



# A SAFE PLACE

The attached guidelines represent our Safety Plan, which is designed to protect the children and youth who participate in the ministry of our church. Some forms and information have been used with permission from other publications.



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## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	2
• Why Do We Have a Safety Plan?	3
• The Recruiting Process	4
<b>Creating a Safe Environment</b>	5
• General Guidelines	6
• Volunteers and Kids	6-7
• Activities/Events Guidelines	7
• Transportation	8
• Restroom Guidelines	8
• Discipline Guidelines	9
• Principles for Effective Classroom Management	10
• Have a Prevention Plan	11-12
• Specifics About Infant/Toddler Room	13
• Injury Guidelines	14
• Medications	14
• Guidelines to Prevent Infectious Disease	14-15
<b>Child Abuse</b>	16
Recognizing Child Abuse	17-21
• Victims and Perpetrators	17
• Physical Abuse	17-18
• Neglect	18-19
• Mental Injury or Emotional Maltreatment	19
• Sexual Abuse	19-20
• Sexual Abuse By Teens	20
• Sexual Exploitation	20
• Threats of Harm	20-21
• Domestic Violence	21
• Child Selling	21
• Fatality	21
How Do I Show Love Without Messing Up?	22
Reporting Child Abuse	23
• Mandated Reporters ORS 412A.004	23
• What if a Child Talks to You About Being Abused?	23-24
• Duty to Warn	24
• What if a Parent Talks to You About Abuse?	25
• What if You Suspect Abuse Has Occurred at Church?	25
• What if an Offender Makes a Disclosure?	25-26
• Reporting Possible Cases of Child Abuse	27



## Introduction

Grace Chapel desires to create and maintain a culture of sensitivity regarding the issue of child safety because the Scripture mandates that we, “Take heed that you do not harm these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father.” *Matthew 18:10*

And, “Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He bought with His own Blood.” *Acts 20:28*

We acknowledge that child abuse or neglect can happen in ANY church, but bringing the issue of safety to light ends the secrecy, which perpetuates the risk to children and youth. Not having a prevention program in place leaves its most precious treasure, the children, vulnerable to the devastation of emotional, physical and spiritual wounds and the church open for financial ruin.

Creating a safe environment for children is the first priority for Grace Chapel and, therefore, all volunteers and staff are expected to comply with the safety plan of the church. Only when children and youth are safe are they able to experience and express the essence of Jesus.

## Why Do We Have a Safety Plan?

The leaders of Grace Chapel are responsible for providing a safe and secure environment for the ministries of the church. This responsibility includes recruiting and training volunteers, providing proper supervision, maintaining a safe facility and caring for the specific needs of students. One of the biggest needs in creating a safe place is to safeguard against child abuse.

According to the publication, Church and the Law, "The church has often been a place where students have been abused by those in authority. The church has, in some cases, even turned a blind eye to the abuse of students, hoping the problem would die or go away. In other situations, the church has, in its desire to be open to all, unwittingly also opened the doors to abusers, often without regard to the potential for harm to students."

Grace Chapel understands that the church's responsibility to represent Jesus Christ must be demonstrated and modeled in His love, concern and holiness of life to everyone who participates in the ministries of this church.

The Scriptures say:

"But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality...because these are improper for God's holy people." Ephesians 5:3

"But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea." Matthew 18:6

We view ourselves as partners with parents to protect and promote spiritual growth of children and youth.

In addition, we recognize that the church may be legally accountable for the individual acts of abuse or neglect, which may occur in the ministry of the church even though neither the church nor its leaders were aware of the abuse or condoned it. The church may be held liable whether the church itself was negligent or even knew about the abuse. The church may be held accountable in hiring or accepting personnel, as well as in supervising or monitoring them, whether they are in paid positions or service as volunteers.

The key question is:

**"WHAT DID YOU DO TO PREVENT THIS TRAGEDY FROM HAPPENING?"**

The answer to that question could be the deciding factor in whether or not the church is declared negligent.

## **The Recruiting Process**

Properly screening potential volunteers is the first line of defense in providing a safe ministry environment. In alliance with our liability insurance, the church must show evidence that it has taken reasonable action in screening and supervising volunteers. If an abuse accusation occurs, the courts will look for a process by which the church screens volunteers **before** engaging them in service. A court can find the church negligent and therefore legally liable if it is less than systematic in its recruiting process. Thorough and accurate record keeping is crucial.

### **1. The Application**

Volunteer workers who are in direct supervision of children or youth or serve in an on-going assignment (expected service of two times a year or more) **MUST** complete the Volunteer Application form and list three references before serving.

