



**Protecting our Children:
Reducing the Risk of Child
Sexual Abuse in our Church**

Policy and Procedure

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Table of Contents

Definitions and Terms	page 4
First Baptist Greenville's Policy	page 6
Principles of Supervision	page 7
Specific Examples for Bathrooms and Overnight Events	page 9
Specific Policy Regarding the Use of Social Media and Online Interactions with Minors	page 10
Specific Policies for Interaction with Children and Youth Outside of FBG Events	page 11
Reporting Procedures for Church Workers	page 12
Reporting Obligations for Church Workers	page 14
Appendices (or Resources)	
Suspected POC Violation Report	
Risk Evaluation Checklist	
Understanding Child Sexual Abuse	
Chaperone Reminders	
Registered Sex Offender Church Participation Program	

Definitions and Terms

ACS - Automated Church Software - church membership database.

Allegation - Any reported incident that involves an accusation of abuse or harassment.

Child - Individual under the age of 18.

Child Sexual Abuse - *“Any sexual activity with a child – whether in the home by a caretaker, in a day care situation, a foster/residential setting, or in any other setting, including on the street by a person unknown to the child. The abuser may be an adult, an adolescent or other child, provided the child is four years older than the victim.”* (National Resource Center on Child Sexual Abuse, 1992).

Church Participation - Including, but not limited to, Sunday School involvement, small group participation, general service and volunteering, or consistent worship attendance.

Church Member - An individual whose membership status in ACS is “church member”.

Clergy - An employee of the church who has been ordained.

DSS - Department of Social Services - local agency to which reports of abuse may be made; responsible for child welfare.

Employee - A church worker who is compensated by the church for their services.

General supervision - care and oversight of children appropriate for low risk activities where the potential for a serious accident or injury is low. The primary focus of general supervision is on the group at large, rather than on specific individuals or actions. Common examples of general supervision at a church include teaching a Sunday School class, monitoring youth during a meal, or supervising a volleyball game.

Incident - Any instance or pattern of behavior that is the basis for filing a report with the POC Administrator.

Minister - An employee of the church who serves in a pastoral capacity, but has not been ordained.

POC - Protecting Our Children - the policy by which FBG attempts to minimize the risk of abuse and create a safe and healthy environment for all of God’s children.

POC Management Team - POC Administrator, Preschool Minister, Minister to Children, Minister to Youth, Spiritual Formation Minister, Senior Minister.

Redundancy - The condition of more than one risk reduction principle or safety measure in place at one time.

Specific supervision - care and oversight of children that is more direct and focused, and that requires higher levels of understanding, training, skill, observation, and feedback.

Violation - Any incident or pattern of behavior that goes against policy, but which does not involve abuse.

Volunteer - A church worker who is not compensated by the church for their services.

Worker - Any representative of the church, paid or unpaid, who is responsible for the supervision of minors or responsible for areas where minors might be.

Statement of Policy

First Baptist Greenville (FBG) is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment where children can learn about and experience God's love. It is the goal of the church to provide appropriate supervision for all church sponsored activities involving children and to minimize risk in all church spaces where children might be. Therefore, all church employees¹ and all church volunteers² who work with children in church sponsored programming must be approved prior to beginning their duties and responsibilities. The approval process requires that each condition below be verified and recorded by the POC Administrator.

1. **Applicant is listed in ACS (church database) as “church member”, “watchcare member”, “Sunday School member”, or “family member” in the same household as a member (volunteers only).**
2. **Active church participation for at least six months has been confirmed by a staff member (volunteers only).³**
3. **Appropriate background checks are approved.**
4. **Applicant has completed the required online POC programming.**
5. **Character references provided by the applicant (minimum of three) are acceptable.**
6. **All required paperwork has been completed and signed by the applicant.**

If any one of the above conditions has not been satisfied, the applicant will not be approved for employment with the church or to volunteer with children until the POC Administrator has completed all steps.

Additional recertification including, but not limited to, background checks and character references will be conducted as often as deemed necessary by the POC Management Team. POC approval automatically expires at the end of three years with no recertification.

POC policy updates may be made by the POC Management Team at their discretion. POC approved adults will receive an email when policy changes are made. A current policy is available on the church website.

Registered sex offenders will not be approved for POC but are able to participate in worship according to the guidelines of our Registered Sex Offender program (see Appendix).

¹ The minimum age for employment at FBG is 16.

² Volunteers who work with children must be at least 6th grade. Elementary age children may assist in the presence of a parent.

³ Active church participation includes, but is not limited to, Sunday School involvement, small group participation, general service and volunteering, and consistent worship attendance.

Principles of Supervision

Principle 1: As risk increases, supervision should also increase.

