

Child Protection Policy

Jubilee Community Church



September 2017

A Word About Children

We love children! Our Lord loves children and chastises those who treat them insignificantly: *And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God (Mark 10:13-14).* We learn from our children's trust of us what our faith ought to look like toward our heavenly Father. This is why ministry to children is not just a duty to us, but a heartfelt delight! We get to know more about our relationship with our heavenly Father through them! Therefore, thank you for the privilege of serving your children. Our earnest desire is to be faithful with their trust and do everything we can to protect them in their weakness and vulnerability.

Our vision is to help children grow in their love for Jesus:

"But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 3:14-15, ESV)

Our Mission: To honor God

The ministry to children¹ at Jubilee exists to honor God by:

- Maintaining a safe and secure environment for our children.
- Supporting and encouraging parents / guardians who are primarily responsible for teaching biblical truths to their children (Ephesians 6:4)
- Making the whole counsel of Scripture known to children with special emphasis on the Gospel (Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Romans 1:16-17)
- Praying for the children and relying on the Holy Spirit to regenerate their hearts through the faithful teaching of His Word (Romans 10:17; Ephesians 2:4-10)
- Living faithfully before the children and modeling for them how Christians are called to respond to God, interact with each other, and with the world around us (Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 11:1)
- Encouraging children to learn to serve and to not just be served (Mark 10:43-45).
- Maintaining the highest ethical standards such that volunteers and teachers always live and serve above reproach, protecting the reputation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Preparing children to one day walk with God as adults, which means getting them ready to be a part of the public services and Lord willing, one day, a fully participating adult member.
- Inviting Jubilee families to join us in pursuing the fatherless, unchurched youth of our neighborhood so they can be taught the Gospel through mentor relationships - with the hope and prayer of also reaching their parents.

Staff and Volunteer Expectations

All children's ministry staff and volunteers share a particular responsibility for:

- Loving the children as Christ loves them
- Setting an example of proper Christian conduct in the way we live our lives
- Ministering to the children
- Understanding that the care of children is not a right, but a privilege; and this privilege embodies responsibilities to God for ministering to and caring for the children

¹ Children's ministry at Jubilee includes Nursery, Sermons for Saplings, Jubilee Kids, Jubilee JV and Jubilee High - any ministry with those who are under 18 years old

Child Protection

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

- Screen 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
- Employ scheduling procedures and volunteer/child ratios that optimize safety
- 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 officials
- Adhere to a healthy child policy for admittance to children's ministry
- Adhere to a two-volunteer room policy whenever possible.

Personnel Summary

- *Children or Minors* are individuals under eighteen years old (under MN law and for most state laws).
- *Adults* are individuals eighteen years or older.
- Staff are the paid employees of the church. All full-time church staff are required to receive a background check regardless of whether or not they have direct contact with children.
- *Volunteers* are adults who work with children and are not in the employment of the church. All volunteers who serve in children's ministry are required to go through both the Jubilee children's ministry training and screening procedures before they serve. Volunteers include childcare workers, ministry leaders, mentors, teachers, coordinators, and anyone else who serves the children. The term 'volunteer' will be used throughout this policy manual as an all-encompassing term for anyone who serves the children and is not church staff.
- *Helpers* are minors who are at least one grade older than the children they are assisting and are assisting in some area of children's ministry alongside an adult. Helpers do not count as adults towards the adult-to-child ratios. Helpers may or may not themselves be a member of the church; will not be required to go through training, but will be vetted by the JCC ministry staff. Helpers will be supervised by the adult volunteers in the same room.
- *Pastors/elders* are elected officers of the church who serve the church by providing teaching and leadership to the congregational as a whole. They must go through both the children's ministry training and screening procedures if they are to serve in children's ministry, just like any other volunteer.
- *Ministry Leaders* are selected by church staff and entrusted with the leadership of volunteers and participants in a specific ministry, such as nursery, Jubilee Kids, Jubilee JV or Jubilee High.

Protecting the Children Before They Arrive

Ensuring a safe environment begins long before Sunday, Monday or Wednesday ministry begins. Every applicant who wishes to serve in children's ministry is required to go through a screening process and attend JCC children's ministry training.

