Child Protection Plan

Revised January 27, 2019

<u>First Baptist Church</u> 411 North Warren Winslow, Arizona 86047 (928) 289-2484

Introduction

Our goal in preschool, children and youth ministries is to provide a safe, secure, loving environment for every child and to assure parents can safely and comfortably leave their children with us. For this purpose, we have developed a policy that reflects our desire to secure this environment.

Our first line of defense in preventing child abuse is the application, screening and interview process required of all staff and volunteers before being placed permanently in a classroom. All people who work with preschoolers, children and youth, regardless of their area of ministry, are expected to adhere to the following policies. Failure to do so may require the individual's removal from the ministry position.

First Baptist Church considers the preschoolers, children and youth who attend this church to be a precious resource. The future of this church and our community rests upon their development and potential.

First Baptist Church also recognizes the potential for hazard to our congregation from convicted sexual offenders who may wish to worship with us. We also recognize a potential hazard from individuals who may come on the church property other than for attendance at services. This policy will include procedures for addressing special considerations with these individuals both within and without our services.

Recognizing physical, sexual and emotional abuse endangers their future and shatters the innocence and purity of childhood, First Baptist Church is making every effort to provide a safe, secure environment for all preschoolers, children and youth.

Summary Statement

First Baptist Church is committed to the nurture and protection of all human beings, particularly those who are physically or emotionally vulnerable such as children. Thus, First Baptist Church will not tolerate physical, sexual or emotional abuse in our church. First Baptist Church will act decisively and assertively to protect preschoolers, children and youth and to help victims as well as perpetrators find personal and spiritual healing.

POLICIES

I. Children and Youth Worker Enlistment and Selection

- a. All Workers must have been church members long enough to have become thoroughly acquainted with the policies, doctrines and expectations of the church.
- b. All Workers must have a completed application on file in the church office. All files will be available only for authorized personnel (program leaders and screening teams) and shall be kept in a secured file.
- c. All Workers must read the Child Abuse Prevention and sign a statement acknowledging receipt and adherence to the policy. **This will include attendance at required training.**
- d. Adults who have been convicted of sexual, physical or emotional abuse should not volunteer their service in any church sponsored activity or program for preschoolers, children or youth.
- e. A minimum of two adult workers (preferably not related) or one adult worker and one helper high school age or above should be at every activity.
- f. All preschoolers, children or youth Workers (paid, paid staff and volunteers) will fill out a written Worker application (including references), attend a CPP Training class, and give permission for a criminal background check to be conducted for all applicants. Possible factors in the background check that can restrict an individual's opportunity to work with children or youth, for example, are conviction of any sexual offense or conviction of any other violent offense.
- g. The screening team will check references, review the results of the background check, and conduct interviews of applicants. The screening team will consist of two or more of the following: Deacon Chairman, Sunday School Director, Discipleship Training Director, Director of the Children's Ministry program in which applicant has expressed an interest, Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor. This will serve to evaluate, as is reasonably possible, the suitability of the individual for ministry to preschoolers, children or youth. If for some reason it is determined an individual is unsuitable for ministry to preschoolers, children or youth. every effort will be made to find another area of ministry at First Baptist Church that is more appropriate for the applicant.
- f. Youth Helpers who began as a Youth who still wish to work with the children will be subject to a background check at 21 years of age. If they leave Winslow for an extended length of time (4 months or longer) they will need to submit to background check to work with the children and youth.
- g. All helpers and workers over the age of 21 shall submit to a background check.
- h. All helpers and workers shall attend a CPP Training Class every 5 years as a refresher.

i. Background checks may be done periodically on individuals who are Workers or Helpers.