Key point: *General supervision is appropriate for low risk activities.*

- As the risk increases, the supervision should become more direct and focused, and require higher levels of understanding, training, skill, observation, and feedback.
- Supervisors must understand the risks that are present, know how to reduce those risks, engage in direct and focused observation, and provide necessary feedback or intervention to avoid accidents or injuries.
- Consider the ratio of church workers⁴ to children for all activities.

Example:

-While general supervision is appropriate for monitoring children eating a meal, specific supervision is needed for children cooking a meal.

Principle 2: Risk increases as isolation increases.

Key point: *Avoid isolation with any child or children.*

- Treat any activity that is located off of church property, or any activity that is located on church property, but at a time or location that is isolated, as higher risk.

Example:

-If you find yourself alone with a child, try to locate another POC approved adult to join you. Also ensure that a door is open, a window is in the room or line-of-sight or line-of sound can be obtained.

-POC approved adults are encouraged to make themselves available as a second adult if they observe a lack of adequate supervision.

Principle 3: Risk increases as accountability decreases.

Key point: *Accountability involves justifying one's actions.*

- The personal character and integrity of the adult worker: evaluated through FBG's screening process.
- The number of people present: having multiple adults present for any activity decreases the risk of isolation and helps maintain a balance of power and control.
- The degree of openness and approval associated with an activity: Church leaders should obtain advance approval before any activity can be sponsored in the name of the church or on the church property.

Example:

-All children events operate under an open door policy: any staff member or parent has the right to observe any event at any time, with or without advance notice.

Principle 4: Risk increases when there is an imbalance of power, authority, influence, and control between a potential abuser and a potential victim.

Key Point: *Children are vulnerable to sexual predators due to an imbalance of power related to age, size, strength, control and authority.*

⁴ Church worker includes paid staff and volunteers unless otherwise noted throughout the document.

- Risk increases when there is an age separation of five years or more.
- Abuse is less likely to occur when a balance of power exists.
- Adequate policies and an adequate number of adults (preferably unrelated) lower the risk.

Example:

-A senior in high school is not recommended as a roommate with an eight grade student because of this imbalance of power.

-Two or more adult Sunday school teachers in a classroom minimizes the imbalance of power.

Principle 5: Risk increases when adults who have not been POC approved are present.

Key point: *Adults who are not approved to work with children should not be allowed to remain in the area of the activity.*

- Since there is no family obligation or ministry related reason for the adult to be there, risk would unnecessarily increase if the adult were allowed to remain.
- In low risk situations where general supervision is applied, the parent may stay to support or observe their child as long as they do not work with any other children or assume a leadership role in any way.
- Any POC approved adult (leader or chaperone) should feel comfortable in asking an unfamiliar person about their presence at an event.

Example:

-A non-POC approved parent may want to stay with their child for all or part of an activity if they feel their child needs support.

-A non-POC approved adult may want to observe a practice; but this adult should not be leading or coaching in any way.

Specific examples for Bathrooms and Overnight Events

Bathroom assistance for preschoolers and children

- If a bathroom is not attached to the supervised classroom take children to the bathroom in groups if possible.
- Ensure the restroom is not occupied before allowing children in the restroom.
- Line-of-sound instead of line-of-sight is maintained while children are using the facilities. (ie. The worker should be able to hear the children not see them.)
- Bathroom doors should remain open.
- If workers need to assist children, stall doors must remain open.

Overnight events

Segregating adults reduces risk of adult on child abuse but increases the risk of child on child abuse.

All housing arrangements will be submitted to the POC Administrator prior to the event.

Dormitory or hotel style sleeping rooms:

Adults should have separate sleeping quarters but still be able to supervise youth rooms.

Children of same gender and similar ages should room together.

Privacy for showering/bathroom use should be maintained.

A minimum of two adults should be present for bed and room checks.

Bunkhouse style sleeping rooms:

Two adults of the same gender will be housed with children in this setting.

Privacy for showering/bathroom use should be maintained.

Privacy and modesty should be maintained in a bunkhouse setting.

Specific Policy Regarding the Use of Social Media and Online Interactions with Minors

As many children and youth now communicate through phones, social media, and other forms of technology, it is important that our staff and volunteers maintain healthy boundaries with students that leave no room for doubt that there is transparency and the communication is appropriate. Staff and volunteers will observe the following guidelines when it comes to communicating with children or youth:

- Any one-on-one DM “direct messaging” with students is discouraged as is private electronic communication on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, instant messaging, texting, etc. Private message chains are prohibited, and staff and volunteers will need to recognize this and then include supervisors or parents in any of these situations.
- Replying to any communication (emails, text messages, DMs,) from children and youth by a staff or volunteer is appropriate ONLY when copying in a colleague or the child’s parent/guardian.
- Communicating through “organizational group pages” on Facebook or other public platforms in a public forum is acceptable but it is not appropriate to have harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating comments on any of First Baptist Greenville’s social media platforms.
- Staff and volunteers should be cautious about what they post on their personal social media websites particularly if any of their friends or followers is a minor.
- Staff and volunteers ideally should not send requests to “follow” or “friend” students they do not already know and have an established relationship with. Even for students that staff and volunteers know, it is recommended that they allow students to initiate the request.

