specific terms of probation.
- The Children's ministry staff conducting a thorough criminal background check. If the information provided by the offender differs from the information given by the probation officer or gathered by the Children's ministry staff, that will be grounds for denying membership.
- Disclosure of information to parents and the congregation. The information released to the church is at the discretion of the elders. A letter detailing this information will be sent directly to all member parents.
- Refrain from any form of communication (including phone, texting, email, social media or any type of technology), social fellowship, physical contact, mentoring, babysitting, or coaching with children or youth or participate in any activities or programs related to children or youth both inside and outside of the church.
- The Children's ministry staff will designate SWBC members or staff who will accompany the alleged perpetrator or criminal offender at all times while he or she is on SWBC's property or in attendance at any church related services, activities or gatherings that has the possibility of children being present.
- Any restrictions that elders determine.
- Permission to notify the leadership, congregation, and parents of anything that the elders deem significant for these groups to know.
- A warning that the church will report any suspected activity to civil authorities.
- A warning that any violation of the code of conduct (including allegations or suspicion of abusive behavior) can result in discipline and banning from the church facilities or any church related programs and activities.
- Sign a written document that details all of these items, plus anything else that the elders deem important to include.

Other Guidelines About Sexual Offenders:

If a convicted sexual offender applies for a volunteer or staff position, he or she will be denied by the church. Exceptions may only be made upon the approval of the elders, full disclosure to the congregation, and a congregational vote.

If a sexual offender does not disclose a former allegation, conviction or adjudication, and it is revealed later, the offender will be removed from any paid or volunteer position immediately and may be removed from membership as well.

If a sexual offender is a minor, the church reserves the right to bar that minor from any children or youth activities and will follow the guidelines set out above for any sexual offender who seeks participation in church-related public services, programs or activities.

If a sexual offender leaves SWBC (as a member or regular attender) and begins attending another church, the elders will disclose allegations or self-admission or criminal conviction of neglect or abuse to the leadership at the next church.

I acknowledge the fact that I have received a copy of the *Summit Woods Baptist Church Child and Worker Protection Policy*. I have read this policy and understand that this policy will apply to me in my role as a volunteer, paid, or temporary worker with Summit Woods Baptist Church.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Date _____

APPENDIX A: IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS AND CONTACT INFORMATION⁴

To Report Abuse or Suspected Abuse

Police Emergency Phone Number: **911**

Police Non-Emergency 24-Hour Phone Number (Lee's Summit): **816-969-7390**

Missouri Hot Line to Report Child Abuse: **1-800-392-3738**
(<https://dss.mo.gov/cd/keeping-kids-safe/can.htm>)

Jackson County Children's Services: **816-889-2037**

To Contact Church Staff or Officers

Summit Woods Baptist Church Office: **816-525-8215**

Bret Capranica, Teaching Pastor: **816-392-4694**

Dalton Vansell, Director of Children's Ministry: **816-726-0312**

Brett Harris, Elder Chairman: **816-805-2022**

ChildHelp National Child Abuse Hotline

The ChildHelp National Child Abuse Hotline **1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)** is dedicated to the prevention of child abuse. Serving the United States, its territories, and Canada, the Hotline is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with professional crisis counselors who, through interpreters, can provide assistance in 170 languages. The Hotline offers crisis intervention, information, literature, and referrals to thousands of emergency, social service, and support resources. **All calls are anonymous and confidential.**

Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Website

www.nsopr.gov.

Includes a national sex offender search feature.

⁴ Adapted from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Child Protection Policy, https://c52d388b85e6c47bef5d-9ff91644b80b1213b3e9d43ad0f0e963.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/uploaded/g/0e4058922_1425054470_gslc-child-protection-policy.pdf

APPENDIX B: CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT TRAINING CHECKLIST⁵

- **What do I do if I suspect that a child has been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused? *Report Immediately!***
 - In the case of suspected parental abuse, staff and servants will immediately report concerns to the Children’s ministry staff or to one of Summit Woods’ pastors.
 - It is not the responsibility of the reporting person or the staff to substantiate any allegations or suspicions. Rather, we are responsible as a church community to comply with the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and cooperate fully with Child Protection Services and the law enforcement officials in our community. At all times in such a process confidentiality will be upheld. **DO NOT DISCUSS WITH OTHER PARENTS OR CHILDCARE WORKERS.**
 - If a child is disclosing that a parent or another adult is causing harm, **DO NOT** talk with the parent or that adult about this. This is where much discernment about the situation is needed. Talking to the parent could result in additional abuse, shame, etc. Contact the Children’s ministry staff or one of Summit Woods’ pastors immediately.