#### **Please note:**

Kidventure - Ardent JH Team Members are asked to be at least 12 years of age upon completion of application.

### **2. References**

References should exclude relatives and include at least one reference from outside the church. Teen volunteers should include the youth pastor, mentor or Young Life leader. All references will be emailed a form and asked to fill it out regarding the applicant.

### **3. Interview**

A formal or informal interview will be conducted by the Kidventure staff or Ardent Student Ministries staff, to review the volunteer application and get to know the volunteer. This is also a time for the volunteer to ask questions about various ministries or about the child/youth safety policies.

### **4. Criminal Records Check**

The volunteer will release permission for a criminal records check with Screen Now. This record along with the application and references will be placed in the volunteer's file and will be kept confidential.

### **5. Training**

Volunteers are trained by taking time to observe the capacity they will be volunteering in, as well as periodic all-volunteer trainings and/or meetings throughout the year.

# **Creating A Safe Environment**

## **General Guidelines**

1. Prior to working with children or youth, workers must read through the Safety Plan and sign a form indicating they have read it. If there are any questions or concerns, the volunteer can meet with the Kidventure Director or Youth Director to discuss them.
2. Any concerns about volunteer applications or reports of inappropriate behavior in the volunteer application process will be referred to the Kidventure Director or Youth Director.
3. All working with children or youth must have attended Grace Chapel for a minimum of six months prior to service.
4. Volunteers with a criminal past or anyone who has been accused of sexual abuse, physical abuse or family violence will not work with children or youth. They will be informed of the information discovered against them and told not to have any contact with minors. Volunteers with a history which includes criminal offenses unrelated to the safety of children may be approved by the Kidventure Director for work with children. Examples include parking violations, shop lifting years ago as a teenager, etc.
5. Anyone in substance abuse recovery or "clean" less than two (2) years may not work directly with children or youth.
6. Unannounced visits by supervising church staff will be made to all classrooms and activities involving children or youth.
7. Church computers use an internet service which blocks inappropriate web sites. All staff are trained and held accountable for making sure appropriate content is shown to children and youth.
8. Fire escape routes shall be posted in every classroom in which children or youth activities are held.

## **Volunteers & Kids - Kidventure**

1. Volunteer leaders must not be alone with a child or Ardent JH volunteer at the church or on activities. For private one-on-one conversations, the adult must be in full view of others, or have an open office door. Volunteer leaders of the opposite sex are prohibited from being alone in a car, office, home or a room with a closed door/door with no window.
2. An Ardent JH volunteer, 12 years or older (16 for infants), may be used to substitute for one adult provided that teen has completed the volunteer screening process and JH training.



3. When one adult is teaching or leading a child's activity and no Ardent JH volunteer is available to serve as a helper, the door may be left open with a "roaming" adult helper who can assist as needed.
4. Workers must not seek comfort or counsel by discussing personal problems with children.
5. Under no circumstances may a volunteer or staff of Grace Chapel correct a child with physical punishment.
6. The ratios which must be kept at all times for the safety of the children are as follows:
  - Infants: 3 to 1 adult (16 or older).
  - Toddlers: 4 to 1 adult (12 or older).
  - 2's: 5 to 1 adult (12 or older).
  - 3's: 5 to 1 adult (12 or older).
  - 4's: 7 to 1 adult (12 or older).
  - K-5<sup>th</sup>: 10 to 1 adult (12 or older).

### **Volunteers & Kids - Ardent Student Ministries**

1. Ardent Mentors/Volunteers/Leaders will be partnered up with students of the same gender and are not to be alone with a student of the opposite sex at any time.

### **Activities/Events Guidelines**

1. When weather permits, volunteers may choose to take a group of children or youth outside to the grass area or for a walk on church grounds. A notice must be placed on the class door to inform parents of the location of the children or youth.
2. Church members that open their homes for a children or youth event must comply with all church safety policies.
3. Tobacco, alcohol, controlled substances or weapons are strictly prohibited at all church activities involving children or youth.
4. Ardent student volunteers should not wear any clothes that they cannot wear to school. This includes any articles of clothing reflecting negative, obscene or sexual messages.
5. All supervising adults must be approved volunteers who have completed the volunteer application process and received Safety Plan training.
6. Any accident must be immediately reported by following church policy.

7. There can be no excessive touching, hugging, kissing or lap sitting (older children or youth) of volunteers of either gender during church activities.
8. Children or youth should not wander outside of the church or activity area without adult supervision.

