



Youth Ministries Policy Manual

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POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Faith operates on a two-year rotation. **The deadline for both years is the last Sunday of September. Youth workers whose active status has lapsed will not be permitted to work until they complete the necessary steps to become up to date.**

- Year 1 (odd): Youth workers must read the updated Youth Policy Manual and submit their name through the link in the document or email akent@fbctaylors.org to verify that this has been completed.
- Year 2 (even): Youth workers must renew their MinistrySafe Training, authorize Faith to run a new background check on them, and read the updated Youth Policy Manual (and verify that this has been completed as stated above).

New youth workers will complete the requirements initially and then get on the rotation for the Youth Policy Manual the same year and the MinistrySafe and background check the following year.

I. Prerequisites for serving in the Youth Ministries¹

- a. Potential workers must be members of Faith for at least six months and faithful in attendance.
 - One exception is made for those who join as associate members. Associate members do not have to wait until they have been a member for six months. However, they will not be allowed to fill a supervisory role of any kind. All other screening requirements apply to associate member applicants and must be completed before they may begin serving. An associate member who joins Faith as a full member after six months of associate membership does not have to wait an additional six months before serving in a leadership role.
 - A second exception is made for mothers who join Faith with nursery-age children. All mothers who put their child in one of the nurseries are required to serve on the rotation of nursery workers. To fulfill this requirement, new-member mothers may begin serving in the nurseries as soon as the requirements have been completed, minus the six-month wait. Mothers who delay or decline completing the screening requirements may be disallowed from using the nurseries until the requirements have been completed.
 - A third exception is made for members who leave in good standing and return as members in good standing. They may begin serving immediately upon rejoining Faith and after they have updated the youth worker requirements.
- b. Complete a “Youth Worker Information Questionnaire” (adults) or an “Information Questionnaire” (teens) and turn it into the Church Office (in a sealed envelope).²
- c. Read and agree to abide by the Faith’s “Youth Ministries Policy Manual” (this document).
- d. Those who are age 18 and older must additionally:

¹ In this policy manual “Youth Ministries” refers to all ministries involving minors, from the nurseries to the youth group. “Child/Children,” “Young Person/People,” or “Youth” refers to any minor participating in the “Youth Ministries,” from the nurseries to the youth group. Any reference to “Faith” means Faith Baptist Church.

² These are available on the church website under “Ministries” > “Youth Worker Requirements” or by request from the church office.

- Successfully pass a criminal background check.³
- Successfully pass a reference check (included in the Youth Worker Information Questionnaire).⁴
- Successfully pass MinistrySafe’s sexual abuse awareness training course.⁵

Note 1: Teens may begin serving in any children’s ministries once they reach 9th grade. 7th and 8th grade teens may serve but only with a parent. Nursery: Girls may begin serving in nursery during the worship service (AM and PM) only once they reach 7th grade.⁶

Note 2: Those who have a prior conviction of any kind of sexual misconduct or abuse—whether standing or expunged—will not be allowed to serve in any of the youth ministries at Faith Baptist Church at any time.

II. Supervision

- Only approved Youth Workers may help in any class or nursery. Permission must be granted from the Ministry Leader before a non-approved worker may be allowed to help or visit in the classroom unless that person is a parent of a child in the class. Parents are never to be restricted from accessing their child’s class or activities.
- Two adults over the age of eighteen are to be present wherever a ministry is taking place with children. In the event that there is only one adult in a classroom setting, another adult nearby should be notified, and the door left open for the entire class time. Youth workers are to never be alone with a child (this includes trips to the bathroom) unless they are in plain sight of other adults.
 - An exception to this rule is made only for the nursery, where an approved teen worker may serve alongside an adult in place of a second adult worker.
- Parental permission is to be obtained when having overnight activities. Except with written parental permission, no less than two adults of the same gender are to stay overnight in a room with a child. There are to be no mixed-gender sleeping arrangements, nor are adults or children to enter the sleeping area of the opposite sex. (See Appendices/Forms for the Overnight Activity Permission Form.)
- Parental permission is also to be obtained when a youth worker is spending time with a young person apart from church functions.
- Youth workers are not to transport young people in their personal vehicle without parental permission. When transporting a young person of the opposite sex, another adult over the age of 18 must be present for the duration of the ride.
- At the end of an activity, two adults must wait with the young people until the last

³ Applicants must submit their information through the appropriate link found on Faith’s website under “Ministries” > “Youth Worker Requirements.” They will be prompted to give consent for this initial check and will be prompted for consent to any subsequent checks in the future.