Screening Procedure

To ensure safe and quality care, JCC has established a screening procedure to approve all volunteers to work with our children:

- All volunteers must be members in good standing or on the pathway to membership at JCC or a like-minded church or educational institution, approved by both the ministry leader (or nursery coordinator) and pastor responsible for children's ministry.
- All volunteers must be eighteen years of age or older.
- Children or youth who are at least one grade older than the children they are assisting are welcome to help (subject to the approval and direction of the leader), but they are always in addition to the adult volunteers.
- All volunteers must have completed JCC's children's training.
- All volunteers must have completed the volunteer application and been recommended by or in consultation with the nursery coordinator, ministry leader or pastor responsible for children's ministry.
- At least one reference check must be satisfactorily completed prior to beginning of service.
- Criminal records checks and other appropriate screening checks will be completed.
- All completed records of screening procedures will be kept securely along with the original application.
- Volunteers are to be approved by nursery coordinators, ministry leaders or pastor responsible for children's ministry.
- All volunteers must repeat the criminal background checks every three years.

JCC reserves the right to reject any applicant for volunteer service or dismiss an existing volunteer for any reason, including, but not limited to, refusing or failing to complete screening; failing to provide requested information; providing information that is subsequently determined as false or misleading; sin or suffering issues that compromise the applicant or volunteer's ability to care for children; any criminal report or charge; obtaining information from references or criminal record checks that suggest that the applicant is not suitable to help with children.

Any volunteer, helper, staff or elder who learns of or has knowledge of misconduct by an applicant must report that knowledge to the nursery coordinator, ministry leader and/or the pastor who oversees children's ministry. He or she also must be personally responsible for any legal obligation that he or she may have to disclose such information to the authorities.

Training

All children's ministry staff and volunteers must attend JCC's children's ministry training before they are allowed to work with the children. Additional training sessions will be scheduled for existing volunteers to update them on policies and procedures. Full-time staff who do not have direct contact with children will receive training on child protection policies. Parents / guardians with questions about childcare training are welcome to attend these sessions.

Transportation of Children

Children may only be picked up by staff-approved volunteers who have parental / guardian consent. It is expected that there will always be a staff-approved chaperone in the car in addition to the driver if at all possible.

Protecting the Children As They Arrive and Depart

Arrival and Departure Times

Volunteers should be ready to accept children 15 minutes prior to the start of any session, so that parents / guardians have enough time to transition their children before the session begins. Parents / guardians are encouraged to pick up their children immediately after the conclusion of the session. In the event that a child is not picked up within 15 minutes of the end of the session, volunteers will ask the leader of the ministry to locate the parents.

Signing a Child in to Children's Ministry

Any parent of children birth to 5th grade, or staff-approved volunteer providing transportation, who would like his/her child to participate in a children's ministry program will sign the child in to the appropriate classroom, nursery, or activity when he/she arrives, granting permission for the child to participate in that Jubilee Children's event or program. The parent should also use this opportunity to note any allergies or special needs the child may have, as well as who the approved person to pick up their child will be.

For more details on our procedures for caring for children with allergies, please see the "Snacks and Food" section below. Leaders and 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, or anything else that might impair our ability to maintain a safe and secure environment for the children. A parent or designated guardian must be reachable via phone at all times while their children are checked-in.

Protecting the Children While They Are In Our Care

Two Volunteer Rule

For all children's classes and programs, at least two qualified, unrelated adult volunteers must be present in each classroom at all times. Related volunteers who are members may receive special approval by the ministry leader (or nursery coordinator) and pastor responsible for children's ministry.

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

Staff and volunteers must never leave a child alone in a classroom.

A staff member or volunteer may take children out of the nursery or classroom only for a compelling reason, such as to use the bathroom or in cases of illness, emergency, or evacuation.

Staff or volunteers should have one-on-one meetings with a child only in public places with the knowledge and consent of the parents. When a meeting on the church premises is necessary, it should be done with at least one other adult present, and held with the knowledge and consent of the staff and the parents.

