



FAIRVIEW
BAPTIST CHURCH

Children's and Student Ministry Leadership Handbook

If anyone serves, let it be from the strength God provides, so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ in everything. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 4:11

Welcome and thank you so much for your interest in serving Fairview's children and students!

At Fairview Baptist Church, our vision for children's and student ministry is no different than that of the church.

"We exist to make disciples of Jesus Christ."

As such, the core values for our children's and student ministry model those we set forth for all disciples of Jesus Christ at Fairview. We desire to be a church that exhibits *Gospel Transformation*, *Loving Community*, and *Missional Living* as described in Acts 2:41-47. This greatly impacts the way that we approach our children's and student ministry efforts.

Gospel Transformation: Because we are a church family that focuses on heart transformation and character growth by applying the gospel to all of life, we avoid heaping behavioral modification on the children in our care. Rather, we seek to put Christ and His gospel at the center of everything we do in children's and student ministry at Fairview.

Loving Community: Because we are a church family that loves one another in a way that reflects the power of the gospel, we hope to lovingly partner with parents in bringing up a generation of culture-shaping children, rather than children who are shaped by the culture.

Missional Living: Because we are a church family that defines our lives by mission in all that we do both here and worldwide, we aspire to see a children's and student ministry that is Kingdom-expanding, and not simply ministry-building.

As you partner with us to invest in our children and students, let us stop and say this: your ministry is important, whether it's once a week or once a month. From infants and toddlers to high school students, you are working to lay a foundation of biblical truth that will support a theological framework and worldview in the future. With the sure foundation of the gospel, the Holy Spirit can work in our kids so that they experience a genuine relationship with God and share the joy of that relationship with others. For that, we thank you!

Finally, we desire to provide a safe and secure environment for the children and students who participate in our ministry. What follows are practices that are widely accepted and recommended within the greater church community. By implementing the following practices, our goal is to protect the children and students of Fairview Baptist Church from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting those who serve them.

In Christ,

Lindsey Fescoe
Director of Children's Ministry

Chase Phillips
Pastor for Students & Sending

DEFINITIONS

The following terms are used herein and are defined as follows:

- A. **Adult:** any person age 18 or older who is serving or volunteering.
- B. **Child/Student:** any person who is 18 years old or younger and/or has not yet graduated from high school
- C. **Grooming:** Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust, manipulate the child into an inappropriate activity, and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.
- D. **Child Abuse:** child abuse refers to an act committed by a parent, sibling, caregiver, or person in a position of trust (even though he/she may not care for the child on a daily basis) which is not accidental and which harms or threatens to harm a child's physical or mental health or welfare. The law typically uses the following definitions and explanations in determining whether a child has been abused:

1. **Physical Abuse:** any type of physical violence that is non-accidental. A physical injury, threat of injury, or creation of a real and significant danger of substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or impairment of bodily functions. Examples: grabbing, wrestling, burning, cutting, bruises, welts, abrasions, internal injuries, poisoning, sprains, dislocations, gunshot and stabbing wounds.

2. **Physical Neglect:** the failure to provide food, water, clothing, shelter, or supervision for a child if the child's health or safety is endangered. Physical neglect may include multiple occurrences or a one-time critical or severe event that results in a threat to health or safety, such as a toddler being left alone. Other types of neglect include abandonment; inadequate supervision, clothing, shelter, personal hygiene, or food; and malnutrition.

3. **Sexual Abuse:** abuse that consists of sexual contact or interactions with a child, including physical contact (fondling, molestation, sexual intercourse, rape) and nonphysical contact (exhibitionism, child prostitution, pornography, voyeurism, or inappropriate sexual speech or gestures). Sexual abuse actions occur against another person's will or without consent.

4. **Medical Neglect:** refusal or failure by the caretaker to obtain and/or follow through with a complete regimen of medical, mental, or dental care for a condition which, if untreated, could result in illness or developmental delays.

5. **Failure to Thrive:** a syndrome of infancy or early childhood that is characterized by growth failure, signs of severe malnutrition, and variable degrees of developmental delays. Children are considered to be in this category only when the syndrome is diagnosed by a physician and is caused by non-organic factors.