⁴ Applicants will include names and email addresses for references in the Questionnaire.

⁵ Applicants will receive access to this video via email after turning in the Questionnaire.

⁶ Teen girls may not serve in nursery during the Growth Group hour or on Wednesday night unless they serve directly with a parent.

young person has been picked up.

- g. Before taking a class outside or moving locations, workers must notify the appropriate Ministry Leader in advance.

III. Bathroom Procedures

- a. No less than two adults of the same gender are to be present whenever a child needs to be taken to the restroom. Workers should enlist a helper from another classroom, if needed, to assist with taking a child or children to the restroom.
- b. At no time are men allowed to assist in the ladies'/girls' restroom, nor will ladies assist in the men's/boys' restroom, except in the case of a medical emergency.
- c. When taking a group to a smaller restroom that requires some children to wait outside in the hallway, the door is to be propped open to provide an added measure of accountability and to allow for supervision of the entire group. Only a man may assist the boys while another worker (man or lady) supervises the children outside the bathroom. Only ladies are allowed to both assist and supervise the girls.
- d. In cases where younger children require assistance with their clothing (i.e. belts, pants, zippers, pull-ups, etc.) the worker must assist them in plain view of the accompanying adult while also exercising caution and discretion.

IV. Playground Guidelines

- a. When weather permits, the playground may be utilized except during Hidden Treasure Christian School functions.
- b. Children younger than five years old are not to play on any of the Monkey Bars due to the continuing development of their bodies and their susceptibility to injury.
- c. As in the classroom, no less than two adults are to be present at any time. Only approved youth workers are allowed to help with the children, except for parents of children in the class.
- d. Before taking the group outside, the Ministry Leader must be notified.

V. Pick Up/Drop Off

- a. Infants through 6th graders must be checked in by a parent or legal guardian for every service that a child attends. Children will be dismissed only to a parent unless the parent has authorized other adults or older siblings (at least 16 years old for the Children's Ministry Wing and at least 18 years old for the nursery) by submitting an authorization form. *Children will be dismissed only to the people who have been authorized by the parent to pick up.*
- b. Whenever there is a question about the validity of any adult who is seeking to pick up a child, workers must wait until the child's parent or legal guardian has been contacted and any uncertainty has been removed.

- c. If an adult insists on access to a child outside these restrictions, the worker should enlist the help of the nearest safety team member.

VI. Teacher/Student Interaction

- a. When demonstrating affection, workers must exercise discretion. Inappropriate behavior will result in immediate dismissal. (See Appendix A for affection guidelines.)
- b. Any and all suspicious activity must be reported to the appropriate Ministry Leader and/or the Youth Pastor immediately.
- c. Physical force is not permitted in any form unless necessary to prevent a child from hurting himself or other children. There is to be no corporal punishment administered by a youth worker under any circumstances.
- d. Photos or videos may not be taken of young people without parental permission. Likewise, no photos or videos of young people may be posted on any social media without parental permission.
- e. Because of the association with bribery or favoritism, youth workers must exercise caution and forethought when giving gifts to young people. Youth workers should seek to maintain a class-wide policy; otherwise, notify the child's parent(s) to explain why their child was the recipient of a particular gift.
- f. All youth workers who communicate individually with anyone under 18 years are required to copy the child's parent on that communication.