Visibility

When children's classes or programs are in session, the interior doors and windows should allow for unobstructed views from the outside of everyone inside the room.

Child-to-Volunteer Ratios

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

- Children 0– 35 months: One adult for every four children
- Children ages 3-5: One adult for every eight children
- Children ages 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 ministry leader should be notified and asked for more volunteers in order to maintain these ratios. Whenever age-groups are combined, the ratio is determined by the age of the youngest child.

Diaper Changing and Rest Room Procedure

0 Months through 2 Years Old

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

2 Years Old through Pre-K

Parents / guardians should take their children to the restroom prior to signing them into a class. At check-in and drop-off, parents / guardians should let the volunteers know if their child is potty training. If at all possible, bathroom breaks will happen as a group so one adult is not alone with a child while in the bathroom area (includes room connecting the bathrooms). If this is not possible, preferably a female volunteer will take the child and at least one other child to the rest room (but no more than the adult child ratio allows). The volunteer should wait outside the closed restroom stall door unless the child requires assistance. 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 rest room shall go with another child of the same age and sex. A volunteer will accompany the pair to the rest room and wait outside bathroom 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.

5th Grade and Older

For 5th grade, any child needing to use the rest room 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.

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, 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 his behavior is endangering or upsetting other children). Correction should be discrete and never outside of the sight of others.

Steps of correction might include (depending on the age of the child): (1) removing the child from the situation or problem; (2) pointing out the problematic behavior; talking to the child about his/her sin and need for Christ; (3) praying for the child and redirecting to a new activity; (4) helping the child to reconcile with the offended children when appropriate. Volunteers should view misbehavior as an opportunity to introduce children to the gospel.

Children's ministry volunteers and staff members are strictly prohibited from using any form of corporal punishment such as slapping, kicking, punching, spanking, or hitting. They should never speak harsh words, insults, belittling comments, threatening words, or any other verbal humiliation to children.

If a child's behavior is uncontrollable or the child does not respond to the acceptable means of discipline indicated above, the volunteer should ask the ministry leader to call the parents. If the child assaults, harasses or bullies other children, misbehaves beyond minor correction, or has a pattern of misbehavior, the parents / guardians should be immediately called so the child can be removed.

Volunteers or staff 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 a children's ministry leader. Once a child is removed from children's ministry, reinstatement is possible at the determination of the pastor who oversees children's ministry and the ministry leader. A child may be reinstated if the risk of re-offense has been adequately reduced. For further information regarding discipline, please speak with the ministry leader in charge of your specific ministry.

Physical Touch Policy

Two types of relationships are important to consider: volunteer-to-child and child-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.) will 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.

- 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 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-to-Child

- No male or female under eighteen should ever be alone together while in children’s ministry.
- No inappropriate touching (as defined above and in the appendix) of any kind will be accepted. If inappropriate touching occurs the perpetrator will be removed from the ministry immediately and the child’s parents and elders of the church will be notified.
- 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.

Parents / guardians in the Classroom

While accompanying their children, a parent / guardian should be kindly but firmly dismissed if the parent / guardian is causing difficulty or presenting concerns for the welfare of the class.

Administering Snacks and Food for Nursery and Sermons for Saplings

A nut-free free snack and water will be offered to children through kindergarten (4s/5s classroom).

If a child should not be given a snack of this nature, the parent should do the following:

- Verbally notify the team leader on duty
- Note the nature of the allergy and how to respond to an allergic reaction in the appropriate spot on the sign in sheet

Ongoing Care for Children with Allergies

Parents / guardians of children with allergies should talk with the ministry leader about how to handle any allergic reactions. Upon parental request, allergy information about children of members may be posted in the child’s classroom.

If a parent desires to feed their child anything other than the provided snack at any time during the services, we ask that they administer the food personally to their individual child in designated locations such as the fellowship area in the basement.

Serving Snacks

Volunteers should always check each child’s allergy information before serving a snack. If instructions are not clear, no food should be given to the child without clarification from the parent/guardian. The volunteer may send to clarify with the child’s parent or guardian.