6. **Mental Abuse/Neglect:** a pattern of acts or omissions by the caretaker that results in harm to a child's psychological or emotional health or development.

7. **Verbal/Emotional Abuse:** verbal or nonverbal conduct including aggressive or attacking language, mental exploitation, degrading or belittling communication, or humiliating or threatening conduct that may or may not include bullying. Damage to the emotional well-being of a person and causes significant changes in behavior, cognition or emotions.

8. **Educational Neglect:** the child's caretaker is directly responsible for the failure of the child to attend school or an approved alternative program of study.

9. **Bizarre Discipline:** where the caretaker uses eccentric, irrational, or grossly inappropriate procedures or devices to modify the child's behavior.

10. **Spiritual Abuse:** occurs when a caretaker establishes control and domination by using Scripture, doctrine, or leadership role as a weapon. This form of abuse may mask itself as religious practice and may be used to shame or punish.¹

E. **Corporal Punishment:** any punishment applied to the body but not limited to slapping, spanking, pinching, pulling, or squeezing.

¹ For further resources on these categories, definitions, and guides see: Darby Strickland, *Is It Abuse? A Biblical Guide to Identifying Domestic Abuse and Helping Victims* (Philipsburg: P&R, 2020); Brad Hambrick, *Becoming a Church that Cares Well for the Abused* (Brentwood: B&H Academic, 2019); Chris Moles, *Caring for Families Caught in Domestic Abuse: A Guide toward Protection, Refuge, and Hope* (Greensboro: New Growth Press, 2023); and Deepak Reju, *On Guard: Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse at Church* (Greensboro: New Growth Press, 2014).

QUALIFICATIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS

We desire to protect both the children/students and volunteers involved in our ministry; therefore, Fairview Baptist Church requires all children's and student ministry volunteers to complete **FOUR SAFETY STEPS** before ministry work or placement begins.

STEP ONE: Screening Process

Volunteers working with children/students and all employees—regardless of position—are required to complete the Fairview Baptist Church Screening Process, which includes:

- Attending the Fairview membership class and becoming covenant members.
- Attending Fairview Baptist Church for 6 months before being eligible to serve.
- Completing a Volunteer Application. Volunteers who are minors must also complete an application and include Parent Signature.
- Read and sign off on the Policies and Procedures Document.
- Conducting an interview with the Director of Children's Ministry, Pastor for Students, or a delegated representative as needed.

STEP TWO: Criminal Background Check

Fairview Baptist Church requires that all volunteers leading or assisting in children's or student activities undergo a criminal background check. The background check will be repeated every two years.

STEP THREE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

Fairview Baptist Church policies and procedures require that volunteers avoid and prevent abusive behavior of any kind. Volunteers are required to report any policy violations to the children's program director, the Pastor for Students, or another pastor/elder. Volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in "grooming" a child for sexual abuse.

To equip leaders with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, Fairview Baptist requires all leaders to complete sexual abuse awareness training. The training is to be renewed every two years.

STEP FOUR: Attend Ministry Trainings

Volunteers are required to attend the ministry trainings that occur twice a year. These trainings cover tips and best practices in ministering to children and students, as well as encouraging one another in the work of evangelism and discipling the next generation.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

Fairview Baptist Church is committed to partnering with parents to raise godly children. We therefore expect a high level of personal responsibility from our Fairview Children's/Student Ministry volunteers.

- All volunteers must be covenant members of Fairview Baptist Church.
- All volunteers must demonstrate, through their lifestyle and teaching, a commitment to serving Jesus Christ.
- All volunteers must regularly attend church services at Fairview Baptist Church.
- All volunteers must wear a black lanyard name tag when they serve.
- All volunteers must consistently arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of their class.
- All volunteers must notify the appropriate coordinators/pastor of upcoming absences.
- All volunteers must treat all children/students equally, regardless of sex, ethnicity, or ability.
- All volunteers must commit to speaking positively to parents, children/students, and other leaders.
- All volunteers must follow the curriculum provided while incorporating their own creative ideas.

AGE SPECIFIC GOALS

INFANTS (0-1 year olds)

There are no structured activities in this class. The goals in this age group include: caring for the physical needs of the babies and praying for each baby and their family.