### **Transportation Guidelines**

1. The number of passengers allowed in a car is limited to the number of seat belts available in that vehicle. Seat belts must be worn properly.
2. All drivers must have a valid driver's license and maintain minimum automobile insurance requirements as determined by Grace Chapel.
3. Kidventure:
  - a. All drivers transporting children during an activity must be 21 years of age or older.
  - b. All children must have written permission from a parent or guardian to ride in a vehicle.
4. Ardent Student Ministries:
  - a. Ardent staff must maintain a parent's and/or guardian's verbal permission for students to ride in a vehicle with them.
  - b. A general understanding of what to do in case of an accident or breakdown is required.

### **Restroom Guidelines – Kidventure Community**

We strongly recommend that parents take their children to the restroom prior to each class or service. This procedure will be communicated to parents at the beginning of each new school year.

#### **Preschool**

1. Only female adults may escort a group of children to the restroom.
2. If an adult female is not available to take the children to the restroom an approved female teen volunteer can escort children to the restroom.
3. The volunteer should then remain outside the restroom stall and wait for the children before escorting them back to the classroom.
4. In the instance a child needs assistance, please leave the stall door open and assist the child as needed.

5. Children should be taken to the restroom in groups of two or more. If only one child needs to use the restroom, please ask another child to accompany you to the restroom.

### **Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade**

1. Responsible school-age children are to pick up a hall pass from the Oversight adult at the Outpost and go in same gender pairs to the restroom.
2. Children are then to return the hall pass to the Oversight adult at the Outpost before returning to class.

### **Discipline Guidelines – Kidventure**

With effective classroom management, discipline is rarely needed. We are never to use any form of physical punishment with children at Grace Chapel. The goal of Biblical discipline is always restoration of the child. The attitude of love is the key to accomplishing this goal. Using Positive and Negative Reinforcement, we can accomplish the goal of effective classroom management and restoration of a disruptive child.

**Positive Reinforcement** is a tool to be used at all times. It involves **continual observation** and praise to children for their good behavior and participation. Some examples are:

“All of you are sitting very nicely.”

“You are doing a nice job coloring.”

“I really like the way some of you are raising your hands to talk.”

“Do you know how much it pleases God when you sing to Him?”

**Negative Reinforcements** are used when a child or children become disruptive to the classroom environment. It involves removing the child from the rest of the class in a time-out situation. The child should be separated from the class for a length of time appropriate to his/her age (generally one minute per year old). Remind the child of the rule they have broken. If a child continues to disobey or misbehave, an adult helper can get a parent out of service to have them talk with their child. Please take the time to communicate with the parent the nature of the problem and what the child needs to do to stay in class. At this time, the parent can talk it over with their child outside of the classroom, or stay with their child until the child complies, or the parent can remove the child from the classroom. Parents’ assistance should be acknowledged with appreciation and warmth and they should be assured that their child will be eagerly welcomed when he/she is able to follow the rules. Please also follow up with the parent and ask about effective ways to communicate with their child.

## **Principles for Effective Classroom Management**

**Effective Classroom Management** is accomplished when you have a structured and well-monitored classroom. Setting expectations and reminding kids of our two rules is helpful in setting up a structured classroom.

1. Be SAFE
2. Be RESPECTFUL

These expectations for children should be clearly communicated in the classroom setting:

- Not all children are able to sit quietly for extended periods of time, so give consideration to their needs as you plan the lesson.
- Allow time for students to get the “wiggles” out.
- Be consistent with all children.
- Maintain students’ dignity.
- Make sure that discipline and guidance is provided in a loving way for each child’s benefit.
- Follow through; immediate correction of problem behaviors will let students know you are fair and consistent.
- Know your students. Be sensitive to each child and the effects the lesson can have on his/her life.