II. Children and Youth Helper Enlistment and Selection

- a. Preschoolers, children or youth Helpers will be asked to fill out the Helper application prior to serving. If a Helper is under high school age, he/she will not be counted as one of the two individuals (two workers or one worker and one helper) required present at all activities. Great discretion must be exercised in the selection of younger helpers after consultation with others well acquainted with the younger candidate. Although church membership is not required for Helpers, Helpers must be professing Christians, be active in this or some other evangelical church, and must express an understanding and acceptance of the Mission Statement of First Baptist Church.
- b. All Helpers must have a completed application on file in the church office. All files will be available only to authorized personnel and shall be kept in a secured file.
- c. All Helpers must read the Child Abuse Prevention Policy and sign, acknowledging they will adhere to the policy. They will attend a CPP Training Class, submit references, and give permission for a criminal background check conducted for all applicants. Helpers under the age of 18 will not have a background check preformed. Possible factors in the background check that can restrict an individual's opportunity to work with children or youth, for example, are conviction of any sexual offense or conviction of any other violent offense.
- d. Adults who have been convicted of sexual, physical or emotional abuse should not volunteer service in any church sponsored activity or program for preschoolers, children or youth.
- e. A minimum of two adult Workers (preferably not related) or one Worker and one Helper should be at every activity.

III Restroom Procedures

- a. A single Worker or Helper should never take a young child into the restroom. Always be accompanied by another adult or other children.
- b. When taking young children to the restroom, it is recommended the workers/helpers should only take children of the same gender whenever possible. Minors should have as much privacy as possible. Enter a bathroom stall only when absolutely necessary to assist the minor, keeping the door open.
- c. Diapers are only to be changed in designated areas and in the presence of other Workers/Helpers.

IV Classroom Procedures

- a. At least two adult Workers (preferably not related) or one Worker and one Helper will be present. No child should be left alone with a Worker/Helper unless in plain view. If a child arrives before other members of your teaching team arrive, prop open the door and/or blinds so the interior of the classroom is visible. This is irrespective of the number of children in the classroom.
- b. Window blinds are to be kept open at all times unless it is necessary to darken the room for proper viewing of videos or films.
- c. Workers/Helpers should refrain from having young children sit on their lap while the room is darkened or when other Workers are not present.
- d. Leaders of each organization should have extra approved Workers available to cover classes as needed.
- e. Report all unknown persons wandering around or engaging in any suspicious activity to a pastor or other church leader. If an unknown person will not justify his presence, police will be called immediately.
- f. It's understood that there may be brief periods of time when one Worker or Helper is alone in the room with children because of restroom needs, emergencies, etc. These occasions should be as infrequent and as brief as possible

V Approved Activities

- a. Activities or outings outside of regularly scheduled classes or childcare must be approved by the pastor or the appropriate church program leader.
- b. Workers and Helpers should never drive a preschooler, child or youth home without another adult accompanying them unless parental permission has been received or the appropriate church program leader has been notified.
- c. Workers and Helpers should avoid all situations which would require them to be alone with a preschooler, child or youth.
- d. Counseling is seen as an important role for both Workers and Helpers but must be done with great discretion. Privacy is sometimes essential for effective communication with a child or youth, but counseling should be done whenever possible within view of other adults while remaining out of hearing of others. If at all possible, schedule counseling conferences in the church office when other adults are in the general area.

VI Overnight Activities

- a. Overnight activities must have advance written authorization from a parent as well as a pastor or appropriate church program leader.
- b. Chaperons and adult sponsors must be approved church Workers or Helpers.

VII Clarifications

a. In all sections where "Worker/Helper" is used as a description, two persons are required and at least one must be an adult Worker.

- b. The Children's Ministry Team is responsible for implementing the overall Child Protection Plan. All groups or programs that work with preschoolers, children or youth will cooperate and follow this policy.
- c. The Church Council will appoint one person to set up a confidential file of Workers and Helpers.

POLICY PROVISION SPECIFIC TO YOUTH MINISTRIES

The church recognizes that Workers and Helpers with Youth, grades 7 - 12, are, in many respects, functioning differently than those working with younger children. Typically, it may be necessary for Youth classes to be conducted by a single Worker. On overnight youth trips, camps or retreats, it is present practice for one same-sex adult to be in each sleeping room occupied by Youth. This will be acceptable practice in these situations. HOWEVER, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD A WORKER BE ALONE WITH A YOUTH OF EITHER THE SAME OR OPPOSITE SEX WHETHER IN A CLASSROOM, VEHICLE, OR OVERNIGHT LODGING. (See Paragraph V, section (d) above in reference to counseling situations.)

On occasion, the parent of a youth asks to accompany his/her son or daughter on trips. This is acceptable, space permitting, but that parent, unless approved under the conditions of this policy as either a Worker or Helper, is not to be placed in the position of chaperone, counselor or teacher with any other youth than his/her own child.

