

**Camelback Bible Church  
Children's & Youth Ministries**



**Child/Youth Protection Policy**

**S**ecuring

**A**

**F**aithful

**E**nvironment



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# I. INTRODUCTION

## Why a Child Protection Policy?

In a day and age such as ours, sadly marked by occurrences of physical and sexual abuse of children even in the church, it is vitally important that a church have a child protection policy. Such a policy will aid the church in remaining “faithful” to the following callings:

***Faithful to our calling to care for the children.*** Psalm 82:3-4 tells us to “Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless, maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy, deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” Children in many ways are weak and needy. Therefore, it is our duty as a church to protect them from any kind of physical or sexual abuse. The church must be a safe place for our children. To this calling we must remain true.

***Faithful to our calling to support our staff.*** Jesus warned his followers to be “as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves”. In light of the potential that one of our staff members could be suspected or falsely accused of inappropriate behavior toward a child, it is incumbent upon us to set up and maintain procedures that will protect them from such an occurrence, and will help them know how to conduct themselves wisely. This is a vital way the church can faithfully serve its staff.

***Faithful to maintain the unity and integrity of the body.*** In Ephesians 4:3 Paul tells believers to “make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” It only takes one incident of abuse to bring tremendous trauma to the church. An accusation of one member toward another can result in deep conflict as members take sides. Such conflict can lead to other crippling results such as loss of confidence by members, the departure of members, and financial liability due to lawsuits. The church must steadfastly protect itself from such difficulty.

***Faithful to guard the honor of our Lord Jesus Christ.*** Jesus said in Matthew 5:16 “Let your light shine in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” As a church we must be resolute to uphold the glory of our God. Again a single incidence of child abuse can do much to harm the name of our Lord. The church must be known by the world to be a loving and safe place for all who enter its doors. Such a testimony brings great honor to the God who lives among us and empowers us to live in newness of life.

***Faithful to submit to governing authorities.*** The apostle Paul instructs believers in Romans 13 to “be in subjection to governing authorities” who are ordained by God as an “avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil”. That means, as a church, we must support the efforts of local authorities as they seek to fulfill their God-given task of administering justice. This support should never nullify the revealed will of God in any way, and does not preclude the church from dealing with issues of repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation which the church is specifically designed to handle.

## **How do we make our ministry SAFE for Children?**

When children are dedicated at Camelback Bible Church, the church body often stands as a symbol of unity of purpose, and pledges itself to the care of these children. Certainly part of that care is providing a SAFE environment for children, free from abuse of any sort. In light of this, the elders, pastors and members of the church are committed to providing ministry that promotes the safety and welfare of all children entrusted to their care. The following procedures have been adopted to ensure this. (Note: a fuller explanation of these procedures can be obtained by contacting the church office.)

**Screening:** Screening efforts will include an application process, checking of references, performing of background checks, interviewing of potential staff, gaining elder approval, and requiring candidates to attend CBC for at least six months prior to serving. The level of screening required will be determined by the nature of the involvement the worker has with the children.

**Supervision:** Supervision of staff will include enforcing a 2 worker rule (having 2 adults working with children whenever practicable), an open window policy (activities in the rooms always observable from the outside), and specific guidelines that outline appropriate staff behavior, and implementing check-in/check-out procedures when appropriate.

**Training:** All staff will be required to receive training that will assist them in being able to identify major signs of abuse, know how to conduct themselves in potentially compromising situations (taking a child to the bathroom), know how to protect themselves from false accusations, and know how and when to report suspected incidents of abuse. Parents will also be provided with information that can be helpful as they carefully instruct their children about abuse.

## **II. SCREENING PROCEDURES**

### **Prayer**

Before approaching someone for a ministry or accepting someone into a ministry both the applicant and the coordinator should pray and seek God's leading for the applicant to go ahead with the rest of the process.

### **Six-Month Rule**

Before working in the Children's or Youth Ministry the applicant must have attended Camelback for at least six months, with adequate time to get plugged into various ministries and get to know people.

### **Membership Requirement**

Membership is encouraged though not required for most work in the Children's or Youth Ministry, however church attendance of six months is required (see above). For Ministry Coordinator and supervisory positions, membership IS required.