- **Who is considered a “mandatory reporter” of child abuse and neglect?**
 - For Missouri, any person who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a child is neglected or abused shall immediately cause an oral or written report to be made.
 - This includes but is not limited to teachers, school personnel, or child-caring personnel. This makes anyone working with children at Summit Woods a mandatory reporter.

- **How do I know if something is reportable or not? CAPTA (The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act) mandates “minimum definitions” for child abuse and sexual abuse:**

Child abuse or neglect is any recent act or failure to act resulting in imminent risk or serious harm, death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation of a child (usually a person under the age of 18, but a younger age may be specified by CPS in cases not involving sexual abuse) by a parent or caretaker who is responsible for the child’s welfare.

Sexual abuse is defined as:

- 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 any simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing visual depiction of such conduct; or

⁵ Adapted from Sojourn Church Kids, https://c52d388b85e6c47bef5d-9ff91644b80b1213b3e9d43ad0f0e963.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/uploaded/s/0e4058920_1425054469_sec-training-checklist.pdf

- Rape, and in cases of caretaker or inter-familial relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children.

There are many signs of child abuse. Any one sign may not mean anything, but if there are a number of signs, or if they occur frequently, you may suspect maltreatment. Some signs are...

- **Physical**
 - Unusual bruises, welts, burns, fractures, or bite marks
 - Frequent injuries, always explained as accidental
 - Wears concealing clothing to hide injuries
 - Child seems frightened
 - Child seeks affection from any adult
 - Unpleasant, hard to get along with, demanding, often does not obey.
- **Emotional**
 - Apathetic, depressed, withdrawn, passive
 - Seems overly anxious when faced with new situations, people.
 - Disorganized, distrustful, or rigidly compulsive.
 - Takes on adult or parent roles and responsibilities.
 - Throws tantrums, seems impulsive, defiant, antisocial, aggressive, self-destructive
 - Fearful, hyper-alert, lack of creativity and exploration.
- **Sexual**
 - Has torn, stained, or bloody underclothing.
 - Experiences pain or itching in genital areas
 - Has an STD or venereal disease
 - Appears withdrawn or engages in fantasy or baby-like behavior.
 - Has a poor relationship with other children.
 - Is unwilling to participate with other children.
 - States that he or she has been sexually assaulted
 - Acts like an adult, not a child.

“Wouldn’t I know a predator if I saw one?”

- **False Assumptions that We Make:**
 - We assume it will happen to someone else.
 - We assume we are safe.
 - We assume we can recognize them (i.e., they will be “monsters” and not like us).
 - We assume they exist only in certain social and economic demographics.
- **Profile of a Predator:**
 - Over 80% of the time, the abuser is someone known to the victim. Most abuse takes place within the context of an on-going relationship. There are more persuasion predators (sharks) than power predators (bear). They live a double-life, and they groom the child for abuse before acting. They seek

opportunities to have easy access to children (for example, targeting single mothers). Some predators deliberately target churches. These predators count on their victims giving no disclosure.

- The usual offender is between the ages of 20-30 years. 20% of sex offenders begin their activity before the age of 18. Most are men, but there are some women. Predators are often married and have children. They come from every economic and social demographic.

What happens if a child touches me inappropriately?

First, think about how you would respond before this occurs.

- Remain calm. Ask yourself if this was accidental or on purpose.
- Redirect appropriately (e.g., “Sarah, please keep your hands to yourself”)
- Take the child aside and explain good touch / bad touch if given the opportunity (“We do not touch areas covered by a swimming suit.”). Take into account the age of the child you are working with. You should be able to talk about inappropriate touching with children ages 3 and older.
- For abused children, inappropriate touching may seem “normal.” Or, the behavior may be to gain attention or see how the adult will respond.
- Notify the Children’s ministry staff or a pastor immediately about purposeful and inappropriate touching.

How can I best minister to a child that has been abused or neglected?

You are an important part of the healing / redemptive process for a child who may have been abused or neglected. It is important that you...

- Pray for the children you are working with that they will be safe, secure, and loved.
- Speak to children with integrity. Children will often feel safe in a church setting, and they may open up to you because they think that you are someone they can trust. If a child says that they want to tell you something only if you promise not to tell anyone else, you should respond, “I want to hear what you have to say, but I can’t promise that I can keep a secret.” This way, if they disclose any abuse or neglect, you can report without betraying their trust.
- Remember that children don’t always tell the truth, but it is our responsibility to listen and report what was stated. You may end up saving the life of a child!
- If any child has been abused, and we DO know about it and action IS being taken, there are a few things to remember when working with this child: Have lots of patience and understanding; Report to the parents/guardians each time the child brings up the assault; Show lots of love and care for the child.

What additional care is required for a child that is in foster care?