Specific Policies for Interaction with Children and Youth Outside of First Baptist Greenville Events (mentoring, coaching, babysitting, etc.)

First Baptist Greenville strongly recommends that staff and volunteers do not have outside contact with children and youth. If off-site contacts are unavoidable, some are more appropriate and consistent with Protecting Our Children. Others are not.

Examples of interactions that are appropriate would be any event where parents and guardians are *aware* and *present* of the interaction such as a sports function or home gatherings or home lessons. Inappropriate interactions would include taking a child or youth on an outing without the parent's or guardian's written permission, visiting a child or youth at their home without a parent or guardian present, entertaining a child or youth at their home without the parents or guardians present.

If an outside contact is unavoidable, it is safest and best practice to make sure that a staffer's supervisor is aware that there is contact and permission from the parent or guardian has been obtained.

Reporting Procedures for Church Workers

What to do when a violation of POC that is not abuse is reported or observed

1. Inform your direct supervisor and/or POC Administrator of the violation.⁵
2. Fill out and file a Suspected POC Violation Report⁶ with POC Administrator.
3. Per the Report of Suspected POC Violation, POC Administrator meets with the POC Management Team to follow up on the report. A follow-up plan will be established and recorded.

What to do if abuse is reported, suspected, known, or observed

1. Inform your direct supervisor and/or POC Administrator of the abuse.
2. Report abuse to DSS or to local law enforcement.⁷
3. Fill out and file a Suspected POC Violation Report with POC Administrator.
4. Per the Report of Suspected POC Violation, POC Administrator meets with the POC Management Team to follow up on the report. Any other supervisory staff will also be included. A follow-up plan will be established and recorded to include assigned communication needs.
5. Follow advice of local law enforcement/DSS moving forward.

Staff Responsibilities once a report has been made to DSS

1. Do not confront the accused. Never interview the victim or attempt an in-depth investigation. This should be left to professionals who are trained and familiar with these kinds of situations.
2. Staff will report the incident to the church insurance company, attorney and any others who need to be included in the follow-up. Do not try to handle the situation without professional outside assistance.
3. If an external investigation is determined necessary, FBG should work with law enforcement/DSS as necessary.
4. Document all efforts at handling the incident.
5. Do not prejudge the situation. Take the allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and the victim's family. Extend whatever pastoral resources are needed. The care and safety of the victim are the first priority.
6. Treat the accused with dignity and support. If the accused is a church worker, that person should be relieved of his or her duties until the investigation is finished.
7. The church will designate a person(s) to be the spokesperson(s) for the church to the media. That person and that person only, will communicate with the press. Every precaution will be taken to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.

⁵ Discrete and confidential reporting of suspected abuse is critical to abuse prevention. Church workers should understand that reporting reflects caring and is not disloyalty.

⁶ Any and all Suspected POC Violation Reports are retained by POC Administrator for duration of employment and/or church membership. Administrative Assistant – Personnel & Office services will also retain copy of Report and any additional documentation for paid employees.

⁷ Contact information: DSS - 1-800-422-4453; Law Enforcement 9-1-1.

What to do if an allegation is not litigated by the courts

If the incident is not litigated, the church must decide steps forward for the employee or volunteer. These steps are not meant to prove guilt or innocence of the accuser or of the accused, but are meant to assist in determining disciplinary action for the employee or volunteer. The allegation may be:

- Substantiated – this means there is adequate evidence to uphold the allegation
- Unsubstantiated – this does not mean the allegation is false; only that there is not enough evidence to prove or disprove the allegation
- False – this means there is adequate evidence to disprove the allegation
- Malicious – this finding would indicate there is adequate evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been an intentional effort to deceive
- Unfounded – this would reflect cases where there is no evidence or basis which supports the allegation being made. It might indicate that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw.

State Compliance for Mandatory Reporting

In South Carolina certain persons are required by law to report to the County Department of Social Services or to law enforcement agency in the county where the child is found when in the person's professional capacity the person has received information that a child has been abused or neglected. 20-7-510 (A) of the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976 as amended provides as follows: (A) A physician, nurse, dentist, optometrist, medical examiner, or coroner, or an employee of a county medical examiner's or coroner's office, or any other medical, emergency medical services, mental health, or allied health professional, member of the clergy including a Christian Science Practitioner or religious healer, school teacher, counselor, principal, social or public assistance worker, substance treatment staff, or childcare worker in a childcare center or foster care facility, police or law enforcement office, undertaker, funeral home director or employee of a funeral home, persons responsible for processing films, computer technician, or a judge must report in accordance with this section when in the person's professional capacity the person has received information which gives the person reason to believe that a child has been or may be abused or neglected as defined in Section 20-7-490. If you are one of such persons, you have mandatory reporting obligation separate and apart from your duties to report set forth in this booklet. As a church worker, you must report any abuse or suspected abuse to the appropriate department head or ministry leader.