Security and Emergency Response

Emergency Situations

In emergency situations, if appropriate, 911 will be called to secure help and staff and volunteers will be summoned to the children's ministry room to assist with the emergency.

Accidents, First Aid and Medical Emergencies

The kitchen is equipped with basic first aid kits. In the event of life-threatening injury or illness, emergency medical services will be called and parents / guardians should be located and informed immediately. Volunteers should complete an Incident Reporting Form (Appendix #3) for all injuries, whether major or minor prior to leaving the premises on the day of the accident.

Evacuation Procedures

In the event of a fire, staff or a volunteer should call 911 and also assist all children in immediately evacuating the building. Staff will help keep parents / guardians away from the children's rooms. Parents / guardians should not report to the children's floors because they risk creating chaos and blocking the exit stairwells for children. Instead, parents / guardians will meet their children in the designated areas outside of the church building (sidewalks across the parking lot or across the street).

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 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 evacuate the building.

Step 2: Volunteers and Staff Communicate the Danger

- When it is safe to do so, whoever sees or hears the live threat should notify the ministry leader or staff about the problem. Staff or the ministry leader will then notify the remaining volunteers about the live threat.
- When it is safe to do so, staff or volunteer should call 911. Give the following information:
 - Location and the nature of the threat.
 - If shots have been fired tell police we have an "active shooter." MN Police are trained specifically to respond to an active shooter.

Step 3: Hide.

- If running is not a safe option, hide in as safe a place as possible.
- Close the door
- Barricade the doors 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 leader of ministry, the pastor who oversees children, 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 staff will first do a thorough check of all rooms to make sure the child is not in another part of the building. Volunteers will continue to search for the child until they are found. If the child is not found, the staff or elders will call police to secure further help. In the case of a kidnapping, staff or the team leader should call 911 to secure help from the police.

Parent involvement in Emergency Procedures

The pastor who oversees children and/or the leader of ministry will decide how and when to notify parents / guardians about security or emergency situations. Involving parents / guardians too early might cause unnecessary fears or panic. If an emergency does happen, parents / guardians will need guidance, pastoral care and counseling, so we rely on an elder or staff to walk with parents / guardians through difficult situations.

Healthy Child Policy

Communicable Disease Policy

In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases among the children, several guidelines are in place concerning disease.

1. Children with infectious diseases should be kept home until they are no longer contagious. If a child is exhibiting symptoms of illness such as fever, diarrhea, open skin lesions or blisters (as in chicken pox), or persistent nasal discharge, the parent should keep the child home.
2. Hand washing or use of anti-bacterial hand sanitizer must be a regular habit for both children and volunteers.
3. Toys and equipment should be washed and disinfected regularly.
4. JCC is dedicated to preventing the spread of disease among the children. Ministry leaders have the right to refuse a child on the basis of questionable symptoms. To prevent this, parents / guardians are asked to comply with the Healthy Child Policy guidelines:

A child should not participate in a class if and when any of the following exist:

- 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
- 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 appear ill during a class will be kept at the sign-in area with a volunteer while someone locates the parents.

Please inform the leader of ministry if your child appears to have contracted an illness while attending a JCC children's event so that other parents / guardians may be notified if necessary. If a child contracts an illness and has been in contact with other children while at JCC, it is the responsibility of parents / guardians to notify the leader of ministry.

Neither volunteers nor church staff may give any medication to any child unless specifically directed by the parents / guardians in writing to do so.

Parents / guardians of children with special needs are encouraged to contact the leader of ministry before signing the child into class. This allows the staff to assess the needs of the child and assist parents / guardians in transitioning their child into a classroom setting.

Universal Precautions

Universal precautions are very effective for protecting both the children and volunteers from illness. These methods are employed such that all human bodily fluids are treated as if they carried infectious diseases. Universal precautions are applicable in any setting and should always be used.