- When a child is in foster care, their legal guardian is the CHFS (Cabinet for Health and Family Services) so often the biological family or the foster family does not have custody and cannot pick up a child. Be aware of these circumstances.
- When a child is in foster care, there is also a need for added privacy. No photos should be taken of these children. Names of these kids should not be talked about outside of church. Moreover, staff and servants should not solicit information about whether foster parents plan to adopt, why the children are in care or where their birth parents live.

How can I guard myself from accusation?

While appropriate physical contact with children can be an effective means of aiding in communication, redirecting attention, calming restlessness, or of showing godly love and care, it can also be easily misinterpreted. Here are a few simple rules to abide by related to physical touch to help protect yourself from accusation—whether you are serving in children’s ministry, an event, or are just interacting with kids in community:

- Always remain in open sight of other adults.
- Appropriate physical contact will vary according to the age of the child. What is appropriate for nursery children (holding, rocking, sitting in laps, diapering, assisting in the potty, etc.) will not be appropriate for grade school children.
- At Summit Woods, our policy is that only females may change diapers. Only females will take children to the bathroom and/or assist in the bathroom. We do not change the diapers of children age 5+.
- Sitting on laps is only appropriate for ages 0 through preK, but it is not appropriate for older children. It is not appropriate for a man to pick up or hold a child who is older than pre-K.
- In some situations, a man will need to limit physical contact more than a woman in the same situation, especially when working with older children.
- All caregivers should refrain from the following activities: roughhousing, wrestling, or giving shoulder or piggyback rides to children. Physical contact in group activities such as ultimate Frisbee, freeze tag, touch football, etc., is reasonable and understandable, but be above reproach in all relationships. Generally speaking, these types of activities should be avoided in a community group setting as well—particularly if a child’s parents are not present or within sight range.
- Use care and discernment when hugging a child. Brief side-hugs when greeting or comforting a child are generally appropriate. Prolonged, frequent, or frontal hugs are not appropriate. In older classes, servants should not initiate hugs, particularly towards children of the opposite sex. If an older child initiates a hug, redirect them to more appropriate contact such as a side hug or gentle "high-five."
- Only touch children in "safe" areas and for brief times, with no rubbing or massaging. "Safe" areas generally include hands, arms, shoulders, upper back, or gentle pats on the top of a child's head. Never touch a child on or near any region that is considered private or personal (on any part of their body that a swimsuit covers) unless changing diapers or assisting nursery children in the potty.
- Never touch a child out of frustration or anger. Physical discipline is not an appropriate means of correcting someone else's child.

APPENDIX C: INAPPROPRIATE AND APPROPRIATE TOUCH⁶

“Good touch” is important to each of us. Children do not grow and thrive without the good touch of others. Touch was important to Jesus as he healed people and comforted them. Our Christian tradition shares love with each other through hugs, placing an arm around another’s shoulder or squeezing a hand to say, “You are loved.”

It is imperative that the Christian community not lose the importance of “good touch.” We need to continue to express Christian love in appropriate ways with children. To a child who is upset, a warm hug and kind word can be most comforting. In the midst of our caution, let us not forget that good touch is just that – *good!*

With this in mind, what follows are some examples of appropriate touch that should be encouraged and examples of inappropriate touch that should be avoided when serving in Summit Woods Baptist Church’s Children’s Ministry.

Appropriate Touching

- A comforting pat on the shoulder and back, or allowing an emotionally distressed child to lean their head on your shoulder is appropriate.
- Back rub to help comfort, or put an irritable child to sleep is appropriate.
- High-Fives, handshakes, or the touching of two fists are appropriate and recommended touch, especially when interacting with older children.
- Holding hands is permitted with children 10 years and under when initiated by the child, or when helping a child to walk, climb stairs, etc.
- Holding a child firmly with your hands to restrain him/her is appropriate when it is used to prevent a child from an accident, injury, hurting self, others, or you.

Inappropriate Touching

- Shoving, hair pulling, shaking, slapping, pinching, biting, kicking, hitting, or spanking a child for any reasons.
- Squeezing of arm, neck, face, or any parts of the body.
- Tickling children over 5 years old. It is over stimulating and is considered by some professionals to be a deceptive device that could lead to inappropriate touching.
- Children sitting on laps of adults is inappropriate for ages 6 and older.
- Holding or restraining children on the lap. However, holding a child 5 years and younger is appropriate for short time spans when comfort is needed by the child or the child’s behavior is out-of-control or endangering other children.
- Touching a child in the genital areas except for younger and developmentally delayed children requiring a diaper change, bathing/washing and assistance with toileting procedures. Otherwise, touch in the genital area is only permitted by medical personnel in case of injury or suspected injury.