## **Application Form**

A Children's/Youth Worker Application & Authorization for Release of Information will be completed by anyone desiring to work in the Youth or Children's Ministries. Those applicants requiring background checks (see chart below) would also fill out a Consent to Perform Background Check.

## **References**

As part of the application process all applicants must submit four names of people to be used as references. These should be people the applicant has worked with in previous ministries and has known at least four years. One of those names must include a pastor, elder, deacon, small group leader, or Sunday Fellowship teacher. A Reference Form will be sent to each person named and these completed forms will be confidential.

## **Interview**

As part of the interview process all applicants will meet for an interview with the ministry coordinator (or in certain cases a pastor or elder) of the ministry in which they are applying to work. The applicant should be assured that what is discussed will be confidential. The interviewer should have gone over the application at this point and made notes of any questions he/she had that should be discussed during the interview. CBC has two interview forms. One specifically tailored to those interviewing as Youth Staff and one for applicants in the Children's Ministry.

## **Background Investigation**

CBC is currently contracted with a company to conduct background checks as requested. Each applicant completes a Consent to Perform Background Check form for CBC to have the screening conducted. This form asks for social security number, other names used, current address and previous addresses from the past seven years. The screening company does a national wants and warrants check, a social security number screening, and a statewide Arizona screening for all applicants. Additional levels of screening can be conducted at CBC's request for such things as driving records, additional out-of-state county searches, and fingerprinting, dependent on nature of employee/volunteer's job responsibility.

## Screening Recommendations

Position	Child SAFE Class Required	Application & Interview Required	References Required	Criminal Check Required	Fingerprinting Required
Camp Counselor (Children's and Youth Camps)	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO
Children's Church Leader	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Children's Music Ministry Director	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Helper (Under Age 18)	NO	NO	Pastoral Reference	NO	NO
Irregular Helper+	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
LOGOS Leader	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Ministry Director	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Nursery Workers (Sunday)	YES	Application Only	YES	YES	NO
Nursery Workers (Weekday)	YES	YES	TBD	YES	NO
Paid Staff	TBD	YES	YES	YES	NO
Sunday Morning Discipleship Leader	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
VBS Staff (Adults only)	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO

+ An irregular helper is one who helps in an unscheduled, as needed basis (i.e.: nursery help for Christmas Eve services, Camp Support Staff, Children's Music Ministry Helpers). These helpers must never be left alone with children and must be supervised by someone who has gone through a background check.

\*To be determined by appropriate Pastor

### Public Notice

As part of the screening process, Children's Ministry and Youth Ministry worker applicant names should be given to the CBC elders for their review. Any concerns or comments that are indicated at that time should be incorporated into the screening process.

### III. SUPERVISION

#### Guidelines for Children’s Ministry (Nursery-6<sup>th</sup> Grade)

The supervision of our children should be of a very high priority. Even though we do all we can in the screening process, we know that supervision is our most important line of defense for the protection of our children.

1. All workers must have no record of arrests or conviction for child abuse, violent offense, or any crime dealing with the welfare of a minor.
2. All workers must also be free of any accusations or allegations of child abuse.
3. All workers must read CBC’s *SAFE for Children Child/Youth Protection Policy* and view the Staff Training video (if available) before beginning their ministry with children. A SAFE Staff and Parent Training will be held at a minimum of twice a year, and workers must attend the training as soon as it is offered.
4. All workers must adhere to CBC’s *SAFE for Children Child/Youth Protection Policy*.
5. Our desired policy is that there shall always be a minimum of two workers present during church activities. Two workers can consist of two adults or one adult and one teenager. If a situation arises where only one worker is necessary or available, parental notification and permission should be obtained. Such a person must have gone through a background check. In such a case, if room is equipped with a paging system, the parent should take a pager. Additionally, a ministry coordinator must plan to periodically check the room to ensure safety of all concerned.
6. If feasible, install window, split doors or two-way windows in all classrooms. Window blinds, when possible, should be left open at all times. Nursery gate is recommended as per CBC blueprints.
7. Doors should remain unlocked during activity-times. If it is safer to lock doors (i.e. evening nursery times, or working alone in classroom) please advise parents and/or supervisor of locked door.
8. Suggested child-to-worker ratio:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Worker</u>
0-12 months	2	1
1-3 years	4	1
4-6 years	6	1
1 <sup>st</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	10-14	1
4 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> grade	10-15	1

These ratios are suggested for the purpose of properly staffing a

The two-worker policy should still be followed.