## **Have a Prevention Plan – Kidventure**

1. **Teamwork (amongst staff & helpers)**
  - a. Use eye contact and hand motions to communicate across the room.
  - b. Be on the “same page” with expectations of the students & each other.
  - c. Use distraction techniques with the students to “back up” the other teacher.
  - d. Present yourselves as a team. Know each other well enough to know when the other needs help.
  - e. Reinforce what the other teacher has asked of a student.
2. **Minimize distractions in the classroom**
  - a. Close doors.
  - b. Remove/put away things that will take students’ attention from you.
  - c. Be purposeful in setting up the room.
  - d. Use visual and/or auditory aids to draw attention.
  - e. Change activities often.
  - f. Use logical rhythm. Slow, quiet activities at the beginning of class and then greater freedom of movement and expression toward the end. Preschoolers will need several such cycles.
3. **Know your students**
  - a. Allow “space” for students who need it, as long as they aren’t disrupting someone else.
  - b. Physically separate students prone to distract each other.
  - c. Do check-ins with the students; especially those that seem “out of sorts.”
  - d. The students are active participants. No one can sit and listen passively for very long – especially kids.
4. **Be Prepared**
  - a. Give responsibilities or have another activity prepared to give to students that get bored or finish their activity.
  - b. Know your lesson and the layout of the class time. (Sometimes it’s helpful to the teachers and students to write out the schedule on the board.)
  - c. Have a structured class. Students should know what they should be doing at any given time.
5. **Communicate Expectations**
  - a. Take a few minutes at the beginning of each class to remind the students of the rules.
  - b. Have the students repeat the rules or have them name & give examples of what they mean.
  - c. Physical proximity can prevent students from being tempted to break expectations. A hand on a shoulder or sitting/standing next to a child is a great reminder.
  - d. Use Positive Reinforcement whenever possible.
6. **Be Consistent**
  - a. You are lying to a student when you say that you are going to discipline them and don’t follow through.

- b. Being predictable provides stability to the class and helps a student trust you.
- c. Be consistent with all children.

## **Specifics About Infant/Toddler Rooms**

1. No child should be admitted into Base Camp if any of these conditions exist:
  - First 48 hours of a cold or flu
  - Yellow/green runny nose
  - Elevated fever now or during the past 24 hours
  - Eye drainage or infection
  - Contagious rash
  - Any other contagious illness
2. If symptoms are observed after admission, try to separate the child from other infants and ask another adult to locate the parents. Take extra precaution at this time to avoid handling other children until the child has been taken from Base Camp and you wash your hands.
3. All workers in the infant/toddler rooms should be in good health. If you or any other worker becomes ill while working in the nursery, ask another adult to locate one of the oversight people.
4. No one under 16 years old may supervise infants without an adult.
5. New gloves should be worn with each diaper change. Hands are to be washed and the paper changed on the changing table after each diaper change. The changing table should also be sanitized with clorox spray or wipes.
6. Only adult women should change diapers.
7. Only those scheduled to work should be inside the infant or toddler rooms (except nursing moms). You may allow parents to help transition their child.
8. Wear your Kidventure name tag at all times so that new parents will know to whom they are entrusting their children.
9. All children are to receive tender, loving care.
10. Used toys should be placed in a large plastic bin at the end of the service. Large toys should be sprayed or wiped with lysol following each session of care.
11. Parents should leave special instructions, if needed, in order to allow infant/toddler workers to provide the best possible care of their child.
12. Label items which are removed from the diaper bag with the child's name, i.e. bottle, pacifier.
13. Oversight staff will check and change diapers as needed.
14. Children in the nursery or toddler rooms may be released only to a parent or guardian that has a matching security receipt. Older children may not pick up a child from the infant/toddler room.

## **Injury Guidelines**

1. If a child or youth is injured as a result of an accident, appropriate First Aid should be given. First Aid supplies are available in all classrooms.
2. All injuries should be reported on the Accident Report form. The child or youths' parents should be notified immediately, depending on severity, or when the parent picks up the child or youth.
3. For a life-threatening injury, staff will call 911 and notify the parents immediately, giving them as much information as possible.

## **Medications**

1. Volunteer leaders are not to give or apply medications. (Including Aspirin, Tylenol or Advil.) If a child or youth needs medication, the parent must give it or give permission for the leader to give it.
2. No medication will be left with a volunteer worker or with the child or youth.
3. In extreme cases (asthma or anaphylactic reactions), prior arrangements should be made by the parents with the Kidventure or Ardent Student Ministries staff, including written instructions to be followed in the administration of emergency medications.
4. "Medications" also includes the application of special powders or ointments during diaper changing. If special powders or ointments are required, prior arrangements must be made for the parents to be responsible to change their child's diaper as needed during the service.

## **Guidelines to Prevent Infectious Disease**

1. A Body Fluids kit will be available next to the Cleaning Supply/First Aid kit.
2. Anyone who comes into contact with any body fluid (blood, urine, stool, vomit) should wear gloves.
3. Anyone changing diapers should wear gloves and use a new pair for every diaper change.
4. Anyone who comes into contact with any body fluid should wash their hands with disinfectant soap and rinse with water, which is supplied by each sink.
5. Isolate the area where any blood or body fluid may have dropped on carpet, toys, chairs, tables and wash these areas with soap, water and disinfectant.
6. Keep other children or youth from contact with the body fluid.
7. Place all soiled gauze, bandages, and wrappers into a zip-closure bag. Pull gloves off inside-out and place in bag. Seal and dispose in a plastic lined trash container.
8. Wash your hands thoroughly with antibacterial soap following the clean-up.