Reporting Child Abuse

I. Definitions of Child Abuse

First Baptist Church defines preschoolers, children or youth abuse as acts of mistreatment or neglect against minors (those under 18). Abuse of minors in this policy falls into four major areas.

A. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is any non-accidental injury to a minor by an adult or older care giver (ARS 13-3623). This could include blows, shaking, or assaults which cause injury to the child. Disciplinary spanking by a parent which does not cause physical injury to the minor is not considered physical abuse. Spanking, however restrained, should **not** be used by Workers/Helpers for discipline at any time.

- B. Neglect is the <u>chronic</u> failure of a parent or guardian or other caretaker to provide a minor with adequate food, clothing, medical care, protection and supervision.
- C. Emotional Abuse

Emotional Abuse is the chronic creation of an emotional environment that produces exceptional emotional stress. This is rarely alleged and even more

rarely acted upon by Child Protective Services but extreme instances may require attention.

D. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is the exploitation of a minor for the sexual gratification of another person. In those instances where both parties are minors, the determination of action to be taken is based on relative ages of the minors. This determination should be made by appropriate authorities. Sexual abuse includes intercourse, sodomy, oral sexual contact (ARS 13-1405-6); fondling (ARS 13-1410); prostitution (ARS 13-13-3212); the production of pornography (ARS 13-3552); exhibitionism, and the deliberate exposure of a minor to pornography or sexual activity (ARS 13-3553,3556).

II. Procedural Responses to Alleged Child Abuse

For legal and moral reasons it is imperative the following reporting procedures are carefully followed. These procedures apply to all Workers and Helpers who minister to preschoolers, children or youth at First Baptist Church. (Nursery workers, Children's Programs Workers and Helpers, Sunday School teachers, Sunday School helpers, Discipleship Training Workers and Helpers, Youth Sponsors, etc.)

Note: The Children's Ministry Team and chairperson shall be appointed by the Church Council upon recommendation of the Ministry Opportunity Team. Children's Ministry Team members will serve three year rotating terms The Children's Ministry Team and any pastor who screens them or who screens preschoolers, children or youth Workers or Helpers will be subject to the same requirements as those who work with preschoolers, children or youth.

When a First Baptist Church staff member, Worker or Helper suspects that a preschooler, child or youth under his or her care has been abused, the following steps shall be taken.

Step 1 The Worker shall <u>maintain appropriate confidentiality</u>. The incident is discussed with others on a "need to know" basis only.

At this point, the worker does not question the child. The worker must avoid putting words in the mind of the preschooler, child or youth. For example, one would not say, "Did so and so touch you in such and such a place?" It's very easy to contaminate any formal investigation that might follow. There is a second valid reason not to question the child: any investigation that follows will be traumatic for the child as he or she reveals what happened to CPS and/or police and later detectives. Even if one avoids rehearsing the child, questioning at this point is an unnecessary traumatic episode. The worker's report is based only on valid suspicion that something inappropriate but as yet undetermined has happened. Step 2 The worker shall **contact the pastor** immediately and report his/her observations and concerns regarding the suspected abuse. If the pastor is not readily available, contact the chairperson of the Children's Ministry Team.

Step 3. It is appropriate for the Worker initiating a report, the pastor, and possibly members of the Children's Ministry Team to discuss the seriousness of the presenting situation and plan any action that may be necessary. For example, if the alleged abuse occurred during a church activity, and the alleged perpetrator is a member of the church staff or is a volunteer Worker or Helper with preschoolers, children or youth, it will be necessary to contact the church attorney and insurance carrier immediately. It is not appropriate for any member of the church to conduct his or her own investigation, to question the alleged victim, or to have any contact whatsoever with the alleged perpetrator.