⁶ Adapted from Capitol Hill Baptist Church Child Protection Policy, https://s3.amazonaws.com/account-media/13123/uploaded/c/0e4671492_1676558220_childprotectionpolicy.pdf

- Kissing a child on the lips, neck, or anywhere else. A child should never be allowed to kiss a staff member, volunteer, or another child on the lips, neck, or anywhere else. Children are also not allowed to kiss one another.
- Slapping a child on the behind, even when playing.
- Fondling children, even in non-private areas.
- Carrying a child on the back unless the child is unable to walk.

**APPENDIX D:
CHILD ABUSE REPORTING FORM⁷**

If a volunteer, staff, deacon, or elder suspect, hear about, or observe signs or symptoms of abuse, please: (1) Talk immediately with the Children's ministry staff or a pastor and (2) document any relevant information on this form.

This report should include signs or symptoms observed, notations about bruises or injuries that are visible, a summary of what the child said, and a description of any emotions expressed by the child. Do not go back and interview the child. Fill this form out based on whatever information has already been obtained.

Today's Date: _____

Name of Child: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Name of Volunteer: _____

Signs or Symptoms of Abuse Observed:

Bruises or Injuries that are Visible:

Emotions expressed by the Child:

Summary of the Conversation with the Child:

Anything Else that is Relevant:

⁷ Adapted from Capitol Hill Baptist Church Child Protection Policy, https://s3.amazonaws.com/account-media/13123/uploaded/c/0e4671492_1676558220_childprotectionpolicy.pdf

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Summit Woods Baptist Church
Lee's Summit, MO

This volunteer application form is to be completed by all volunteers involved with the supervision or custody of minors. This is not an employment application form. This is one of many steps we are taking to provide a safe and secure environment for the children, students, workers, and volunteers who participate in our programs and use of our facilities.

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the Word of Truth.

II Timothy 2:15

General Information

Full Legal Name: _____

Name You Go By: _____

Complete Address:

Home/Cell Phone: _____

Member of Summit Woods Baptist Church: yes no

How long have you been a member? _____

Personal Information

When did you make your profession of faith? _____

When were you baptized? _____

Are you currently serving in another capacity in the church? _____

If so, where? _____

I am willing to work with the following group and time: (Circle all that apply)

- Bed Babies: Sunday AM, Sunday PM, Wednesday PM
- 1 Year Olds: Sunday AM, Sunday PM, Wednesday PM
- 2 Year Olds: Sunday AM, Sunday PM, Wednesday PM
- Preschoolers (3 ½ - PreK): Equipping Hour, Worship Service
- K – 1st Grade: Equipping Hour
- 2nd – 3rd Grade: Equipping Hour
- 4th – 5th Grade: Equipping Hour
- Children’s Music (1st – 6th)
- Preschool Music (3 ½ - K)
- Truth for Kids (Pre-K – 5th)
- Awana: Cubbies (2 yr. prior to K), Sparks (K–2nd), TNT’S (4th – 6th)
- Sunday Evenings: 3 – Kindergarten
- Sunday Evenings: 1st – 6th

I am willing to help with special events, (exp. Harvest Party, Christmas Party, etc.)? Yes No

Confidential: Part 2

Because Summit Woods Baptist Church believes that ministering to children entails extraordinary responsibility, this part of the Volunteer Application form asks you to answer questions which are intended to reduce the potential risks of abuse to children, workers, and the church. Since answers to these questions are personal and sensitive, access to this part of the form will be limited to the Children’s ministry staff and Pastoral Staff.

None of your answers to these questions will automatically disqualify you from serving as a volunteer. If you prefer to discuss this part of the form will be limited to the Children’s ministry staff and Pastoral Staff.

1. Has your driver’s license ever been revoked? Yes No
If so, explain _____

2. Have you ever been arrested? Yes No
If so, explain: _____

3. Have you ever been convicted of, pleaded guilty to, or are you currently charged with assault, abuse, neglect, or sexual molestation of a minor?
Yes No
If so, explain _____

4. Other than above, is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would affect your ability to supervise, guide, or care for children/students? (i.e. if you were neglected or abused as a child*; if you have problems with substance or alcohol abuse, etc.)

If so, explain: _____

*Victims of abuse need love, encouragement, and support. This extends not only to people who are currently being victimized, but also to the many in our society who are adult survivors of abuse. If you have a history as a victim of sexual or physical abuse, this church family wants to extend our love, acceptance, and help to you. If you desire, you may discuss this with one of the ministerial staff at no cost. Please know that they are ready to assist you in dealing with these difficult and traumatic issues. Please contact the church office at 816-525-8215 to make an appointment.

5. Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offense except minor traffic violations? Yes No
If so, explain _____

6. Have you ever been accused, charged, or alleged to have committed any act of neglecting, abusing, or molesting any child? Yes No
If so, explain _____

7. Have you ever abused drugs or alcohol? Yes No
If so, explain _____

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature _____

Please print your name _____

Date _____