Important Points of Universal Precautions:

- Wash hands before and after any contact with bodily fluids, including wiping noses, changing diapers, cleaning vomit, and treating a blood spill.
- Always wear disposable gloves when dealing with any bodily fluids.
- Treat all soiled linen (i.e. sheets, clothing) as potential infectious agents.
- In rooms with children ages 23 months and below, remove toys that children have been mouthed from the general play area. Set them in the "Mouthed-Toys Bin". At the end of the session, disinfect the room with Lysol disinfectant spray.

Neglect & Abuse Prevention, Reporting & Response Definitions

What is child neglect and abuse? It is important to define our terms.

Child neglect is failure, whether intentional or not, of the person responsible for the child's care to provide for the child's basic needs such as adequate food, clothing, medical and dental care, supervision, and/or proper education, or the failure to protect the child from harm.

Child abuse is any recent act or failure to act resulting in imminent risk or serious harm, death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual harm or exploitation of a child by a parent or a caretaker who is responsible for the child's welfare.

Sexual abuse perpetrated by an adult is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child and an adult. This includes activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult or child. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered to be forced whether or not the child consents to it.

Sexual abuse perpetrated by a child is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between children, with or without the consent of either child, when one child has

power or perceived authority over the other child. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of any of the children.

Sexual exploitation includes forcing a child or soliciting a child for the purposes of prostitution; and using a child to videotape or photograph pornography.

Child sexual abuse is any form of sexual contact with a minor, non-touching offenses, or sexual exploitation of a minor. This is criminal behavior that involves children in sexual behaviors for which they cannot be personally, socially, and developmentally ready.

Child spiritual abuse the use of spiritual authority (the Bible or church authority) to emotionally, physically, and/or sexually abuse a child.

Prevention

JCC takes protection against and reporting of neglect and abuse very seriously. In an effort to prevent abuse and neglect, we:

- Educate and equip staff and volunteers about neglect and abuse
- Adhere to the procedures and guidelines as set out in this policy manual. Many of the policies are written to protect children, including the two adult rule, visibility guidelines, and diaper and bathroom policy.
- Train and screen volunteers prior to contact with any children. Screening includes filling out an application, getting feedback from references and requiring a criminal background check.
- Require all full-time staff to submit to a criminal background check within a month of joining staff.
- Repeat criminal background checks for full-time staff and volunteers every three years.
- Require volunteers and staff to be members or on the pathway to membership at JCC or a like-minded church or institution, approved by both the ministry leader (or nursery coordinator) and pastor responsible for children's ministry.

Any instance of suspected or observed abuse or neglect should be handled with the following guidelines.

Reporting of Neglect & Abuse

Point of Contact for Reporting

Anyone who suspects, witnesses, or has any reason to believe that a child has been or is likely to be neglected and/or harmed or threatened with abuse in any form should contact the leader of the ministry, the pastor who oversees children's ministry, or any elder at JCC. This reporting includes questionable behavior (overly flirtatious behavior, shoulder massages or other intimate acts, etc.) and/or possible offenses (volunteers observing actual abuse or possible evidence of abuse, like abrasions, lacerations, etc.).

Any person who serves as the initial point of contact is required to report all allegations and/or eye-witness accounts to the entire staff.

Guidelines for Mandatory and Permissive Reporters

In reporting of neglect or abuse to the authorities, it is important to distinguish between permissive and mandatory reporters. A mandatory reporter may include social workers, teachers and other school personnel, physicians and other health care workers, mental health professionals,

childcare providers, law enforcement officers, and domestic violence workers. Permissive reporters include anyone who is not a mandatory reporter, which will be the majority of JCC volunteers and staff.

The church has a moral and ethical obligation to report any neglect and abuse, so if the person suspects or witnessed or has knowledge of neglect or abuse, the person must talk to the point of contact for reporting—the leader of the ministry, the pastor who oversees children’s ministry, or any elder at JCC.

If the person who suspects or witnessed or has knowledge of neglect or abuse is a mandatory reporter, he or she must follow the guidelines and laws set out for mandatory reporters. He or she must fulfill his/her obligations to the law, including reporting to Child Protective Services or the police. At no time will the mandatory reporter be prohibited from reporting, even if their consultation with staff or leadership in the church results in a disagreement. If you are a mandatory reporter, it is important that you know whether you must report only in the context of your professional duties or whether the obligation to report also applies when you’re away from your professional duties or functioning as a volunteer at our church.