9. Child Release/Identification:
  - a. Nursery: children should be released to a properly identified and preauthorized adult or older sibling (13 years or older). There shall be an

established system of identification between parent and child for pick-up purposes.

- b. 2yr – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: children should be released to a properly identified and preauthorized adult or older sibling.
  - c. 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade: children can be released to meet their parents at a predetermined location or wait in the classroom according to parent's wishes.
10. Diaper changing and/or bathroom supervision: Diaper changing should always be done by a female unless the father of the child chooses to change the child.

When an older child needs to use the bathroom:

2years-4years old: A female worker should accompany child to bathroom, leave door open and help wipe and wash hands. It is suggested you verbally state what you are doing, "Do you need help snapping your pants? I'll help you snap them." The only exception to this should be if the child's father chooses to take the child to the restroom.

5years and older: Send to bathroom by 2's. One of the workers should make sure they can see the children reach the bathroom and wait in the breezeway until they are finished.

11. Report any suspicious activity to an adult worker, director or pastor.
12. Overnight activity: Adults and children should all be of same gender in a sleepover activity. There should be no situation where there is only one adult and one child in a room.
13. Early drop-off or late pick up: If a child has been dropped off at an activity early, please leave the classroom door open until more children arrive. If a child's ride is late in picking up, please also leave the classroom door open until they have departed.
14. Discipline: Rules for discipline include the following:
  - A. It is never appropriate for a worker to administer a spanking to a child.
  - B. Workers should not forcefully restrain or hold a child, nor yell at a child.
  - C. Avoid all touching that could be misinterpreted. No touching of buttocks, groin, or breast area.

## Guidelines for Youth Ministry (Grades 7-12)

1. All workers must have no record of arrests or convictions for child abuse, violent offense, or any crime dealing with the welfare of a minor.
2. All workers must also be free of any accusations or allegations of child abuse.
3. All workers must read CBC's *SAFE for Children Child/Youth Protection Policy* and view the Staff Training video (if available) before beginning their ministry with youth. A SAFE Staff and Parent Training will be held at a minimum of twice a year, and workers must attend the training as soon as it is offered.
4. All workers must adhere to CBC's *SAFE for Children Child/Youth Protection Policy*.
5. Any worker under the age of 18 will work under the supervision of an adult worker.
6. Must work only with same gender.
7. Any dating of youth by workers is inappropriate.
8. Avoid any physical contact that might be misinterpreted. No forceful grabbing or pulling. No touching of groin, buttocks, or breast area.
9. In the presence of youth do not consent to or engage in activity that is legal for adults but illegal for minors (alcohol, under-age driving, etc.).
10. Communicate with and inform parents of role with their child. Ask for questions, concerns and approval about time that might be spent alone with their child. (i.e., camps, retreats, coffee, etc.)
11. When spending time alone with a youth is necessary, meet in a public location.
12. When driving alone with a youth:
  - Go directly to destination.
  - Be aware of time – call if delayed.
  - Do not spend any more time than needed in a car together.
13. When attending overnight function with a youth:
  - A minimum of 2 adults, that have completed screening and training, must be present.
  - Workers must not room with youth one-to-one.
  - When in room alone with a youth, door must remain open.

## IV. STAFF AND PARENT TRAINING

### Child Protection Training

In accord with the goals of CBC's *Safe for Children Child/Youth Protection Policy*, CBC shall, at least semi-annually, conduct an instructional training course ("SAFE Staff and Parent Training"). All ministry staff, Elders, volunteer Children and Youth workers shall complete the SAFE Staff and Parent Training within six months of commencing service in a CBC Children or Youth ministry. The SAFE Staff and Parent Training shall also be open to the CBC body.

The SAFE Staff and Parent Training shall include at least two hours of instruction covering the following areas:

**Introduction** – a statement of the Biblical and other bases for CBC's commitment to child protection.

**Child abuse** – instruction in the nature and problem of child abuse. Instruction on "indicators" of child abuse should be limited to those indicators from which a more specific finding of child abuse can be made, such as 1) in the case of physical abuse: pattern injuries, multiple injuries in various stages of healing, or, unexplained injuries or burns in suspect locations; or, 2) in the case of sexual abuse: evidence of penetrating genital trauma, pre-adolescent sexually transmitted disease, or, extreme sexual precocity.