If you are a member of the clergy, you may be exempt from reporting "when information is received from the alleged perpetrator of the abuse and neglect during a communication that is protected by the clergy and penitent privilege as defined in Section 19-11-90." (20-7-550). Section 19-11-90 limits the priest-penitent exemption to "regular or duly ordained minister, priest or rabbi." All members of the clergy are advised to consult with legal counsel as to whether you must report or whether you are exempt because of the privilege.

Any and all mandated reporters must report to the proper authorities. The mandated reporter making the report should indicate other mandated reporters who are aware of the situation to include them in the initial report. This lessens the risk of duplicate reporting. In most instances, the Department of Social Services (DSS) receives the report.

Reporting Obligations for Church Workers

FBG will not take any action in retaliation against any church worker who, in good faith and with a genuine belief that child sexual abuse has occurred, brings or voices a complaint pursuant to this policy or otherwise opposes child sexual abuse. In addition, FBG will not tolerate any retaliatory acts by other individuals.

Retaliation is a serious violation of FBG policy and applicable law. If you believe you have been subjected to retaliation in violation of this policy, you should report your complaint immediately to your ministry area leader/supervisor. Individuals will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination if they are found to have retaliated against an individual because such individual (1) in good faith and with a genuine belief that child sexual abuse has occurred, made an honest complaint about such conduct, (2) participated honestly and in good faith in any investigation into a child sexual abuse complaint, and/or (3) in good faith opposed acts of child sexual abuse.

Mutual Accountability – A Church Obligation

A sound reporting procedure promotes accountability among church workers. Questionable or inappropriate behavior often precedes acts of child molestation. Church workers should be trained to identify inappropriate behavior with children. Workers should be encouraged to warn each other when questionable behavior is displayed. Questionable behaviors should be reported to the proper individuals. Such a policy, if implemented with care and sensitivity, can help to avoid actual instances of abuse or molestation.

Personal Responsibility – A Moral Obligation

Workers may not report a suspected incidence of child sexual abuse for a variety of reasons. Some may want to avoid embarrassing situations. Who wants to be a tattle tale? A fear of possible personal and legal recrimination may exist. Discrete and confidential reporting of suspected abuse is critical to abuse prevention. Church workers should understand that reporting reflects caring and is not disloyalty.

Volunteer Responsibilities

The report or accusation should be made to the appropriate staff member or supervisor. The staff member or supervisor will then decide the appropriate response and enlist the help of appropriate legal and social authorities. Never interview the victim on your own. This can lead to contaminated testimony.

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Appendices (or Resources)

Suspected POC Violation Report

Risk Evaluation Checklist

Understanding Child Sexual Abuse

Chaperone Reminders

Registered Sex Offender Church Participation Program

Suspected POC Violation Report

Date of Report: _____

Confidential

Reported By:

Name _____ position _____
address _____ city/ST/zip _____
email _____ phone _____

Information about Alleged Victim: (include as much information as is known)

Name _____ age & gender _____
Parent 1 _____ address _____
email _____ phone _____
Parent 2 _____ address _____
email _____ phone _____

Person Suspected of Misconduct: (include as much information as is known)

Name _____ Relationship to victim _____
address _____ city/ST/zip _____
email _____ phone _____

Description of incident(s)/suspicion(s) of abuse:

Date _____ Time _____

What happened? Where did it happen? Include as much information as you witnessed.
(Use additional pages if needed.)

Name and contact information of any person(s) involved and/or present and not named above.

I certify that the information reported above is true, and will be kept confidential.

Reported By signature _____

Department Head signature _____

Date by which Reported By will receive a follow-up report: _____

For Office use only:

If reported to DSS or Law Enforcement, what was their recommendation? (Include date, time, name of contact, and contact info)

Actions taken following report? Who was involved? _____

What is the follow-up plan? _____

Does anyone else need to be notified? _____

If so, what is the plan for notification? _____

Will the situation need monitoring? _____

If so, how will monitoring be done? _____

Please include any additional information which may be helpful to the investigation (use additional pages if needed):



Risk Evaluation Checklist

Ways to decrease isolation and lower risk

1. Increase the number of POC approved adults present
 - a. Key question: *Who will be present for this activity?*
 - b. Action step to lower risk: *Increase the number of POC approved adults present to lower isolation and increase accountability.*