If the person who suspects or witnessed or has knowledge of neglect or abuse is a permissive reporter, they should contact the leader of the ministry and/or the pastor who oversees children, or any JCC elder. Because permissive reporters do not have professional training or experience in recognizing abuse, and because many of JCC’s volunteers are single adults with very little or no experience with children, they are required to report first to the leader of the ministry, the pastor who oversees children, and/or any JCC elder.

If reporting to Child Protective Services or police is deemed as warranted by the staff or the elders of JCC then that person must report. At all times, this person will be required to fulfill their obligations to the law.

District and federal laws authorize civil or criminal penalties or civil liability for failing to report a reasonable suspicion of child abuse. In addition, obstructing or interfering with an investigation of child abuse can result in criminal charges.

The church will not tolerate any retaliation against a reporter who has a reasonable suspicion of neglect or abuse.

More Guidelines on Reporting

When available, the following information will be documented and reported when helpful:

- The name, age, gender and address of the victim(s).
- The name, age, gender and address of the alleged perpetrator/offender(s).
- The nature, frequency, date(s) and location(s) of the abuse alleged to have occurred.
- The relationship between the victim and the alleged perpetrator/offender.
- Other evidence that supports the allegations (eyewitness, medical exams, confessions, etc.)

What should an individual do when they suspect, hear about or observe what appears to be a sign or symptom of neglect or abuse? Talk immediately with the ministry leader and/or the pastor who oversees children. The volunteer, staff, or elder should document this information on the Child Abuse Reporting form (see Appendix 2). After the ministry leader or the pastor who over-

sees children serve as an initial point of contact, they are required to report all allegations and/or eye-witness accounts to the JCC staff.

What should the ministry leader or the pastor who oversees children say or do with the child who is allegedly neglected or abused? Talk with the child and find out how the injury happened, though be careful of the level of detail you pursue. Asking for too much detail might be harmful for a child as it causes them to relive the abusive experience. If the child is describing what might be abuse, the objective is to obtain very general information that may help substantiate or alleviate the suspicion. Ask the child open-ended questions and get them to relay the event in their own words. Be careful to not suggest answers to the child and be sensitive to the fact that the child will be scared to tell the story, sometimes out of fear that it will upset adults or will not be believed. Write out a report that should include signs or symptoms observed, notations about bruises or injuries that are visible, a summary of the conversation with the child, and a description of any emotions expressed by the child. Do not ask the child to undress in order to show bruises or injuries that are not visible. Include all of this information on the Child Abuse Reporting form.

What should volunteers or staff report when they hear of a story of abuse? Note what the child said happened, who the child was with when it happened, where it happened, and when it happened. All of this should be documented on the Child Abuse Reporting form.

What should a volunteer or staff do when they observe an incident that may be abusive? Immediately intervene to protect the child; follow-up immediately with the ministry leader or the pastor who oversees children; write out a report about the incident; and act in accordance with all reporting laws. The volunteer or staff should keep an on-going log of the suspected person's behavior and anything else that is relevant concerning the person or the child or their relationship.

Response to Neglect & Abuse

JCC will ensure that a caring response is always provided to any suspicion or witnessing of neglect or abuse. Every allegation of neglect or abuse will be taken seriously. Proper guidelines for handling such complaints will be followed diligently and exhaustively. The victim(s) and victim's family will be cared for by the church in whatever way is available. Situations will be handled forthrightly with due respect for all parties' privacy and confidentiality.

Who Should be Notified?

The church will seek professional assistance when deemed appropriate by the staff and the elder board of JCC. Notification will be limited to those who need to know about the allegation and to those who can provide assistance in responding to neglect or abuse. The church may:

- Report suspicions or firsthand accounts or any knowledge of abuse to civil authorities. Full cooperation must be given to civil authorities.
- Notify church disciplers, counselors or medical personnel in order to obtain ongoing care for the victim(s) and victim's families.
- Notify an insurance agent, denominational leaders, or any other outside officials.
- Notify and consult with a church attorney.