9. The diaper changing table will have a disposable wax paper cover, which will be discarded after each diaper change with fresh paper applied.

# **Child Abuse**

## **Recognizing Child Abuse**

### **Victims and Perpetrators**

The victim of child abuse is an unmarried person, under the age of 18, who has been purposely physically or mentally injured, negligently treated or maltreated, sexually abused or exploited, or who dies as a result of abuse or neglect. Abuse in Oregon is “actual” as well as “threatened harm” to a child. According to the Reporting Law, threatened harm means substantial risk of harm to a child’s health or welfare. Reports of suspected child abuse must be made when an incident of child abuse has caused or could have caused any physical injury, mental injury, illness, disability, or death to a child.

Perpetrators of child abuse come from all walks of life, races, religions, and nationalities. They come from all professions and represent all levels of intelligence. They reflect all standards of living, from the very filthy to the impeccably clean. No single social strata is free from incidents of child abuse. People who have abused a child represent a cross-section of social, emotional, and psychiatric disturbances. The largest group of child abusers have drug and alcohol problems.

Many parents who abuse their children lack basic information about normal child development and parenting. One significant and common characteristic of child abusers is they have unrealistic expectations of their child’s ability to do certain tasks or to respond emotionally. These two factors can lead to abuse or neglect.

For instance:

- A parent might expect a one-year-old to be completely toilet trained.
- The parent might require the child to take care of the parent’s hurt feelings.
- The parent may believe that a small child is doing certain things to deliberately provoke the parent; i.e., an infant’s crying or a toddler’s creating a mess with food may be misunderstood as purposeful.

Sexual abusers share some of the same characteristics as physically abusive or neglectful parents. In addition, however, sexual abusers manifest deviant behaviors which result in sexual assault of children. Sexual abusers use manipulation, threats, bribery, coercion, and sometimes force in sexual assaults. Sexual abusers violate the trust that a child inherently places in them for care and protection. Sexual offenders exploit the power and authority of their position as a trusted adult in order to sexually misuse a child. Sexual abusers usually warn or threaten the victim “not to tell,” thus creating a conspiracy of silence about the assault(s).

### **Physical Abuse**

Abuse constitutes any physical injury to a child which has been caused by other than accidental means, including any injury which appears to be at variance with the explanation given for the injury. Abuse includes reckless or negligent use of drugs

during pregnancy which results in the birth of an infant with addictions or impairment.

Non-accidental physical injuries may appear as bruises, burns, fractures, bites, cuts, sprains, internal injuries, and auditory, dental, ocular, or brain damage.

### ***Possible Physical Indicators***

- Bruises and welts on face, lips, mouth, torso, back, buttocks or thighs in various stages of healing.
- Bruises and welts reflecting shape of article used (electric cord, belt buckle).
- Cigar or cigarette burns, especially on soles, palms, back, or buttocks.
- Immersion burns (sock-like, glove-like, donut-shaped on buttocks or genitalia).
- Burn patterned (like electric element, iron or utensil).
- Rope burns on arms, legs, neck or torso.
- Lacerations to mouth, lips, gums, eyes or external genitalia.
- Fractures of skull, nose or facial structure in various stages of healing; multiple or spiral fractures.

### ***Possible Behavioral Indicators***

- Wary of adult contact.
- Apprehensive when other children cry.
- Behavioral extremes such as aggressiveness or withdrawal.
- Frightened of parents.
- Afraid to go home.

## **Neglect**

Neglect is negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child which causes actual harm or substantial risk of harm to a child's health, welfare, and safety.

Neglect includes but is not limited to:

Failure to provide adequate supervision such that a child is endangered; an act of exploitation such as requiring a child to be involved in criminal activity; failure to provide life necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, nurturance; "medical neglect" is failure to provide necessary medical care, including the withholding of medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions; abandonment or desertion of a child; and "emotional neglect" is failure to provide the emotional nurturing, physical, and cognitive stimulation needed to prevent serious developmental deficits.

### ***Possible Physical Indicators***

- Consistent hunger, poor hygiene, inappropriate dress.
- Consistent lack of supervision.
- Unattended physical/emotional problems or medical needs.

### ***Possible Behavioral Indicators***

- Begging, stealing food.