Step 4: If the abuse occurred during a church-related activity, complete the "Abuse Reporting Form" as completely as possible. When making a report, most of this information will be required.
If the observation is of abuse that occurred before the child came to a church activity with the assumption that the abuse occurred either at home or elsewhere in the community, have available the following information:
Child's name and DOB.
Name of parent or legal guardian
Child's home address & telephone number
List other adults living in the home, if known
List names and ages of other children living in the home, if known
Date and time of your observation
Describe in detail what was observed
Quote as concisely as possible anything the child told you
Indicate when, in the normal course of events, the child will be returning home

Step 5. After all pertinent information is compiled, the individual initiating a report is legally required to make an immediate report to Child Protective Services (ARS 13-3620) by calling **1-888-767-2445**. Especially if the child appears to be in imminent danger of continued abuse, it is also desirable to notify the local police at **289-2431**. These reports may be made by the person first suspecting abuse, by the pastor, or by some other designated person but it must be noted that the legal burden rests with the individual who is initiating the report.

Step 6. After the report has been made, the parents of the suspected victim will be contacted, by appropriate authorities, **unless a member of the household or relative of the victim is the alleged perpetrator.**

Step 7. As soon as possible but within 72 hours, a written report is to be submitted to Child Protective Services and local police. This letter should contain: (1) the date and time the report was made, (2) the names and addresses of the minor and his or her parents or guardian (3) a review of the nature and

extent of injuries observed, and (4) the reporter's name, address and phone number. The time, contents, and recipients of the abuse reports given to CPS and the police department should always be documented and kept in the secured child protection file at First Baptist Church.

Step 8. If the Children's Ministry Team or pastoral staff determine there are reasonable grounds to believe a minor has been abused and the alleged perpetrator is a member of the church staff or is a volunteer Worker or Helper with preschoolers, children or youth at First Baptist Church, <u>the accused will be</u> <u>immediately suspended from his or her ministry to preschoolers, children or youth.</u> The church council, in consultation with the pastors, will determine if and when the accused can resume ministry to preschoolers, children or youth at First Baptist Church. It must be remembered, however, the accused is innocent until found guilty in a court of law. We must be mindful of the rights of the accused and the potential damage a false accusation may bring.

Step 9. If the alleged abuse perpetrator is a volunteer church worker or helper or a church staff member who allegedly abused a child under his or her care in ministry at or on behalf of First Baptist Church, the church may offer professional counseling and legal counsel to the alleged victim and to the alleged perpetrator.

Step 10. The pastors, in consultation with the church leadership and legal or psychological counsel, will determine additional steps which First Baptist Church may take to minister to the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator.

Public Response to an Allegation of Abuse

If an allegation is made by a parent, guardian or another person that a volunteer worker or employee of the church has abused a child in the course of his/her duties, the following policy will be followed.

- 1. The senior pastor is the designated spokesperson for the church. All statements to the congregation, groups within the church and the media will be made by this person only. This person will coordinate the church's response. In the absence of the pastor, the deacons will select a spokesperson.
- 2. The spokesperson will be responsible for carrying out the steps listed below.
 - a. The pastor (if not the spokesperson) will be advised and informed of all steps taken and developments resulting from them.
 - b. Do not prejudge the situation but take the allegations seriously. Ensure the Child Protective Services and/or police have been called.
 - c. The church shall reach out to the victim and the victim's family showing care and support. Within 24 hours of receiving an accusation, the spokesperson, pastor and/or the chairman of deacons will select

two church members to minister to this family. As soon as feasible, these people are to express the church's loving concern and support to the family to help them through this crisis. They do not investigate the situation and will not make public comments.

- d. The church shall reach out to the accused and his/her family showing care and support. Within 24 hours of receiving an accusation, the spokesperson, pastor and/or the chairman of deacons will select two church members to minister to this family. As soon as feasible, these people are to express the church's loving concern and support to the family to help them through this crisis. They do not investigate the situation and will not make public comments.
- e. The spokesperson and all other parties should follow the lawyer's advice while answering any investigative questions from CPS or police.
- f. Document all efforts in handling the incident. Support the parties involved but do not attempt an in-depth investigation. This should be left to professionals who are familiar with these cases.
- g. Treat both the victim and the accused with dignity and support. If the accused is a church volunteer Worker, Helper or church employee, that person shall be relieved of his/her duties until the investigation is completed. If the accused is a church employee, the suspension will be with pay for up to three months. Subsequent pay will then be subject to church consideration.
- h. The spokesperson shall use a <u>prepared</u> public statement to answer the press and to convey news to the congregation, being careful to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved. This should avoid details of the situation in any public interview. Any public statements, news releases, or interviews should be discussed with the church's lawyer before release.
- **i.** A final report will be filed by the spokesperson as needed with appropriate agencies with copies of all documents retained in the church's files.