TODDLERS (2-3 year olds)

The toddler class is encouraged to play, read books, and do simple activities to engage with the lesson. A child in these classes should not be forced or expected to sit still and participate. They can learn by being in the room with the activity and do not have to take an active part in it.

The goals in this age group include: helping children begin to develop a sense of trust as needs are met consistently, learn that people at church love and help them, begin to recognize simple pictures of Jesus, sing simple songs about God and Jesus, say thank you to God and learn that the Bible is a special book that tells about God and Jesus.

PRESCHOOL (4-5 year olds)

These classes will have structured learning activities to go along with a lesson. These activities should include playtime, prayer, teaching, music and craft/activity. The leader should have the lesson prepared ahead of time.

The goals in this age group include: helping children understand that people at church love each other and teach about God and Jesus, God created everything and God loves me, God hears me when I pray, the stories in the Bible are true and really happened, God sent his one and only son Jesus because he loves and cares about us, people make wrong choices.

1ST-2ND GRADE

This class includes a more focused time of teaching and activity time. The leader should have the lesson prepared ahead of time.

The goals in this age group include: helping children understand basic concepts of sin, consequences of sin and the gospel, baptism shows that people have trusted Jesus as Savior, the Lord's Supper is a special event at church for baptized believers to remember what Jesus has done for them, the church is a group of Christians who gather and worship and serve God, Christians are called to tell people all over the world about Jesus.

3RD-5TH GRADE

This class will encourage kids to engage more deeply with the lesson through a Bible lesson and activities. The leader should have the lesson prepared ahead of time.

The goals in this age group include: helping children develop a deeper understanding of the gospel and salvation, basic understanding of The Trinity, encourage asking serious questions about religion, teaching that we obey God as a response to His love for us, basic

understanding of the Holy Spirit, God uses the church to meet needs in the community and around the world, God wants believers to be disciples who grow in their faith and knowledge of Jesus and God wants us to share the gospel with others.

6TH-8TH GRADE

These classes will encourage students to think critically and engage personally with the text of Scripture through Bible study and dialogue with leaders and students.

The goals in this age group include: helping students grow deeper in their understanding and application of the gospel, a more robust understanding of the Trinity, further theological development as students interpret Scripture with Scripture, teaching that faith is demonstrated through obedience, understanding the importance of meaningful church membership, and growing to understand God's mission in the world.

9TH-12TH GRADE

These classes will encourage students to think critically and engage personally with the text of Scripture through Bible study and dialogue with leaders and students.

The goals in this age group include: helping students understand and be able to faithfully articulate the gospel, a more robust understanding of the Trinity, further theological development as students interpret the Bible canonically, teaching that faith is demonstrated through obedience, understanding the importance of meaningful church membership, and growing to understand God's mission in the world.

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

Fairview Baptist Church has a zero tolerance policy for abuse in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every volunteer serving at Fairview to act in the best interest of all children/students.

Abuse may consist of:

- **Emotional abuse**, which conveys a message that the child is worthless and undeserving of love and care. It can take the form of threats, critical words, demeaning terms or names, deprivation of affection, or similar emotional cruelty, spoken or unspoken.
- **Sexual abuse**, which can be defined by any form of sexual contact between a child and an adult or older youth. This could include showing or talking about sexually explicit material.
- **Physical abuse**, which is intentional, deliberate behavior that causes bodily harm to a child. It can take several forms, including assault, shaking, kicking, or choking.
- **Neglect**, which is failing to meet a child's needs, such as nutritional, physical, emotional, educational, and safety.

In the event that a volunteer observes any inappropriate behaviors or suspects abuse or neglect, it is the individual's responsibility to immediately report their observations.

In the state of North Carolina, everyone is a mandated reporter. This includes any reasonable cause or suspicion of abuse to minors, dependents, and elderly.

According to NC G.S. 14-318.6 this includes anyone “who knows or should have reasonably known.”

Fairview is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. **To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to Child Protective Services or another appropriate agency.**

To assist in the reporting of any incident of abuse or to respond to suicide discourse, Fairview has developed standard operating procedures for categories that can be found in the appendices of this policy.