- Extended stays at school (early arrival and late departure).
- Constant fatigue, listlessness, or falling asleep in class.
- Alcohol or drug abuse.
- Delinquency.
- States there is no caretaker.
- Shunned by peers.

### **Mental Injury or Emotional Maltreatment**

Mental injury is harm to a child's ability to think, reason, or have feelings. A child who has been mentally injured is one who has been the victim of cruel or unconscionable acts or statements or who suffers from a caretaker's failure to provide necessary nurturance or protection.

Mental injury has a harmful effect on a child which can be observed.

Parental behaviors which can cause mental injury fall into a pattern of emotionally destructive actions usually taking one or more forms: rejecting, terrorizing, ignoring, isolating, or corrupting. Acts of parents which may result in mental injury include, but are not limited to, habitual ridicule, scapegoating, deprivation of food or water, exposure to violence, threats to health or safety, torture, and confinement.

#### ***Possible Physical Indicators***

- Failure to grow.
- Speech or sleep disorders.
- Forced to dress in "opposite sex" clothing.

#### ***Possible Behavioral Indicators***

- Behavior extremes: aggression/violence to self or others or withdrawal.
- Habit disorders (sucking, biting, rocking).
- Attempted suicide.
- Conduct disorders (antisocial, runaway, fire-setting, destructive).
- Emotional neediness.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Child sexual abuse occurs when a person uses or attempts to use a child for their own sexual gratification. This includes incest, rape, sodomy, sexual penetration, fondling, voyeurism, etc. In 2001, 66 percent of sex abuse occurred within the family.

- Fondling includes touching sexual parts of the body, such as breasts, genitals, and buttocks. This may include an adult having a child touch the sexual parts of their body.
- Sexual contact includes rape, sodomy, incest, sexual penetration, etc.
- Sexual harassment includes intimidating or pressuring a child for sexual activities.

- Exposure and voyeurism include someone exposing him or herself to a child or exposing the genitals of a child for the adult's sexual gratification.

Persons who sexually abuse children rely on many methods to force children to keep quiet. They may be subtle, telling the child they are doing it for his or her own good or promising him or her favor or gifts. Or they may be more blatant, such as a father warning his daughter that if she tells anyone, the family will be broken up and everyone will blame her. Many abusers use threats, telling the child his or her pets will be hurt, siblings will be targeted, or even that the child will be killed if he or she tells.

### ***Possible Behavioral Indicators***

- Withdrawal, fantasy or infantile behavior.
- Poor peer relationships.
- Delinquent or run away.
- Indirect allusions to problems at home such as, "I want to live with you."
- Reports sexual assault.
- Fear of a person or an intense dislike of being left alone with someone.
- Unusual interest in or knowledge of sexual matters, expressing affection in ways inappropriate for a child of that age.
- Refer also to behavioral indicators of emotional abuse.

### **Sexual Abuse By Teens**

Sexual abuse is not always a crime of adults toward children. 40% of children who are sexually abused are abused by older, or more powerful children. Oregon law does not make all sexual activity of a teen under the age of 18 illegal. The law includes defenses in some circumstances if the actor is less than three years older than the victim.

A relationship may be abusive if:

- Force is used.
- There is impaired mental and/or emotional capacity.
- Drugs or alcohol affect the ability to make a reasonable choice.
- There is manipulation, intimidation, implied threats or other forms of coercion.
- There is a distinct power differential or a significant age difference.

### **Sexual Exploitation**

Sexual exploitation is using children in a sexually explicit way for personal gain; e.g. to make money, to obtain food stamps or drugs, or to gain status. It also includes using children in prostitution and using children to create pornography.

### **Threats of Harm**

Threat of harm is subjecting a child to a substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare. Substantial harm is defined as immobilizing impairment, life-threatening

damage, or significant or acute injury to a child's physical, sexual, psychological, or mental development and/or functioning.

Reports of this type of abuse do not need to include harm having occurred, but may include:

- A child living with or cared for by a person who has been convicted of child abuse or neglect of any child in the past.
- A child born to or coming to live with any person who has a child currently out of their home as a result of child abuse or neglect.
- A newborn whose primary caregiver appears to lack the skills necessary to provide adequate care even though the child has not suffered harm.
- A child living with a person who is involved in child pornography.
- Caregiver behavior which is out of control and threatening to a child's safety; e.g., driving while intoxicated with children in the car, not taking prescribed medication, engaging in drug or alcohol abuse, or impairment due to a mental, emotional, or physical problem.