VII. Teaching

- a. Publications, other than those associated with the provided Sunday School or with Faith Baptist Church in general, are not to be distributed or sent home without permission from the appropriate Ministry Leader.
- b. Videos or audio are not to be shown or played without first being approved by the appropriate Ministry Leader.

VIII. Sexual Abuse Reporting Procedures

- a. Reporting witnessed acts of sexual abuse
 - If possible, the witness should intervene immediately so that the action is not allowed to continue.
 - The witness is to report the incident immediately, following steps 2 through 8 under letter *b* below.
- b. Reporting allegations of sexual abuse
 - 1) Every allegation given by a child should be treated as sincere and legitimate until shown to be otherwise.
 - Listen calmly and carefully, taking note of the child's behavior.

- Do not panic or overreact to the information being disclosed.
 - Do not criticize or suggest that the child is not telling the truth.
 - Be careful not to lead the child's response by putting words in his/her mouth.
 - Respect the child's privacy by not discussing the situation with others.
 - Do not deny or minimize the allegation and do not blame the child for what has happened.
 - Never promise confidentiality; always answer such requests by affirming that only those who need to be informed or involved will be notified.
- 2) The youth worker who received the allegation from a child is to contact the Youth Pastor immediately (within 2 – 3 hours) by phone or in person; *email or other written communication is not sufficient.*
 - 3) The Youth Pastor and the youth worker who received the allegation will together contact the appropriate authorities within 48 hours of the initial report from the child. The youth worker will then fill out the "Incident Report Form" (see Appendices/Forms for the Incident Report Form) and turn it in to the Youth Pastor.
 - 4) When appropriate, the Youth Pastor and Senior Pastor will together bring the situation to the attention of the child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
 - 5) Further action will be taken only as directed by the appropriate authorities or by the direction of the Senior Pastor.
 - 6) If the accused person is a youth worker, he/she will be temporarily relieved of all Youth Ministry duties until the matter is resolved.
 - 7) The youth worker who received the allegation is not to discuss the situation in any way with anyone else inside or outside of the church congregation. All questions about the situation are to be directed to the Youth Pastor. Violation of this policy will result in dismissal of the youth worker from any and all Youth Ministries.
 - 8) Only Faith's designated spokesman (chosen by the Senior Pastor) may speak on behalf of the Church to the media. All requests for information by anyone in the media are to be directed to this spokesman. Violations of this policy will result in dismissal from any and all Youth Ministries.

Note: Every effort must be made to follow these policies. If an emergency or unavoidable circumstance arises which compromises a youth worker's ability to follow all these policies, he/she must exercise wise judgment, contact the appropriate Ministry Leader immediately, and stay in public view with the child(ren) under his/her care.

IX. Handling Policy Violations

- a. When an individual is observed in violation of the policies outlined in this policy manual, the witness(es) is/are to lovingly confront the individual and remind him/her of the applicable policies.

- b. If a youth worker continues to violate policies, the witness should report the violation(s) to the appropriate Ministry Leader.
- c. The Ministry Leader is to personally confront the individual and discuss the situation with him/her. The Ministry Leader must then report the matter to the Youth Pastor.
- d. Further violations after being confronted by a Ministry Leader will result in dismissal of the youth worker from the respective ministry.

X. Injuries and Medical Assistance

- a. Because of the risk of blood-borne pathogens and other complications, great caution must be exercised when assisting with a medical injury or illness, especially when it involves bodily fluids. Whenever possible, youth workers should seek the help of medical personnel or someone who has been trained in First Aid. Medically-trained church members are on call during services and can be notified by an usher or a safety team member. If the situation is truly an emergency, 911 should be contacted first.⁷
- b. Gloves should always be worn when dealing with blood or any body fluid.
- c. Every effort must be made to contact a parent or legal guardian before administering medication of any kind.
- d. An “Incident Report Form” can be found with each of the First Aid Kits and must be filled out by the person who administered the treatment. The report should be turned in to the Youth Pastor. A report is not needed when simply applying a Band-Aid.

⁷ Each building on the campus is equipped with a First Aid Kit.