How Will JCC Respond to Allegations, Admission or Criminal Conviction?

Allegations of neglect or abuse, admission of child abuse by staff, elder, deacon, volunteer, helper, or any member of JCC, or criminal conviction of abuse should:

- be reported to JCC's elder board. This disclosure of abuse is to be done regardless of the source of the information and should be conveyed to the elders board within 48 hours of the allegation being made or the admission of child abuse or criminal conviction.
- immediately result in removal of the alleged perpetrator or criminal offender from any activity or program involving children;
- result in immediate ineligibility of the alleged perpetrator or criminal offender from being granted approval to participate in any activity or program involving children until a full investigation has been made and a judgement by the elders has been made for future ministry involvement.

The staff and the elders of JCC will decide on other appropriate responses to allegations, self-admission of guilt, or criminal conviction, some of which may include:

- Contacting police or CPS.
- Notification of staff, deacons and any volunteers.
- Reporting allegations, self-admission or criminal conviction to the congregation during JCC's public services or members' meeting.
- Barring from any activities or church programs with children or the children's ministry areas at the church building.
- The staff will designate JCC members or staff, who will accompany the alleged perpetrator or criminal offender at all times while he or she is on JCC's property or anywhere in JCC's buildings. The alleged perpetrator will be notified of this requirement immediately after allegations are made known to staff or elders.
- Disciplining (removal from membership) of alleged perpetrator or criminal offender in a public members' meeting by the congregation.
- Barring alleged perpetrator or criminal offender from any and all church property.
- Suspension or termination of a paid staff member or volunteer position.
- Acknowledging to another organization about allegations against or termination of staff, an elder, deacon, volunteer, helper, or any member of JCC for misconduct or abuse against children.

If staff or JCC elders learns from CPS or police that allegations of neglect or abuse are being investigated or criminal charges have been filed, the JCC elders should:

- Be careful to not interfere with the investigation by police or CPS;
- Prevent contact between the accused and the accuser if appropriate;
- Remove the accused from activities or programs involving children, pending the outcome of the investigation.
- Appoint a member of the staff or the elder board to be a liaison with CPS and the police.

If an adult alleges an incident of neglect or abuse that happened when he was a child in a JCC program, then:

- Members of the staff should hire a trained mental health professional (preferably who is not associated with the church) who can provide the staff with an assessment. The victim will have to provide consent for such an interview and to have the assessment released to the staff in confidence.
- If the accused is no longer a part of JCC then the staff should consult with the elders and legal counsel to determine legal and moral need to report to police or CPS and any other organization that the accused may be a part of since his departure from JCC.
- Even if government officials are no longer bound to investigate due to a statute of limitations, JCC should respond to all allegations with the care and diligence traced out in this policy manual.

Confidentiality

The church, as well as permissive or mandatory reporters, will maintain confidentiality to the extent that it deems appropriate for the care of its members and consistent with applicable law. Allegations and suspicion should be reported only to the persons specified in this policy manual.

Response to Media

If appropriate, the JCC elders will respond to the media. Normally, one elder or member will be designated by the elder board to speak to the media on behalf of the church. A written statement should be distributed at the time of media disclosure. Great care should be taken to disclose only facts and not suspicion. Disclosed facts might include the nature of the abuse allegation and when the alleged abuse happened. Great care should be taken to protect the identity of all parties involved (the alleged abuser and victim). Alerting the media lets the alleged victim know that allegations will be taken seriously and gives other vulnerable members of the community a chance to be protected.

Sexual Offenders in the Church

When An Alleged or Convicted Offender Attends JCC or a JCC Related Activity

If JCC's elders or a children's ministry leader learn in advance that an alleged or convicted sexual offender is wanting to attend a JCC service:

- The staff must decide whether to admit him or her to church services or JCC 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 member of the staff (or a designated member of JCC) will contact the offender letting him or her know that he or she must be accompanied at all time while on JCC property or anywhere in JCC's buildings.