GENERAL POLICIES

TWO ADULT POLICY

A minimum of two screened adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children/students are being supervised during our scheduled programs and activities. Student members (12 to 18 years of age) may serve in Children’s Ministry under the direct supervision of a parent or adult who commits to provide oversight. Students will not be considered as one of the two required adults in the room and are not allowed to serve in the infant room. Student workers must walk through the Four Safety Steps for volunteers and have a completed parent consent form before serving.

Adults may meet alone with a child/student for counseling or discipleship if approved by the parent and if the meeting happens in a location that has visibility and is nearby other adults.

GRADUATED STUDENTS POLICY

Students who have graduated from student ministry may not return to student Life Groups or Wednesday evening Equip Classes unless otherwise invited by the Pastor for Students as a guest or as a student ministry leader. Graduates should attend a Life Group for college students or other programming for adults.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Unless there is an unobstructed window in the door or a side window at the door, the door to any room where children/students are being supervised will remain open at all times.

FOOD AND ALLERGY POLICY

Children's Ministry

Regular cheddar goldfish crackers and water will be provided as snacks during regular Children's Ministry programming. During special events and activities, prior approval from a staff member is needed if other foods will be served. Allergy alert signs must be posted outside of the classroom door if other food will be offered during class.

Allergies should be reported at the time of check-in and shared with volunteers. Volunteers should check name tags for food allergies before serving food/drink items. Volunteers must wash hands before serving food or drinks.

Parents must label their children's personal items, such as cups, snacks, toys, diaper bags, etc. Teachers/volunteers in each classroom need to make sure that items are properly labeled.

Student Ministry

Student Ministry leaders will frequently provide foods containing tree nuts, eggs, dairy, and other common allergens. Students with allergies or dietary restrictions should disclose that information through event sign ups or verbally to Student Ministry leaders at each event. It is expected that students with allergies will be responsible to abstain from foods they are allergic to, though Student Ministry leaders will do their best to provide alternate snacks for students with allergies/restrictions.

MEDICATION POLICY

Children's Ministry Volunteers will not give medication of any kind including vitamins, diaper rash cream and other medicated creams.

Student Ministry volunteers will defer to parents to determine their preferred method for the administration of any necessary medications. Parents will disclose relevant medical information on event sign ups and may choose to either allow their child to take their own medications or may entrust the medication to an adult leader for the duration of the event.

SLEEPING ARRANGEMENT POLICIES

Student Ministry

Whether at camps, retreats, or on mission trips, Fairview will strive to provide 1 to 1 sleeping arrangements where each student gets his/her own bed. Students will not be required to share a bed with each other. Students will not sleep in the same room as adult leaders unless approved by the Pastor for Students and the student's parents. If Fairview takes students to a context where 1 to 1 sleeping arrangements are not available, parents will be notified in advance before agreeing to the sleeping arrangements.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

On drives less than 2 hours long, adult volunteers age 25+ may drive children/students with parent and staff approval. Fairview volunteers will never be alone with a student in a vehicle without parent and leader approval. On drives longer than 2 hours, at least two adult volunteers will travel in each vehicle.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Children's Ministry

All children's ministry volunteers are responsible for providing a loving, respectful, and orderly environment in which children can learn, play, and interact with others. This environment should be maintained by preparing beforehand, proactively directing children towards acceptable activities, verbally encouraging positive behavior, and, when necessary, correcting or redirecting inappropriate behavior. Volunteers should view misbehavior as an opportunity to point children to the gospel.

Praying for the children outside of class, and with them in the midst of conflict, will make a huge difference during class.

Sample Prayer for an Individual: *God, I thank you for (child's name). We are having a difficult time in class today. We ask for your peace in our hearts and minds and your help as we finish our time together. Please forgive us for our actions that hurt you or others. I am so glad that (child's name) is part of my class. Please bless our relationship. In Jesus name, amen.*

If a child is behaving inappropriately, the volunteer will:

- Never speak harshly to a child, but using a positive tone, they will redirect the child's attention, if possible
- Tell the child specifically what he/she is doing that is not acceptable and state what the expected behavior is (e.g., for young children, "We do not throw blocks. We use blocks for building)
- If discipline is needed, the volunteer will use the "time-out" technique. "Time-out" is the removal of a child for a short period of time from the situation in which the child is misbehaving and has not responded to the above techniques. To determine the amount of time a child sits in time-out, we recommend up to one minute per year of age. For example, a two-year-old can be in time-out for two minutes at a time. The "time-out" space, usually a chair, is to be located away from the play activity but within sight of a volunteer. After a brief interval of no more than five minutes, the leader should discuss the incident and inappropriate behavior with the child. When the child returns to the group, the incident is over and the child is treated with the same affection and attention shown to the other children.