**Interaction with a suspected victim at discovery** – instruction in the appropriate worker reaction to suspicion of abuse. Instruction should include importance of limiting inquiry with child to four questions (who-what-when-where).

**Interaction with previously abused children** – instruction in the special needs of child abuse victims and the ability of the CBC body to meet those needs.

**Legal Considerations** – instruction in the substance and procedure of Arizona law relating to child abuse.

**CBC Policy** – instruction in the substance and procedure of CBC policy

**Questions and discussion.**

## V. RESPONDING TO A REPORT OF CHILD ABUSE

### **Reporting Child Abuse**

A CBC staff member, Children's Ministry Volunteer, Youth Volunteer, or other CBC worker involved in a ministry to children under 18 years of age ("Worker"), who believes or suspects that a child in the Worker's care has been abused or neglected, shall immediately report that belief or suspicion, and additional information required to complete the CBC Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Form (see form at end of packet), to the Pastor responsible for the Worker's ministry. If that Pastor is not immediately available, then the Worker shall immediately report to any member of the pastoral staff. The reporting Worker shall not disclose the suspicion or report to anyone other than the pastor, except as required by Arizona law.

### **Reporting CBC Policy Violation**

A Worker who observes or learns of a violation of CBC's *SAFE for Children/Youth Protection Policy* shall report that violation, and the additional information required to complete the CBC Policy Violation Reporting Form (see form at end of packet), to the Pastor responsible for the Worker's ministry, within three days. Non-Workers may also make a CBC policy violation report. The reporter shall not disclose the suspicion or report to anyone other than the pastor. The reporter's identity shall be kept confidential. Forms for the reports shall be made available by the Pastors.

### **Receiving Child Abuse or Policy Violation Reports**

#### **A. Written Report to Pastor; Report to Law Enforcement**

The pastor who receives the report shall, together with the reporter, immediately complete the CBC Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Form (see form at end of packet).

If, on the basis of the report, the pastor has a reasonable belief that the child has been abused or neglected, then the pastor shall immediately report the abuse to law enforcement and Arizona Child Protective Services ("CPS") in accordance with Arizona law. In addition, if at the time of the report the child is in the care of CBC, the pastor shall consider whether the child may be subject to an imminent threat of further harm ("exigency"). If the pastor believes an exigency exists, then the pastor shall make an emergency report to law enforcement by calling 911. If the pastor cannot determine from the report whether or not an exigency exists, then the pastor or an appointed representative shall conduct an immediate investigation in accordance with the Investigation Guidelines.

If the pastor, after receiving a report, does not have a reasonable belief that the child has been abused or neglected, he shall immediately notify the Chairperson of the Review Committee that a report has been made. In addition, he may conduct an investigation in accordance with the Investigation Guidelines. If at any time during or after his investigation, the pastor has a reasonable belief that the child has been abused or neglected, then the pastor shall immediately report the abuse to law enforcement and Arizona Child Protective Services ("CPS") in accordance with Arizona law.

## **B. Child Incident Review Committee – Child Abuse Reports**

A Child Incident Review Committee (“Review Committee”) consisting of a Pastor, an Elder, and a non-governing member of CBC, is established. Where possible, the Review Committee will be staffed with doctors or other professionals who are willing and able to develop expertise in child abuse matters. The Review Committee shall 1) review abuse and neglect cases that are not reported to law enforcement; 2) oversee investigation of reported Worker child abuse; and 3) respond to CBC Child Protection Policy violations.

1. Within 72 hours of receiving a report from the pastor, the Review Committee shall convene. The Review Committee shall consider the report and independently determine whether there is a reasonable belief that the child has been abused or neglected. The Review Committee may conduct an investigation in accordance with the Investigation Guidelines. If the Review Committee determines that there is reason to believe the child has been abused or neglected, then the Chairperson of the Review Committee or Pastor shall, on behalf of CBC, immediately report the abuse to law enforcement and Arizona Child Protective Services (“CPS”).

2. If a Worker is alleged to have committed the abuse, while engaged in CBC activity, the Review Committee shall conduct an investigation in accordance with the Investigation Guidelines. The Review Committee shall report its findings to the Chairman of the Board of Elders.