## **Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence is a pattern of assaultive and/or coercive behaviors including physical, sexual, and emotional abuses, as well as economic coercion that adults use against their intimate partners to gain power and control in that relationship. Domestic violence is present in all cultures, socio-economic classes, communities of faith, etc. Domestic violence almost always increases in intensity, severity, and/or frequency.

The presence of domestic violence is a risk for children. However, not all situations of domestic violence require a report to DHS or law enforcement. DHS's authority to intervene with families is based on whether a child is being physically abused, sexually abused, neglected, suffering mental injury or is being subjected to an activity or condition likely to result in substantial harm.

## **Child Selling**

- Buying, selling, or trading for legal or physical custody of a child.
- Does not apply to legitimate adoptions or domestic relations planning.

## **Fatality**

When suspected abuse or neglect is a factor in a child's death, a report must be made. The medical examiner and law enforcement conduct a criminal investigation; DHS child welfare provides necessary protective services to the other children in the victim's family. If the investigation indicates that the child victim was abused or neglected, the child's name is filed in the Central Registry. The most frequent cause of a child abuse death is a head injury from shaking and battering. Most fatally abused Oregon children are under five years of age.

## **How Do I Show a Child That I Love Him Without Messing Up?**

Children (and adults) need to be touched. It is essential to nurturing and should be characteristic of our ministry. Physical contact should be age and developmentally appropriate.

### **This is what appropriate touch looks like:**

1. Meet the child at eye level by bending down or sitting.
2. Listen to him or her with your eyes as well as your ears.
3. Put your arm around the shoulder of a child when comforting or quieting is needed.
4. Pat a child's head, hand, shoulder or back when encouraging.
5. Gently hold the shoulders of a child when re-directing the child's behavior. This helps the child focus on what you are saying.
6. Hold a preschool child who is crying.
7. Smile often.
8. Tell a child the things about him/her that you like.

### **This is what inappropriate touch looks like:**

1. Kissing a child on the lips or coaxing a child to kiss you.
2. Extended hugging and tickling.
3. Touching a child in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit (unless assisting a child in the bathroom).
4. Carrying an older child or sitting him/her on your lap.
5. Being alone with a child.
6. Giving lingering full contact body to body hugs.



## **Reporting Child Abuse**

### **Mandated Reporters ORS 412A.004**

A mandated reporter is required to tell either the Department of Human Services or a law enforcement agency (city or state police, sheriff, or county juvenile department) when there is a reasonable cause to believe a child with whom the mandated reporter has had contact is being abused or a person has abused a child. The obligation to report applies regardless of whether or not the knowledge of the abuse was gained in an official capacity. The law requires that the report be made orally, so most reports are made by phone.

- Physician, including any intern or resident
- Dentist
- School Employee
- Licensed practical nurse or registered nurse
- Peace officer
- Psychologist
- Clergyman (Paid church staff)
- Licensed clinical social worker
- Optometrist
- Chiropractor
- Certified provider of day care, foster care or an employee thereof
- Attorney
- Naturopathic physician
- Firefighter
- Emergency medical technician
- Licensed professional counselor
- Licensed marriage and family therapist
- Court-appointed special advocate
- Employee of DHR, State Commission of Children and Families, Child Care Division of the Employment Department, the Oregon Youth Authority, county health department, community mental health and developmental disabilities program, a county juvenile department, a licensed child-service agency, or an alcohol and drug treatment program.

### **What if a Child Talks to You About Being Abused?**

1. Children often tell a part of a story to see if you are going to react. They sense your response. Guard your reaction and do your best not to over-react or appear shocked.
2. Believe the child that is reporting the abuse to you. Children rarely are able to lie about abuse, but even if their own developmental limitations make accurate reporting difficult, the child protective agency will sort out those issues.

3. Commend the child for talking to you and support him/her with your care and concern. Children frequently blame themselves for the abuse. Reassure the child that he or she is not to blame or at fault.
4. Don't ask the child for all the details. Remember that they will have to tell their story in full detail to the police or child protective professional. Protecting them from multiple interviews is important and they will feel more comfortable around you in the future if they have not shared more than is comfortable.
5. Explain to them what you are going to do in words they can understand. Do not promise a child you will not tell anyone.
6. Immediately document what they tell you. The person hearing the child first hand is the person who should make the report. If the child is going to return to a home where the abuse occurred and is at risk, let the police or child protection agency know that immediately. They will decide how and when to contact the family and what information should be told to the family. If you have any questions, contact the Kidventure Ministry Director or Youth Director.
7. Oversight staff will complete a "Suspected Child Abuse Report" form ASAP (found in the Base Camp desk), and report to Kidventure Director.
8. When appropriate, encourage the family to seek professional help to deal with the consequences of abuse.