- If a child continues to misbehave after utilizing time-out two times, the volunteer will inform the appropriate children's coordinator of the situation and the parents will be notified if necessary.
- If necessary, the minimum amount of force necessary will be used to prevent injury to the child or others.
- Children's Ministry volunteers are strictly prohibited from using any form of corporal punishment.

If a child bites another child, please inform the Director of Children's Ministry. The director will notify both sets of parents at this time. The aggressor must be removed from the classroom for the remainder of the class. An incident report must be written, regardless if the skin is broken or not. If biting continues consistently, parents may choose to attend class with their child or the child should be removed from the classroom until the behavior has subsided.

If at any time the volunteer needs help with classroom management or with communication with parents, they can inform the Director of Children's Ministry and they will provide assistance.

Student Ministry

All student ministry volunteers are responsible for providing a loving and respectful environment in which students can learn and dialogue with others. Student ministry leaders will not tolerate students teasing or making fun of each other, talking over each other, or behaving in such a way that other students will be distracted from the content of the class. Even students who do not wish to meaningfully participate are expected to behave in a responsible manner. If a student shows him/herself unable to behave appropriately after verbal warnings, student ministry leaders will either contact the Pastor for Students or the student's parents.

CHILDREN'S DIAPERING PROCEDURES

- Only female volunteers or the child's parent or guardian will undertake the diapering of children of either sex. Changing diapers should be done in plain sight of other volunteers.
- Children should be changed on changing stations only. Children will never be left unattended on changing tables.
- Children should be diapered immediately after removing the soiled diaper.
- Gloves should be worn when changing diapers and should be replaced for every diaper change.
- The changing table should be sanitized with disinfectant after each use.
- If assistance is needed, volunteers will notify the children's coordinator or another volunteer.
- Volunteers are to wash their hands with soap and water after each diaper change.

CHILDREN'S TOILET TRAINING PROCEDURES

- No child will be forced to toilet train.
- Only female volunteers or the child's parent or guardian will participate in toilet training efforts with children of either sex.
- When children are taken into bathrooms, the door will be left partially open.
- "Accidents" should be handled by reassuring the child and completing the changing of diapers or underwear and clothing. Extra clothing and diapers are available in the cabinets in the children's bathrooms, if the parent has not furnished a clean set of clothes.
- Parents should be notified of all "accidents".

CHILDREN'S RESTROOM PROCEDURES

- Children five years of age and younger should use a classroom bathroom if one is available.
- If a classroom bathroom is not available, volunteers should escort children to the hallway bathroom. An adult should never enter the bathroom alone with a child.
- Volunteers or a member of the security team must check the bathroom to make sure that other adults are not in the bathroom before the children enter.
- Leaders should remain outside of the bathroom/stall door and escort the children back to the classroom.
- If the child needs assistance, the leader should be accompanied by another adult and leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area. First offer verbal assistance to the child. Only assist the child by touching if necessary for his/her safety.
- Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another leader.

CHILDREN'S CHECK-IN AND CHECK-OUT

For children fifth (5th) grade and below, a security check-in/check-out procedure will be followed.

- The child will be signed in by a parent or guardian at the check-in desk.
- They will then receive a "Parent's Tag" for the child, similar to a claim check.
- The parent or guardian must present their tag in order to pick the child up from our care. Please remember to remove the child's tag from their clothing before they leave the classroom with a parent/guardian. This signifies to other volunteers and safety team members that the child is now under their parent's supervision.
- In the event that a parent or guardian is unable to present their tag, they must show appropriate photo identification that corresponds with the parent information on the tag or a children's ministry leader should be notified to assist, if needed.