3. The Review Committee shall document its findings and action in all matters related to paragraphs 2 and 3, above.

4. The Review Committee shall consider reports of CBC policy violation and the investigative findings of the pastor and shall respond to the violation in accordance with CBC Child Protection Policy rationale.

## **C. Policy Violation Reports**

Within five days of receiving a Policy Violation Report, the pastor or his representative shall complete an appropriate investigation (not governed by the Investigation Guidelines) of the violation and forward his findings to the Review Committee.

## **D. Investigation Guidelines**

1. CBC will make reasonable efforts to defer to an ongoing law enforcement investigation of child abuse.

2. Any interview of a suspected abuse victim shall be limited to the subject of basic information as discussed in Child Protection Training.

3. Potential abuse witnesses not addressed above may be interviewed regarding any information they have. Any witness that is interviewed shall be instructed that the interview and report are not to be disclosed to others.

**E. Suspended Involvement of Accused Workers**

Workers accused of child abuse will be suspended from service in the CBC Children and Youth ministries while accusations of child abuse are under investigation.

**F. Notification of Parents**

CBC shall notify a child's parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child abuse report except in cases where a parent or guardian is a potential suspect in the abuse.

# Child SAFE Protection

## Child Abuse / Neglect Reporting Form

*Reporting abuse can precipitate severe consequences to an individual and family, so it should never be done casually or thoughtlessly, and certainly not for malicious purposes. At the same time, failing to report abuse can have severe consequences to a child at risk. Therefore, if you have reasonable cause to suspect abuse by anyone toward a minor, you should document and report incidents to the appropriate age-group minister.*

(Note: please use and attach additional pages whenever needed.)

**Child's Name (victim):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Parent's Names:** \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

**Nature of suspected abuse or neglect (check all that apply):**

Physical Abuse    Sexual Abuse    Neglect    Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Suspected Abuser's name (if known):** \_\_\_\_\_

**How and when did you become aware of the situation (include names of personnel who first became aware of abuse)?**

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**What were the child's responses to the following four questions (use exact quotes and verbatim language)?**

◆ What happened? \_\_\_\_\_

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◆ Who did it? \_\_\_\_\_

◆ When did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

◆ Where did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Additional information volunteered by the child (use exact quotes and verbatim language whenever possible).**

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**Child SAFE Protection**  
**Child Abuse / Neglect Reporting Form (continued)**

**Observation of the child's injury (if any). Note location, type of injury, and color.**

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**Other information that might be helpful:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Do you feel this child is in danger?**  Yes  No  Unknown

**I have reviewed the above report. It is true and correct, based on my personal observations. I understand that this material is to be treated highly confidential and that I am not to discuss it with anyone else other than the age-group minister to whom I make this report.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person making report

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Received by (Pastor)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Child SAFE Protection Policy Violation Reporting Form

Date of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of violation (please check all that apply)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not having a min. of 2 workers  | <input type="checkbox"/> No adult supervisor                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> One adult, no notification given  | <input type="checkbox"/> One adult, no background check      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Window blinds not left open   | <input type="checkbox"/> Doors locked                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child released to unauthorized person   | <input type="checkbox"/> ID system not being used            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Man (not father) changing diapers   | <input type="checkbox"/> Bathroom door not left open         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child (5+) not by 2's to bathroom   | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsupervised bathroom stop          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overnight: mixed gender   | <input type="checkbox"/> Overnight: 1 child, 1 adult, 1 room |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worker spans child  | <input type="checkbox"/> Worker forcefully restrains child   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worker touching child inappropriately   | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth: 1 on 1 with opposite gender  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth: worker dating youth  | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth: parents not informed         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth: not meeting in public location (1 on1)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth: too much time in car         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth: permission not obtain to drive opposite gender   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth: worker engaging in legal activity which is illegal for youth, while in youth presence (i.e.: drinking) |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth: door not open when in room alone with youth  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |  |

Note: Please use back of sheet for additional information whenever necessary.

For any of the above which you checked please provide a detailed description below:

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Is this a first-time occurrence?  Yes  No  Not sure

**I have reviewed the above report. It is true and correct, based on my personal observations. I understand that this material is to be treated highly confidential and that I am not to discuss it with anyone else other than the age-group minister to whom I make this report.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person making report

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Received by (Pastor)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date