### **Duty to Warn**

Duty to Warn refers to the responsibility of a counselor or therapist to inform third parties or authorities if a client poses a threat to himself or to another identifiable individual. Duty to warn gives counselors and therapists the right to breach confidentiality if a client poses a risk to another person. It also protects clinicians from prosecution from breach of confidentiality if they have reasonable suspicion that the client might be a danger to himself or others.

While we recognize that Ardent Mentors/Volunteers/Leaders are not defined as counselors or therapists, we are aware that as a relational ministry students will share personal information about themselves or others. Should any student pose a threat to himself or to another individual, it is our duty to warn the Ardent Youth Director and any other Grace Chapel staff member so that appropriate steps can be taken to protect the student as well as Grace Chapel and the Ardent Mentor/Volunteer/Leader.

Ardent Mentors/Volunteers/Leaders will be informed on how to handle a duty to warn situation should one arise.

### **What if a Parent Talks to You About an Abusive Situation?**

1. Guide the parent through the previous information. Help them understand that even though reporting is difficult, it is the beginning of a healing process for their family. Encourage them to talk to someone they know and trust who can support them through the process and not try to handle it alone.
2. Document the information immediately. Contact the Kidventure Director or Youth Director ASAP.
3. Offer to support them while they file a report. You can go with them to the police station or sit with them while they phone Department of Human Services (DHS), or they can ask the official to meet them at the church. The mandatory reporting number for Clackamas County is (503) 657-6802, after 5pm call Tri-County Child Abuse Hotline: (503) 731-3100.
4. If you think it would be helpful, follow-up the next day with a call of support.
5. If they decide not to report, gently remind them of your responsibility to report.

### **What if You Suspect Abuse has Occurred on Church Property or In the Context of Church Ministry?**

1. If it is happening at the time you learn about the abuse, stop the activity.
2. Make sure the child is safe and separated from the offender.
3. Follow the previously stated guidelines.
4. Contact the Kidventure Director or Youth Director.

### **What if an Offender Makes a Disclosure of Abuse?**

1. It is important to help the offender recognize their own responsibility. The first step in doing so is for them to make their own report to the authorities. Do not listen to attempts to explain away the situation, offer excuses or promises that it will never happen again. Document what you are told, but do not “interrogate” the offender. Give the information to the Kidventure Director or Youth Director.
2. If they have agreed to make a self report, inform the Lead Pastor who is a mandated reporter. He can call the offender to see if a report was filed and if not, he must make the report.
3. Always insist that the offender gets help. Whether physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, abusive patterns need to be addressed with experienced

professional intervention. Prayer and confession is a beginning but abuse rarely stops without treatment.

## Reporting Possible Incidents of Child Abuse

1. Be familiar with signs and symptoms of child abuse as presented in the Safety Plan training. Use caution in making judgments, since trauma in a child's life, may result in similar symptoms. No one indicator confirms child abuse. Allow each indicator to raise a "red flag" in your mind.
2. Anyone supervising children is a mandated reporter and if you suspect abuse or neglect, you must make the report either to a law enforcement agency or the Department of Human Services. In addition, you should complete the "Suspected Child Abuse" form and report the incident to the Kidventure Director or Youth Director.
3. The mandatory reporting number for Clackamas County is (503) 657-6802, after 5pm call Tri-County Child Abuse Hotline: (503) 731-3100.
4. If you are NOT a mandated reporter, you must report your observation to the Lead Pastor, Kidventure Director or Youth Director who are mandated reporters.
5. If there are signs of physical abuse or if a child tells you a specific incident of ongoing abuse, report this to the Kidventure Director, Youth Director or Lead Pastor immediately.
6. Do not "help the child tell his story". Accept without question what the child tells you. If you correct language it may appear the child was "coached" to disclose the abuse. The designated authorities will decide what is valid. You only need to suspect abuse to make a report.
7. Do not disclose the information to others. The only adults who should know are those who are mandated reporters and those who need the information to protect the child.
8. Any child/youth worker who is accused of abuse will be immediately relieved of all contact with children and youth until an investigation is complete. It is not up to the church to decide if the accusations are true. Rather, the church will serve as a support system to all involved and encourage the family to seek counseling.
9. A worker and a child should not keep secrets. Children can be taught the difference between "surprises" (acceptable) and "secrets" (not acceptable).