2. Examine the time and location of each activity.
 - a. Key question: *Does this activity occur at a time or location that causes it to be isolated?*
 - b. Action step to lower risk: *Change time or location so that isolation decreases, or increase level of accountability.*

3. Monitor and secure unoccupied space.
 - a. Key question: *Do we currently secure and properly monitor our facilities to prevent unauthorized use?*
 - b. Action steps to lower risk: *Appoint a monitor to check buildings and restrooms that should be unoccupied while other activities occur on church property. Instruct teachers to make sure that the rooms are left unoccupied at the end of class. Have a designated person lock doors and secure specific rooms and buildings at the end of their use.*

Ways to increase accountability and lower risk

4. Screen all individuals who work with children.
 - a. Key question: *Have church workers been approved through the POC process?*
 - b. Action step to lower risk: *Ensure church workers have been approved.*

5. Increase the number of adult workers.
 - a. Key question: *Does a worker have unsupervised access to a child or extended unsupervised access to a group of children?*
 - b. Action steps to lower risk: *Have two or more workers (preferably unrelated) present.*



Risk Evaluation Checklist

6. Randomly observe activities.
 - a. Key question: *Are activities open or closed to public observation?*
 - b. Action steps to lower risk: *Conduct frequent random observation of activities. For example, appoint a church worker to monitor activities throughout the building. Remind church workers to maintain line-of-sight and line-of-sound. These reminders may include reminders of spaces with windows and staying in view of any video equipment that may be available.*

7. Review training and supervision.
 - a. Key question: *Do workers know what is expected of them regarding appropriate and inappropriate behavior? Do they understand and abide by church policies both on and off of church property?*
 - b. Action step to lower risk: *Prior to events, church workers review and sign a Chaperone Reminder.*

Ways to maintain a balance of power

8. Take into account age, maturity, and influence when pairing up children.
 - a. Key question: *Do higher risk situations currently exist that promote an imbalance of power among children?*
 - b. Action step to lower risk: *Remind church workers to maintain a balance of power as much as possible in the pairing of children for any overnight activity, going to the restroom, or any other activity in which they may be alone for a period of time.*

The answers to these questions enable risk assessment. By analyzing these risk factors, a risk profile will emerge. Then, church leaders and workers must weigh the benefits of the activity against the level of risk. If the risk is too high, the program must be modified to lower risk. **Parents expect that the church has taken every precaution to fulfill its goal of providing a sacred, safe and secure environment for all the children entrusted to us.**

Key Point: *The risk factors and principles discussed here provide a basis for supervising activities involving children to reduce the risk of child sexual abuse. Churches should train workers to understand these principles and to apply them as they plan and supervise activities.*

Understanding Child Sexual Abuse

What Is Child Sexual Abuse?

The precise legal definition of child sexual abuse or molestation varies from state to state, but in general includes any form of sexual contact or exploitation in which a minor is being used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator. In a more common sense, child sexual abuse is:

“Any sexual activity with a child – whether in the home by a caretaker, in a day care situation, a foster/residential setting, or in any other setting, including on the street by a person unknown to the child. The abuser may be an adult, an adolescent or other child, provided the child is four years older than the victim.” (National Resource Center on Child Sexual Abuse, 1992)

1. Child sexual abuse may be violent or nonviolent. All child sexual abuse is an exploitation of a child’s vulnerability and powerlessness in which the abuser is fully responsible for their actions.
2. Child sexual abuse is criminal behavior that involves children in sexual behaviors for which they are not personally, socially and developmentally ready.
3. Child sexual abuse includes behaviors that involve touching and non-touching aspects.
4. Types of abuse that involve touching include:
 - Inappropriate kissing
 - Fondling
 - Oral, genital, and anal penetration
 - Intercourse
 - Forcible rape
5. Types of sexual abuse that do not involve touching include:
 - Verbal comments
 - Pornography
 - Voyeurism
 - Obscene phone calls
 - Exhibitionism
 - Allowing children to witness sexual activity
6. Statistics
 - The full extent of child sexual abuse in our country is not known.
 - In a year, about one in 12 children are sexually abused (Finkelhor, Ormrod, Turner, & Hamby, 2005). The possibility that the number is higher is likely because the greatest percentage of these cases go unreported. 1 out of 3 girls and 1 out of 5 boys will be sexually abused before they reach age 18. (The Advocacy Center. “The Facts About Youth Sexual Abuse.” Accessed February 21, 2014).

Child sexual abuse occurs in all demographics, racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and religious groups. 90% of child sexual abuse victims know the perpetrator in some way. 68% are abused by a family member. (U.S. Department of Justice. “Sexual Assault of Young Children as Reported to Law Enforcement: Victim, Incident, and Offender Characteristics.” Accessed February 21, 2014).