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

- The pastor overseeing children's ministry and ministry leader serving on that day should be notified.
- The staff will designate JCC members or staff, who will accompany the alleged perpetrator or criminal offender at all times while he or she is on JCC's property or anywhere in JCC's buildings.
- He or she must stay away from where the nursery and children's classes meet.
- The staff will work with members to come up with guidelines for JCC 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 will be notified in a public service of the church, most likely the members' meeting. JCC 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.
- The sexual offender should provide a member of the staff with the name of his/her probation officer. Someone from the staff will contact the probation officer and find out 1) more about

the underlying offense – offenders 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 JCC

If the offender seeks membership at JCC, the elders retain a right to refuse membership. If the elders offer membership to an 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 JCC elders and the members of the staff.
- A member of the staff contacting his/her probation officer to find out the underlying offense and the specific terms of probation.
- The staff doing 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 ministry leader that will be grounds for denying membership.
- Disclosure of information to parents / guardians 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, IM, texting, email, social media or any type of technology), social fellowship, physical contact, mentoring, baby-sitting, 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 staff will designate JCC members or staff, who will accompany the alleged perpetrator or criminal offender at all times while he or she is on JCC's property or anywhere in JCC's buildings 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 / guardians 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 or the staff deems 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 JCC (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.

APPENDIX 1: Inappropriate and Appropriate Touch

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.
- Kissing a child on the lips, neck, or anywhere else. A child should never be allowed to kiss a staff member, volunteer, deacon or another child on the lips, neck, or anywhere else. Children are also not allowed to kiss one another. (Note: A kiss is appropriate on the cheek when it is included in a greeting).
- 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.

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.

Some students, especially boys, enjoy roughhousing. However, this has the potential to be harmful. Before engaging in wrestling or similar activities with students, use these questions to guide your behavior:

1. When it's all over, will the youth feel more accepted and belonging or rejected and humiliated?
2. When it's all over, what would the youth's parents say if they were standing there?
3. Is this something you'd do to your own child? Better yet, how would you feel if someone else did this to your child?
4. Does this bring about more distraction, or get in the way of, what we are aiming to do in our ministry time?
5. Does this likely provide a situation where youth will be tempted to be out of control or hurt someone else, either intentionally or unintentionally?
6. Does this likely provide a situation where a mentor will be tempted to be out of control or hurt someone else, either intentionally or unintentionally?

APPENDIX 2: Child Abuse Reporting Form
(Confidential)

Instructions: If a volunteer, staff, deacon or elder suspect, hear about or observe signs or symptoms of abuse, please: (1) Talk immediately with the Director or Coordinator of ministry or the Pastor who oversees children; 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: _____

Check all that apply:

- Team Leader
- Notified Staff
- JCC Elder Notified

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:

APPENDIX 3: Incident Reporting Form
(Confidential)

Employee/Volunteer Reporter _____

Today's Date: _____ Time report written: _____

Type of Incident (check one of the following)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Child injury | <input type="radio"/> Property Damage |
| <input type="radio"/> Physical aggression by minor | <input type="radio"/> Verbal Aggression by minor |
| <input type="radio"/> Parental Complaint | <input type="radio"/> Allegation of Abuse by minor |
| <input type="radio"/> Other _____ | |

Date and time of incident: _____

Other employees/volunteers present at time of incident: _____

Incident being reported including names and ages of minors and names of adults:

(Continue on back if necessary)

Name & Signature of Reporter: _____

Name & Signature of Program Director: _____
Position _____ Date _____

Name & Signature of Ministry Leader: _____
Position _____ Date _____

- This form should be completed by employee/volunteer reporting the incident as soon as possible on the day the incident occurs.
- The form must be reviewed and signed by 2 levels of administration within 24 hours of completion of this report.
- Unless it would cause harm to the child, the Program Director needs to inform the youth's parent immediately
- A copy of this form needs to be placed in the file of each youth (or volunteer) that was involved in the incident.
- The original of this form needs to be placed in the appropriate file for Incident Report Forms.