POLICY FOR DEALING WITH SEX OFFENDERS

When an identified sex offender seeks to participate in church activities, the pastor and designated deacons will interview that offender before they are allowed to attend our services. The pastor will request a signed waiver and authorization for fingerprinting, a criminal background check, and to contact the sex offender's probation officer or other applicable law enforcement. A trained escort will be assigned by the pastor before the person is allowed to attend our services. If the sex offender declines to sign a waiver and authorization, he/she will not be allowed to attend any functions of the church.

When a waiver and authorization are signed, the pastor will arrange for the background check to be completed and will contact the appropriate law enforcement officer to

determine the severity of offense. Based on the results of the background check, the pastor, two deacons, and probation officer will determine the level of supervision needed to protect the church. If it is determined that the sex offender can participate on our church campus, the pastor will confidentially notify the deacon body and applicable program leaders. This notification will thereby alert others to assist in monitoring the individual. A convicted sex offender will be subject to the following requirements:

- He/she will be informed of a minimum six month evaluation period during which time he/she will be assigned a trained escort. This period may be extended at the discretion of the pastor, two deacons, probation officer, trained escort, court appointed counselor/psychologist (if available), and anyone else with whom the sex offender has regular contact for rehabilitation purposes (hereafter referred to as the Accountability Team.) This time is designated to observe the level of cooperation with the church's guidelines and spiritual growth of the sex offender.
- 2. During the evaluation period, the sex offender will only attend Sunday worship service(s). In addition, for male sex offenders, he may attend, with his assigned trained escort, any other additional function at which no children, youth, or women are in attendance (i.e. Men's Monday Night Bible Study, Thursday Addiction Group, or such other men's activities as may be offered.) Female sex offenders may attend, with their trained escort, any other additional function at which no children or youth are in attendance (i.e. Women's Bible Study or Thursday Addiction Group or such other women's activities as may be offered.)

There are a number of reasons for which one would be designated a sexual offender. The church recognizes that there may be cases in which the designation does not reflect the likelihood of repeat offense. In such an instance the stipulation in this section regarding services and function and the stipulation in Section 5 of regarding where to meet one's escort may be adjusted. These adjustments will only be made upon recommendation by the Senior Pastor and approval and a minimum of three quarters of the Deacon body. In all cases, the safety of the congregation will be given prime consideration.

- 3. The trained escort will sit with the sex offender but not immediately in front of, next to, or behind any children or youth.
- 4. The trained escort will keep the offender within view at all times. If the offender goes to a bathroom during a service, the escort will not necessarily remain in the bathroom but will ascertain whether others are in the bathroom at that moment.
- 5. The trained escort and the offender will make arrangements to meet off campus before any service and will remain together until after leaving campus.
- 6. If no trained escort is able to attend a service, the offender will not be allowed to attend that service.
- 7. The trained escort will maintain close communication during the six month evaluation period with the pastor concerning the offender's deportment and cooperation. If an offender is non-compliant during the six month evaluation period or anytime thereafter, an immediate reevaluation by the Accountability Team will determine what further actions need to be taken.
- 8. After the six month evaluation period, the Accountability Team will recommend if the sex offender can or cannot expand his attendance at church, with or without a trained escort, to any other church activities. A sexual offender may not ever attend

any church activity directed toward children or youth unless, with prior approval of the Accountability Team, the offender requests permission to attend functions in which his/her own children are involved. The decision to allow more access to church functions and/or remove the requirement for a trained escort will be made, upon recommendation of the Accountability Team, by the Deacon Body. A three-fourths (3/4) vote of the entire Deacon Body will be required to allow any sex offender to be unescorted or be allowed more access to church functions.

- 9. Church directories may be obtained by members of the church only in the church office. (This is to limit access to personal family information (addresses, names and ages of children, etc.)
- 10. A notification book will be maintained and kept in the church office which will contain an updated listing of all sex offenders in and around the Winslow area including any sex offenders currently attending the church.
- 11. Escort training will be conducted online at the Arizona Southern Baptist website or such other source as may be convenient and equal in scope. In addition, trained escorts will be provided this policy and required to adhere to the policy as outlined above for training escorts.