Definition of Sexual Misconduct

Sexual misconduct has been identified as any “sexualized behavior” within a “ministerial relationship.” First Baptist Greenville strictly prohibits such misconduct.

1. A ministerial relationship exists between a person providing ministry and the recipients of that ministry.
 - a. Clergy, youth advisors, Sunday school or Bible School teachers, and musicians all provide ministry, whether volunteer or paid.
 - b. Recipients of the church’s ministry may be parishioners, counselees, students, employees and volunteers.
2. Sexualized behavior encompasses a broad spectrum or continuum of behavior including gestures and speech as well as physical contact. Sexualized behavior is not limited to sexual intercourse. Sexualized behaviors that might be acceptable in an intimate personal relationship are not acceptable within the context of a ministerial relationship.
3. It is unethical, wrong, inappropriate, or unacceptable behavior for any person engaged in the ministry of First Baptist Greenville (whether lay or ordained, employed or volunteer) to engage in sexualized behavior with anyone with whom there exists a ministerial relationship.
4. Every reasonable effort will be made to bring any misconduct to an end.
5. Every report of misconduct will be taken seriously.
6. All persons involved in an allegation will receive compassion, sensitivity, and concern.
7. In so far as possible, the identity of all persons involved in a report of misconduct will be maintained in confidence. Information related to the report will be shared as required by the policy and procedures in order to investigate and decide an appropriate response to the reported misconduct.
8. The right of all people to obtain justice in an open and fair hearing will be respected.

The Effects of Child Sexual Abuse

“The personal violation of child sexual abuse causes the victim to experience many losses...including loss of childhood memories, loss of healthy social contact, loss of the opportunity to learn, loss of bodily integrity, loss of identity and self-esteem, loss of trust, loss of sexual maturity, and loss of self-determination. All of these personal violations mean that victims of child sexual abuse lose the child’s right to a normal childhood. In adulthood it may also mean the loss of the capacity to appreciate sexual intimacy as nurturing, holy, and loving.” (The Report on the Winter Commission, 1990, Vol. 1, p. 118)

Child sexual abuse robs children of their childhood and can potentially scar its young victims for life. Too often in the past, the effects of abuse were minimized or dismissed. Children were viewed as being resilient. Recent research has shown that children can suffer significant pain from even a single abusive incident. Church members must be aware of the pain and long term suffering that can accompany such abuse. Abused children can display a wide range of negative symptoms in the aftermath of abuse. Abuse can result in abnormal fears, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), aggressive behavior, sexual “acting out,” depression, diffused sexual identity, and

poor self-esteem (Kendall-Tackett, Williams, and Finkelhor, 1991). The incidence of sexually transmitted disease is also a possible outcome.

The degree of damage depends upon several factors including the intensity, duration, and frequency of the abuse. In addition, the *relationship* of the perpetrator to the child matters. If the abuser is a known and trusted authority figure in the child's life, the degree of impact increases dramatically.

An additional burden for the parishioner or client is a sense of being betrayed by God and the Church. This betrayal by one's pastor represents a major obstacle to the parishioner or client's personal faith. The damage to one's spiritual life done by this experience is often profound and long term (Marie Marshall Fortune, *Sexual Violence: The Unmentionable Sin*, p. 107).

Consequences of child sexual abuse can plague victims into adulthood. Outcome studies of adult supervisors of child sexual abuse suggest the following affects: sexual dysfunction, eating disorders, substance abuse, promiscuity, disassociation from emotions, and possible perpetration of sexual abuse on others (Geffner, 1992). **When church leaders, pastors, and respected congregational workers perpetrate the abuse, lifelong religious confusion and deep feelings of enmity toward God and the Church can occur.**

The Profile of a Child Molester

Bob sat dejectedly before the church board. His broad shoulders slumped as he tearfully retold his story. Bob has been sexually molesting his thirteen-year-old daughter for the last two years. This activity may have gone undetected except that Bob tried to abuse one of his daughter's girlfriends while chaperoning a Sunday school activity. The young girl reported the incident to her parents and Bob was apprehended. The church leaders hearing this confession sat in disbelief. How could Bob, a successful businessman, husband, father of three children, and respected church worker commit such actions?

Who is the typical child molester?

- Some church leaders assume that molesters are "strangers wearing trench coats" or "dirty old men."
- These stereotypes not only are inaccurate, but they dangerously contribute to a false sense of security.
- Over ninety percent of the time, the abuser is someone known to the victim.
- Most abuse takes place within the context of an ongoing relationship.
- 20 percent of sex offenders begin their abuse before the age of 18.
- Child abusers often are married and have children.
- If abuse occurs in your church, a respected member will most likely be the molester.

Most of the time the abuser is someone known and trusted by the victim.