APPENDICES/FORMS



Guidelines for Discretion in Showing Affection

The following lists are not meant to be exhaustive, but to serve as a guideline. As always, common sense and discernment should be exercised.

1. Appropriate Behavior:
 - Giving or receiving a short hug
 - Putting a comforting arm around the child briefly
 - Carrying a younger child to a parent
 - Nurturing touches to the head or shoulders
 2. Questionable or Inappropriate Behavior:
 - Long embraces
 - Back rubs
 - Tickling
 - Kisses of any kind
 - Touching private areas
 - Slapping on the buttocks
 - Sitting on a child's or teenager's lap
 - Older children or teenagers sitting on an adult's lap
 - Corporal punishment (see point VI. c. above) or discipline that inflicts pain on the child (i.e. hitting, slapping, spanking, shaking, squeezing, biting, etc.)
-



Discipline as a Part of the Discipleship Process

Discipline is not merely the enforcement of rules. It is the shaping, developing, and controlling of a person's faculties and powers. We want to train our children how to, under the control of God's Spirit, discipline their body and guard their heart. We cannot address behavior merely; we must also address the heart. This kind of training requires exercising ourselves in the right-thinking process as well as the right behavior as we seek to help children practice right thinking and right behavior.

As we work with children, we must disciple them rather than seek to merely control them. There are several things we can do that will give us more opportunities for discipleship.

1. Be prepared ahead of time (plan your work and work your plan):
 - Arrive on time.
 - Maintain a neat, attractive ministry environment.
 - Keep the class time activities moving.

- Know the characteristics of your age group.
- 2. Have Enough Trained Staff (two adults, and generally a ratio of one adult to every four or five children)
- 3. Help Children Learn Self-Discipline:
 - Develop an atmosphere of love and acceptance (not fear and duty).
 - Provide meaningful activities.
 - Be realistic and consistent in your expectations.
 - Focus on positive actions.
- 4. Discipline Aids:
 - Helpers should set a good example. They should be among the children and give their attention to the children, not to the other staff.
 - Commend children for doing right, for accomplishment and work well done. Reward good behavior.
 - Give smaller assignments so that they can succeed.
 - Ask children questions to keep them involved.
 - Sit next to a child to give him or her individual attention.
 - Discipline children individually, not in front of the whole class.
 - Helpers should take initiative to discipline. Don't wait for the teacher/leader up front to get involved.
 - Show your love by your actions as well as your words. Be firm but kind in discipline, treating children equally, justly, and fairly. Be careful to communicate love in your tone and body language.
- 5. Maintain a Sense of Humor:
 - Remember that children are not adults. Be realistic in your expectations for their maturity level.
 - Keep silliness from becoming too disruptive or out of control, but do not overreact to it.
- 6. Discipline Procedure:
 - Set boundaries, expectations, and consequences from the very beginning. Have realistic expectations for the group.
 - Request that the child change his/her behavior (tap his/her shoulder, shake your head, ask him/her individually).
 - Deal with the child individually:
 - Have the child tell you what he/she said or did.
 - Ask the child if he/she violated a Biblical principle.
 - Discuss why it was unacceptable behavior according to Biblical principle.
 - Redirect the child into God-pleasing behavior.

- Let the child experience the consequences of his/her behavior.
- Consider why the misbehavior may be happening. When talking with the child one-on-one, you may discover the reason for the problem:
 - The child is having too much fun and simply needs to settle down. Do not allow children to become out of control.
 - The child is bored and needs to be engaged.
 - The child is hurt and trying to seek revenge.
 - The child is too young to know what acceptable behavior is.
 - The child has unmet needs:
 - Personal attention
 - Physical needs (too hot, cold, tired, hungry, etc.)
 - Lack of consistent discipline at home

C

Potential Signs and Behavioral Indicators of Abuse

(Collected from various legal studies)

Most children do not tell in words that they have been sexually assaulted. Often the reason they don't tell is that they think no one will believe them or they are afraid of what might happen. They may also lack the vocabulary to talk about it. They may, however, tell by their actions.