CHILDREN'S WELLNESS POLICY

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all of the children at Fairview. Parents are encouraged to be considerate of other children when deciding whether to place a child in a classroom. In general, children with the following symptoms should not be brought to a classroom:

- Fever within the last 24 hours
- Diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Vomiting within the last 24 hours
- Green or yellow runny nose
- Eye or skin infections
- Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease

Should a child have a non-communicable, yet noticeable illness or rash (i.e. allergic reaction, eczema, etc.) the parent/guardian will be asked to provide notice of this to the volunteer(s) who can share the basics of this information as necessary and appropriate with other volunteers, parents, etc. It is the policy of Fairview not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children under our care. Medications should be administered by a parent at home. Exceptions to the medications policy may be granted to parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions). Parents of such children should address their situation with the Pastor of Family Discipleship or appropriate children's coordinator to develop a plan of action.

INJURY POLICY

In the event that a child or student is injured while under our care, the following steps should be taken: For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide basic First Aid as appropriate and will notify the child's parent or guardian of the injury at the time the child/student is released from our care. First aid kits are located in each classroom (Band-Aids, etc.) In children's ministry, a minor injury will be recorded on an appropriate "Minor Injury Documentation" sheet and initialed by the parent(s)/guardian. This documentation will be maintained by the Director of Children's Ministry.

For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond basic First Aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be notified and asked to come to the appropriate classroom. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called. Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed in the case of injuries requiring treatment beyond minor First-Aid.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

In the event of an emergency situation during a regularly scheduled church event/activity, the following procedures will be followed:

- Make sure that all children/students are accounted for within the room you are working in.
- If it is safe to do so, take the children/students through the hallway to the closest outside door, exit the building with the children between the adults and walk to the “safe area,” (back corner of the parking lot where the driveway circles around the light pole). If you are with babies, you can place more than one baby in a rolling crib and roll them.
- If it is not safe to go into the hallway, then a classroom exterior window should be opened and used as an exit; one adult needs to go out of the window and the two adults then assist all of the children out of the window. Make sure that all children have exited through the window, close the window as much as possible, and walk together to the “safe area.”
- Make sure that all children/students are accounted for when you reach the “safe area.”
- It may be a chaotic and somewhat exciting time for the children so make sure to watch them carefully until their parents arrive.
- If parents come out to meet their child/student on the way to the “safe area,” let the parent know that they need to accompany the entire group to the “safe area” before you can release their child to them.
- Once in the “safe area,” children may be released to their parents if they have the proper pick-up tag.

DANGEROUS PERSON IN THE BUILDING

Outside doors near children/students will be locked when children are in classrooms. The hallways of the church will be regularly monitored by assigned adults. In the event that an unknown person enters the building and appears to be dangerous:

- The hall monitor will alert the classroom workers.
- All children/students need to be accounted for and brought together in a group.
- The group needs to move to the most protected area in the classroom (bathroom, corner away from hall door, etc.) and wait as quietly as possible.
- Teachers need to stay in this place with the children/students until the hall monitor indicates that there is no danger.
- If the hall monitor indicates, or if in the teacher’s best judgment, it is not safe to remain in the building, the exterior window should be opened and used as an exit; one adult will exit first and the two adults then assist all the children/students out of the window. Make sure that all children/students have exited through the window, close the window as much as possible, and walk together to the “safe area.”

- If a parent attempts to take a child/student from the group while they are moving toward the “safe area,” let the parent know that they need to accompany the entire group to the “safe area” before you can release their child/student.
- Once in the “safe area,” make sure that all children/students are accounted for. Children may only be released from the “safe area” to a parent with the proper pick-up tag.

CHILDREN’S/STUDENT MINISTRY LEADERSHIP HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read the entirety of the Children’s/Student Ministry Leadership Handbook and will take effort to adhere to all prescribed policies, addressing concerns appropriately.

Signature of Children/Student Volunteer

Signature of Children/Student Volunteer’s Parent/Guardian

Date

APPENDIX A

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

Fairview Baptist Church

The purpose of this document is to help the pastors, ministry residents, and additional church staff of Fairview Baptist Church, Apex, North Carolina take appropriate steps when abuse has been disclosed.

POLICY

All counseling pastors, ministry residents, and additional church staff will take abuse seriously by offering compassion and exercising appropriate response to disclosed abuse. If abuse is communicated, follow the outlined procedures below.