Protecting Our Children Reminders for Chaperones

As you prepare to chaperone this event with preschool/children/youth of First Baptist Church, please remember these guidelines from Protecting Our Children:

- Don't be alone with preschoolers/children/youth.
- Don't be isolated with preschoolers/children/youth.
- If you do find yourself alone with preschoolers/children/youth, move to an open space or leave a door open allowing others to have line-of-sight and/or line-of-sound.
- Be watchful of interactions among young people with other young people or adults.
- Should a preschooler/child/youth disclose to you that they have been abused or you see something that makes you think they have been abused we must report the incident to DSS or Law Enforcement. Your supervising staff member should also be informed and can help you make the call.

Chaperone commitment:

I confirm that I have completed the Protecting Our Children process required by First Baptist Church.

I have read, understand and will follow the above guidelines.

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Registered Sex Offender Church Participation Program Policies and Procedures

- 1) All registered Sex Offenders must submit their church participation request directly to the pastor. A Participation Application and personal interview are mandatory.
- 2) Any Registered Sex Offender attending any service or other on-site activity without applying and interviewing with the pastor will be asked to leave church property until the application and interview are completed and participation is approved. Anyone refusing to leave the church property on request will be considered a trespasser.
- 3) Registered Sex Offenders approved following the application process will be assigned five (5) shadows. A shadow is a church member appointed by the pastor, who agrees to accompany a Registered Sex Offender when he or she is on the church campus.
- 4) Registered Sex Offenders shall comply with the following rules:
 - a) Notify at least one assigned shadow before coming on campus and have that shadow agree to serve as his or her assigned shadow while on church property for that visit.
 - b) Meet the assigned shadow at the appointed location and time, and never leave the physical presence of the shadow while on church property.
 - c) Attend church functions in only the following approved areas: Sanctuary, Chapel, Fellowship Hall, and Adult Education classrooms.
 - d) Avoid restricted areas, which include but are not limited to Nursery Hallway and Classrooms, Preschool Hallway and Classrooms, Children’s Hallway and Classrooms, AYMC Youth area and Classrooms, playgrounds, any other area frequented primarily by children, storage rooms, closets, resource and supply areas, and HVAC mechanical spaces.
 - e) Restroom usage requires the assigned shadow to enter the restroom to assure no Preschooler, Children or Youth are present.
 - f) Never converse with a Preschooler, Child or Youth without his/her parent or guardian present.
- 5) Any deviation from these Policies and Procedures will result in removal from the church campus. The church shall have the right to permanently ban that individual from the church campus and seek a restraining order to enforce that ban. The church will also contact law enforcement if circumstances warrant.
- 6) Registered Sex Offenders who are members of First Baptist Church will have full voting rights as any other member. However, they will not be eligible to hold any office within the church; nor will they be authorized to represent the church in any capacity, whether on or off church campus.
- 7) Registered Sex Offenders will not contact their assigned shadows for any reason other than notification of attendance at a church service or other on-site activity.
- 8) Registered Sex Offenders must provide their own transportation to and from the church campus, and are not permitted to ask for transportation from shadows, any other church member, or any church attendee other than a relative.
- 9) Any Registered Sex Offender who violates this agreement may be 1) subject to re-application and interview to participate in services and other activities on the campus of First Baptist Church, Greenville, SC; 2) subject to any other recourse or remedy the law allows.

I acknowledge that I have received FBG’s policy for Registered Sex Offender Church Participation. I understand it, and I agree to abide by it.

Applicant: _____
signature printed name

Witness: _____
signature printed name

Date: _____



Registered Sex Offender Church Participation Program Participation Application

Full Name: _____

Any other names used: _____

Address: _____
street city/state/zip

Cell Phone: _____ Other Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Social Security #: _____

Occupation: _____

Employer: _____

Attached SLED Profile: Yes No

Church Member: Yes No If yes, date joined: _____

For Office Use Only:
Senior Minister Comments: _____

Approved Yes No Comments: _____



Registered Sex Offender Church Participation Program Attendance Agreement

_____ I have read the Policies and Procedures for On-Campus Participation, have had an interview with the Senior Minister, and have been assigned a list of shadows.

_____ I understand First Baptist Church's need for the Policies and Procedures for On-Campus Participation, and agree that they are reasonable conditions for my participation. I agree to abide by the Policies and Procedures at all times.

_____ I understand any violation of this agreement could result in: 1) a re-application and interview to continue any on-campus participation; 2) any other recourse or remedy the law allows.

_____ I understand that I am to contact one shadow prior to coming on-campus and arrange a location to meet my shadow upon arrival; while on campus I know the Restricted Areas and agree to avoid them.

_____ I agree that if I am unable to arrange for a shadow to accompany me while I am on the church campus, I am not to enter the church property. I understand and agree that under the church's Restricted Sex Offender Church Participation Program, I am not to participate in any church activity without a shadow present.