PROTECTION FROM POTENTIAL PREDATORS NOT ATTENDING FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

The following instructions apply to Sunday School, Children's Church, Vacation Bible School, AWANA, Youth Events, and any special events where minors are present.

NURSERY AND 2-3 YEAR-OLD CLASS

A registration form will be used so workers in those age groups have up-to-date and accurate information about each child in their care. The registration form includes the name of the child, the name(s) of all persons authorized to pick up that child, and a signature and date block for the parent or guardian to sign. Parent/guardian or another person designated by a parent/guardian will be required to sign their children into and out of each class. Workers in these classrooms will assure each child is signed in and signed out before the child is admitted/released. If the workers in this age group do not know the person picking up a child in one of these classes, they are authorized to check picture identification to assure the person picking up the child is listed on the registration form.

4-YEARS-OLD THROUGH 2ND GRADE

A registration form will be used so workers in those age groups have up-to-date and accurate information about each child in their care. The registration form includes the name of the child, the name(s) of all persons authorized to pick up that child, and a signature and date block for the parent or guardian to sign. Teachers and workers with these age groups will hold these children until a parent/guardian, older sibling, or other person designated on the registration form picks up the child. Parents are urged to pick

up their children promptly at the time the class is scheduled to end particularly with regard to Sunday School.

3RD GRADE THROUGH 6TH GRADE

A registration form will be used so workers in those age groups have up-to-date and accurate information about each child in their care. The registration form includes the name of the child, a signature and date block for the parent or guardian to sign, and notation whether the child is to be picked up or released at the end of the class or activity. If the parent/guardian prefers the child be picked up, authorized persons for this will be noted.

CHILDREN WITH PARENTS NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Once a teacher or worker identifies a child who does not have a parent or guardian onsite during the activity or that is a regular attendee at church, an age-appropriate registration form will be sent home with the child reminding the parent/guardian their child is released when the function/service ends. The registration form will be accompanied by a short letter explaining the church's policy and our concern for children walking home by themselves.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

In addition to the foregoing policies, workers with the Children's Church during the 11:00 AM service will hold children in their care until the workers see that a parent/guardian of that child is in the courtyard area. Workers will then send the child(ren) down to their parent/guardian and will monitor the children so they go directly to the parent/guardian. If the Children's Church workers do not know the parents, they will hold the child(ren) until a parent/guardian comes to pick them up and, if necessary, ask for picture identification.

AWANA

All Cubbies (3-4 year-olds) and Sparks (kindergarten through 2nd grade) will be held in their classrooms until a parent/guardian or designated other comes to the door to pick them up. All Truth & Training (3rd through 6th grade) will be released to the courtyard area but teachers will remain in that area as monitors until all children from their classes have gone home.

COURTYARD GREETERS/MONITORS

Volunteers will act as courtyard greeters between Sunday School and Church to serve the dual purpose of greeting people and monitoring the courtyard area for anything unusual, particularly individuals from the surrounding area who may be loitering around the church. The courtyard greeters will be in place from 9:30 AM until 9:45 AM and 10:40AM until 11:05 AM. Volunteers will be appointed by Church Council upon recommendation of the Ministry Opportunity Team.

CHURCH MEETING/POTLUCKS

Childcare will be provided for ages birth through kindergarten for all church meetings and/or potlucks when church business or quarterly updates are held or Sunday evening services conducted in the fellowship hall. Children older than kindergarten will be expected to remain with their parents during the meetings.

SANCTUARY USHERS

During worship services in the sanctuary, ushers will monitor the foyer and bathrooms to assure persons not participating in worship services are not loitering in or around the area.

First Baptist Church Winslow, Arizona ABUSE REPORTING FORM

Name of child:	DOB
Name of Parent/Legal Guardian:	
Residence Address:	Mailing Address:
Telephone #	
Date event occurred:	_
Description of Incident:	
Where did incident occur?	
Who was present at the time of the incident?	
Person(s) supervising activity at the time the incident occurred:	
What action has been taken already?	
Name of person completing this form:	Date:
Signature of Reporter	Date
Signature of Report Recipient	Date