DEFINITIONS, TYPES, AND LEGAL INFORMATION

- **Physical:** any type of physical violence that is non-accidental. A physical injury, threat of injury, or creation of a real and significant danger of substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or impairment of bodily functions. Examples: grabbing, wrestling, burning, cutting, bruises, welts, abrasions, internal injuries, poisoning, sprains, dislocations, gunshot and stabbing wounds.
- **Neglect:** a failure to meet basic needs: food, water, shelter, protection, and medical.²
- **Sexual:** abuse that consists of sexual contact or interactions with a child, including physical contact (fondling, molestation, sexual intercourse, rape) and nonphysical contact (exhibitionism, child prostitution, pornography, voyeurism, or inappropriate sexual speech or gestures). Sexual abuse actions occur against another person's will or without consent.
- **Verbal/Emotional:** verbal or nonverbal conduct including aggressive or attacking language, mental exploitation, degrading or belittling communication, or humiliating or threatening conduct that may or may not include bullying. Damage to the emotional well-being of a person and causes significant changes in behavior, cognition or emotions.
- **Spiritual:** occurs when a caretaker establishes control and domination by using Scripture, doctrine, or leadership role as a weapon. This form of abuse may mask itself as religious practice and may be used to shame or punish.

**For specific guidelines see N.C. General Statutes 14-318.6

MANDATED REPORTING

In the state of North Carolina, everyone is a mandated reporter. Pastor/parishioner privilege is no longer applicable in mandated reporting laws. Therefore, clergy are not granted exemption when abuse has been disclosed to them.

Mandated Reporting applies to:

- Minors (under 18) by a parent, guardian, custodian or caretaker. NC G.S. 7B-301
- Disabled or elder adults by their caretaker. NC G.S. 108A-2

² See the various forms of neglect defined in the section on definitions at the beginning of this document.

STANDARD OF KNOWLEDGE

This includes any reasonable cause or suspicion of abuse to minors, dependents, and elderly. According to NC G.S. 14-318.6 this includes anyone “who knows or should have reasonably known.”

****You DO NOT need proof!** If another reasonable person of sound mind can come to the same conclusion report.

PROCEDURES

***If a disclosure has been made, or you have reasonable suspicion of abuse, contact Amber Henderson immediately. If she cannot be reached, contact the senior pastor of Fairview Baptist Church. If he is also unavailable, proceed to the following actions.*

***You are mandated to report abuse, neglect, dependency, or death due to maltreatment.*

1. If a person has disclosed abuse to you, OR you have reasonable suspicion abuse is taking place, you are mandated to report. See the following for how to file a report.
 - a. A report is made to the Department of Social Services (DSS) in the county in which the abuse took place. Ask for the child protective services intake worker. If it is after hours, call 911 and ask for the social worker on call.
 - b. A report can be made in person, over the phone, or in writing. You can report anonymously (however, this could impede any investigation). Information given, regarding your identity is confidential unless DSS is mandated in a court of law to disclose that information.
 - c. Your report should include
 - i. Name and address of parent/caregiver of victim
 - ii. Name and age of victim
 - iii. Current whereabouts of victim
 - iv. Nature and extent of abuse and any other pertinent information
2. Inform the senior pastor of Fairview Baptist Church and Amber Henderson immediately.
3. Document all information as quickly as possible while the information is still fresh.
4. Keep this information confidential after the appropriate people have been notified. Please understand, this is a crucial moment in the life of the victim. Please do not re-victimize them by speaking openly and freely about the darkest period in their life. Respect this moment.
5. Care for yourself. Disclosure of abuse can be difficult to process for anyone. If you find you need to speak with someone to process your part in reporting see Amber Henderson. If she is not the right fit for you she can give you a referral for someone who can help.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Reporting needs to be done by (but is not limited to) the person who has direct knowledge or suspicion. If a person comes to you who has a reasonable suspicion or has direct knowledge, encourage them to report. If they refuse to report, then make the report yourself. It may be helpful to let them know that, according to NC G.S. 7B-301b, it is a Class 1

misdemeanor if a person or institution “knowingly or wantonly fails to report” the abuse of a minor.