_____ I understand I am not to have contact with any preschoolers, children, or youth of First Baptist Church, Greenville.

Restricted Areas (No Access)

- ___ Nursery Hallway and Classrooms
- ___ Preschool Halls and Classrooms
- ___ Children Halls and Classrooms
- ___ Youth Halls and Classrooms
- ___ Playground areas
- ___ Storage Rooms/Closets
- ___ Resource/Supply Areas
- ___ HVAC Mechanical Spaces
- ___ Media Center

Approved Areas (accessible when accompanied by Shadow)

- ___ Sanctuary and Narthex
- ___ Adult Education Hallways and Classrooms
- ___ Restrooms (Pre-use inspection by Shadow to confirm children are not present)
- ___ Church Office
- ___ Fellowship Hall
- ___ Chapel



Registered Sex Offender Church Participation Program Attendance Agreement

Assigned Shadows:

1. _____ Phone: _____
2. _____ Phone: _____
3. _____ Phone: _____
4. _____ Phone: _____
5. _____ Phone: _____

Other Notes: _____

I acknowledge that I have received FBG's policy for Registered Sex Offender Church Participation Program **Policies and Procedures** and the Registered Sex Offender Church Participation **Attendance Agreement** including restricted areas and approved areas. I understand it, and I agree to abide by it.

Applicant: _____
signature printed name

Witness: _____
signature printed name

Date: _____



Registered Sex Offender Church Participation Program Shadow Instructions

The Registered Sex Offender Church Participation Program is organized to allow spiritual participation to persons convicted of an offense requiring registration on the South Carolina Sex Offender Registry. As Christians, we are not to judge or bring shame upon a convicted individual. This program is an effort to bring mercy and grace to such individuals, and allow a religious community to accept and work with them while protecting the welfare and privacy of all members and attendees.

Thank you for serving as a Shadow for:

Name: _____

Address: _____
street city/state/zip

Cell Phone: _____ Other Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Your duties and responsibilities:

- 1) Your assigned registered sex offender is required to notify you or another shadow that they will be attending a church function.
- 2) If you are so contacted by your assigned registered sex offender, arrange a location on-campus to meet. The meeting place needs to be a major entrance in a very public area, away from Nursery/Preschool/Children/Youth areas.
- 3) You will shadow your assigned person by staying with them at all times while they are on campus. If they move from one area of the campus to another, you should be aware, follow, and approve of their actions.
- 4) Be aware that certain areas of the church campus are off-limits to registered sex offenders, even when accompanied by a shadow. These Restricted Areas are listed in the Policies and Procedures for On-Campus Participation.
- 5) You may report any suspicious activity to the Senior Minister/POC Administrator, or in extreme emergency situations, by calling 911 and having the individual removed from campus.
- 6) If campus removal is necessary, try to arrange a silent response to avoid disrupting church activities. Arrange a certain place for the intervention to take place. If the person you shadow leaves the campus due to suspicion or violation, notify the Senior Minister/POC Administrator immediately. As a shadow, you may be asked for a statement in regard to the situation/violation of the agreement and Participation Program.



Registered Sex Offender Church Participation Program Shadow Instructions

- 7) For use of restroom facilities, it is the shadow's responsibility to check the restroom and confirm there are no Preschool/Children/Youth utilizing the facility. Once any children leave the area, you can allow entrance to the area and shadow from the hallway. Be sure no children enter the restroom during that time.
- 8) At the close of the church activity, escort the individual you have shadowed to their vehicle or off campus. Confirm that they leave the church campus.
- 9) If you are unable to shadow an individual upon their request, he or she is responsible for calling the next shadow on the list. **Registered Sex Offenders are not to participate in any church activity without a shadow.** If you observe a Registered Sex Offender attending a church function without a shadow, please report the violation of the participation agreement to the Senior Minister/POC Administrator as soon as possible.
- 10) A copy of the Registered Sex Offender Participation Agreement and a list of shadows will be available in the POC Administrator's office.
- 11) Act discreetly to the extent possible. Remember we do not want to bring shame upon any individual. Our goal is to bring mercy and grace to Registered Sex Offenders and allow the Church to accept and work with them while protecting the welfare and privacy of all Church members and attendees.

REMEMBER THAT IN SERVING AS A SHADOW, YOU ASSUME A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY TO YOUR CHURCH AND THE PERSON YOU SHADOW. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU COMPLY WITH THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AT ALL TIMES. THANK YOU FOR SERVING IN THIS MINISTRY.

I acknowledge that I have received the Registered Sex Offender Church Participation Program and agree to serve as a shadow. I further agree to comply with the Shadow Instructions and the Policies and Procedures for On-Campus Participation by Registered Sex Offenders.

Shadow: _____
signature printed name

Witness: _____
signature printed name

Date: _____