Remember, these are only potential, common indicators. They do not necessarily mean that a child has been abused. Some of these indicators can be attributed to other ordinary circumstances.

Groups 1 (infancy – kindergarten) and 2 (school-age – pre-adolescence):

- Fear of restrooms, showers, or baths
- Specific knowledge of sexual facts and terminology beyond their development age
- Fear of disrobing in front of particular persons
- Moodiness, excessive crying
- Bed wetting (those already potty trained)
- Unusual need for assurance of love
- Regressive behavior (fantasies and/or infantile behavior)
- Aggressive or violent behavior toward other children
- Clinging behavior
- Passive or withdrawn behavior
- Indirect hints or statements about abuse
- Uncharacteristic hyperactivity

- Development regression
- Explicit sex-play with other children

Groups 2 (school-age – pre-adolescence) and 3 (teen years):

- Being uncomfortable around someone previously trusted
- Wearing multiple layers of clothing
- Constant, unexplained anxiety, tension, or fear
- Frequent tardiness or absence from school
- Eating disorders (bulimia, anorexia, obesity)
- Reluctant to go home after school or expresses a desire to live elsewhere
- Nightmares on a regular basis
- Abrupt personality changes
- Changes in sleeping habits
- Lack of self-worth, low self-image
- Poor peer relationships
- Role reversal, overly concerned about siblings
- Self-destructive behavior
- Running away
- Withdrawn, less verbal, depressed, or apathetic
- Sexually acting out with other children
- Seductive toward peers and adults

Group 3 (teen years):

- Suicidal gestures or attempts
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Self-mutilation (cutting, etc.)
- Extreme hostility toward a parent or caretaker
- Self-conscious behavior, especially regarding the body
- Chronic depression
- Social isolation
- Defiance or compliance to the extreme
- Friends tend to be older
- Promiscuity, prostitution, sexual abuse of younger children

Form – Overnight Activity Permission

FBC Overnight Activity Permission Form

Date(s) of Activity: _____

Name of Minor: _____

Location of overnight stay: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Person in charge: _____

Cell phone: _____

One other adult providing supervision: _____

Cell phone: _____

Rooming arrangements (i.e., house, hotel rooms, tents) and how the group will be divided:

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian: _____

Date: _____

Form – Medical Incident Report



MEDICAL INCIDENT REPORT

Please be as thorough as possible. If you need more room, you may use the other side of this form. This report, and any accompanying notes, should be turned in to Pastor Stockard and Pastor Jordan.

Today's date: _____ Person filing report: _____

Date of incident: _____ Time of incident: _____

Person(s) involved: _____

Location of incident (Atrium, Bridge, Playground, etc.): _____

Description of the incident/injury: _____

Treatment given: _____

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES INFORMATION

Contacted Ministry Leader/Youth Pastor Yes / No If yes, name: _____

Contacted Parent/family member Yes / No If yes, name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Form – Non-Medical Incident Report



NON-MEDICAL INCIDENT REPORT

Please be as thorough as possible. If you need more room, you may use the other side of this form. This report, and any accompanying notes, should be turned in to Pastor Stockard (reports regarding youth ministries should also be turned in to Pastor Jordan).

Today's date: ____/____/____ Person filing report: _____

Are you reporting as an eye-witness to this event? Yes / No

How did you find out about this alleged misconduct? _____

Date/time of alleged misconduct: ____/____/____ _____

Location: _____

Ministry activity during which this event took place (Children's Church, youth event, etc.): _____

Name of the accused person: _____

Name of the alleged victim: _____

Nature of the alleged misconduct: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

To be completed only by the Youth Pastor.

Reviewed: Date of Review: _____

Reported to the Authorities? Yes / No

Contact Person: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

SIGNATURE VERIFICATION

Please submit your name through [this link](#) or email akent@fbctaylors.org to indicate you have read this updated manual. Thank you!