- If a person who is over the age of 18 discloses abuse, it is their duty to report. For example: a woman discloses her husband is beating her. It is her duty to report. You may report this abuse, but it may not be taken as seriously. However, if there are minor children, disabled, or elderly in the home, you may report under mandated reporting laws to protect the vulnerable in the home.
- If a person who is 18 or over discloses abuse chooses not to report and you feel the abuser is a threat to others, call CPS.

APPENDIX B

DISCLOSURE OF SUICIDAL INTENT/THINKING

Fairview Baptist Church

The purpose of this document is to help the pastors, ministry residents and additional church staff take appropriate steps when suicidal intent and/or thoughts have been disclosed to them.

POLICY

All counseling pastors, ministry residents, and additional church staff will take threats of suicide seriously by offering compassion and exercising appropriate response. If suicidal ideation (thinking), threat(s) or attempt(s) are communicated, follow the outlined procedures below.

PROCEDURES

If an individual directly discloses to a pastor, ministry resident, or additional church staff member OR a pastor, ministry resident, or additional church staff member learns that a person has suicidal thoughts/intentions, a desire to die, or exhibits self-harming behavior, contact Amber Henderson immediately. If she cannot be reached or the situation seems emergent, call 911. Behavior that suggests it is an emergency includes (but not limited to) erratic or irrational behavior, apparent mental distress, inconsolable, aggressive, agitated, refuse to listen. If this occurs:

- Ask them to stay with you unless they pose a serious threat to you.
- If they leave, call 911 immediately.
- If the communication happens via phone, stay on the phone with them and jump to the "Phone Call" section of this document.

Also, in the mean (T-I-M-E), while you wait with them, consider the following:

T: Tough questions - Here are some examples, please bathe them in compassion:

- "Is there anything you're looking forward to this week?" (Looking for ways to offer hope)
- "Sometimes when people feel sad or hopeless, they consider ending it all. Do you feel like things would be better if you were not here?" (Research shows that asking these questions does not increase a person's risk of suicide-but it will help you know where they're at and how serious it is.)
- "Has anything major happened lately?" Try to see if there've been any major (especially devastating) life events/changes recently.
- Remind them they're not alone! They are important, they belong, they are needed!
- Remind them, first responders (police, EMS, etc.) have more education and training to better help them which is why it is necessary that you call(ed) them. Do your best to help them see why it is good and right to have emergency personnel respond. This needs to be communicated without a HINT of judgment.

I: Isn't confidential

- In a gentle way, remind them that you are there to support them, you can see their struggle, and because you love and care for them you cannot keep what they share a secret.
- Remember to be non-judgmental and care for the mental and emotional torture they're probably experiencing.

M: Minors require reporting

- If the person is a minor you need to let their parents know and direct them to do the following
 - Call for a Mobile Crisis Team at 877-626-1772
 - Or if the threat is more serious they can take them to UNC Hospital ER or Duke Hospital ER. These are farther away, but better for suicide prevention.
- However-if their parent(s) are not shown to be supportive or take these matters seriously, follow up with CPS/911 to ensure they are well cared for.

E: Encourage counseling and offer resources for the future

- Inquire if they are currently in counseling/therapy
- Encourage them to follow up with a counselor and offer accountability to that end.
- Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) Press 1 for Veterans or military members
- Chat at [SuicidePreventionLifeline.org](https://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

PHONE CALL

If the disclosure comes from a person on the phone please do the following.

1. Keep them on the phone, if there is another person/staff member present ask them to call 911. If you have no help to make a second phone call, try to do this yourself. If there are no other phone options available try to convince them to go to the ER themselves. Do the following before hanging up and calling 911.
2. Find out where they are-get an address or as specific a location as possible. Note what number they are calling from
3. Ask if there is anyone around them (family, friends, not strangers). If so-have them seek out that person and see if you can speak with them directly.
4. If you can speak to the person with them, advise them to take them to the ER, call the Mobile Crisis Unit, or 911 if that has not been done.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Document any encounter while the details are still fresh in your memory.
- Notify Senior Pastor, Matt Capps as well as Amber Henderson by phone and email a copy of your document to both.

- Self-care. Dealing with a situation like this can be difficult for anyone no matter how much experience they have. Take care to notice how well you're doing after the incident and find someone you can share with if you feel it would be good to process the event with someone. As always, my door is open! We are a team and we owe it to our Lord Jesus and our church body to care for them and ourselves well.