



Child Protection Policy

Updated: October 2019

Purpose Statement

Brockport First Baptist seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for the children who participate in our programs and activities. By implementing this policy, our goal is to protect the children of our church from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also informing our staff and volunteers (workers) about best practices when working with minors.

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the terms “child” or “children” include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years. The term “worker” includes both paid and unpaid persons who work with children. The term “volunteer” means anyone involved in church programs involving minors, in overnight activities involving minors, in counseling of minors, or in one-on-one mentoring of minors.

Selection of Workers

All persons who desire to work with the children participating in our programs and activities will be screened. This screening includes the following:

a) **Six Month Rule**

No person will be considered for any volunteer position involving contact with minors until she/he has been involved with Brockport First Baptist for a minimum of six (6) months. This time of interaction between our leadership and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant for working with children.

b) **Written Application**

All persons seeking to work with children must complete and sign a written application in a form to be supplied by us (see Appendix A). The application will request basic information from the applicant and will inquire into previous experience with children, previous church affiliations, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal convictions. The application form will be maintained in confidence on file in the church office.

c) **Personal Interview**

Upon completion of the application, a face-to-face interview may be scheduled with the applicant to discuss his/her suitability for the position.

d) **Reference Checks**

Before an applicant is permitted to work with children, at least two of the applicants' references will be checked. These references should be of an institutional nature as opposed to personal or family references, preferably from organizations where the applicant has worked with children in the past. Documentation of the reference checks will be maintained in confidence on file in the church office.

e) **Criminal Background Check**

A national criminal background check is required for all employees (regardless of position) and “volunteers” as defined above.

Before a background check is run, prospective workers will be asked to sign an authorization form allowing the church/synagogue/meeting to run the check. If an individual declines to sign the authorization form, they will be unable to work with children.

A disqualifying offense that will keep an individual from working with children will be determined by church leadership on a case-by-case basis in light of all the surrounding circumstances. Generally, convictions for an offense involving children and/or for offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude someone from being permitted to work with children. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on the application form will also be a disqualifying event.

The background check authorization form and results will be maintained in confidence on file in the church office.

Two Adult Rule

It is our goal that a minimum of two unrelated adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during our programs and activities. Some youth classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during the class session; in these instances, doors to the classroom should remain open and there should be no fewer than three students with the adult teacher. We do not allow minors to be alone with one adult on our premises or in any sponsored activity unless in a counseling situation.

Teenage Workers

We recognize that there may be times when it is necessary or desirable for babysitters (paid or volunteer) who are themselves under age 18 to assist in caring for children during programs or activities. The following guidelines apply to teenage workers:

- Must be at least age 14.
- Must be screened as specified above.
- Must be under the supervision of an adult and must never be left alone with children.

Check-in/Check-out Procedure

For children below sixth grade, a security check-in/check-out procedure will be followed. The child will be signed in by a parent or guardian. That same parent or guardian must return at the end of the program to sign out the child. In the event that a parent or guardian is unable to sign out the child, the Pastor or Church Moderator should be notified. They will then be responsible for releasing the child to the care of a parent or guardian after discussing the surrounding circumstances with the parent or guardian.

Sick Child Policy

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all of the children at Brockport First Baptist. Parents are encouraged to be considerate of other children when deciding whether to place a child under our care. In general, children with the following symptoms should NOT be dropped off:

- Fever, diarrhea, or vomiting within the last 48 hours;
- Green or yellow runny nose;
- Eye or skin infections; and/or

- Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease.

Children who are observed by our workers to be ill will be separated from other children and the parent or guardian will be contacted to request that the child be picked up for the day.

Medications Policy

It is the policy of Brockport First Baptist not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children under our care. Medications should be administered by a parent at home. Parents are reminded of our sick child policy.

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 or Church Moderator to develop a plan of action.

Restroom Guidelines

Children five years of age and younger should use a classroom bathroom if one is available. If a classroom bathroom is not available, workers should escort a group of children to the hallway bathroom. They should always go in a group, never taking a child to the bathroom alone. The workers should check the bathroom first to make sure that it is empty, and then allow the children inside. The workers should then remain outside the bathroom door and escort the children back to the classroom. If a child is taking longer than seems necessary, the worker should open the bathroom door and call the child's name. If a child requires assistance, the workers should prop open the bathroom door, and leave the stall door open as they assist the child.

For children over the age of five, at least one adult male should take boys to the restroom and at least one adult female should take girls. The worker should check the bathroom first to make sure that the bathroom is empty, and then allow the children inside. The worker should then remain outside the bathroom door and escort the children back to the classroom.

For the protection of all, workers should *never* be alone with a child in a bathroom with the door closed and never be in a closed bathroom stall with a child. Parents are strongly encouraged to have their children visit the bathroom prior to each class.

Accidental Injuries to Children

In the event that a child or youth is injured while under our care, the following steps should be followed:

1. For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent or guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care.
2. For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First Aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the worker's supervisor. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
3. Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed in the case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional.

Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse

For purposes of this policy, “child abuse” is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a child’s physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:

- **Physical abuse** – any physical injury to a child that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.
- **Emotional abuse** – emotional injury when the child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and persistent teasing.
- **Sexual abuse** – any sexual activity between a child and an adult or between a child and another child at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
- **Neglect** – depriving a child of his or her essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.

Childcare workers may have the opportunity to become aware of abuse or neglect of the children under our care. In the event that an individual involved in the care of children at this church becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a child under his/her care, this should be reported immediately to the Pastor or Church Moderator for further action, including reporting to authorities as may be mandated by state law.

In the event that an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred at this church or during our sponsored programs or activities, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The parent or guardian of the child will be notified.
2. The worker or church member alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave pending an investigation and instructed to remain away from the premises during the investigation. They will be instructed to have no contact with the victim or with witnesses.
3. All allegations of abuse will be reported to the civil authorities, and the church will comply with the state’s requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists. Our church will fully cooperate with the investigation of the incident by civil authorities.
4. The church’s insurance company will be notified, and the church will complete an incident report (Appendix B). Any documents received relating to the incident and/or allegations will immediately be forwarded to the insurance company.
5. The church will designate a spokesperson to the media concerning incidents of abuse or neglect. The advice of legal counsel will be sought before responding to media inquiries or releasing information about the situation to the congregation. All other representatives of the organization should refrain from speaking to the media.
6. A pastoral visit will be arranged for those who desire it. This should be for the purpose of providing pastoral support during the time of crisis and not for the purpose of investigating the incident or influencing the investigation.

7. Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position working with children or youth.

Training

Brockport First Baptist will provide training on this child protection policy to all new childcare workers and will strive to provide opportunities for additional training classes or events on an annual basis. All workers are strongly encouraged to attend these training events.

Children’s Ministry Volunteer Application

This application must be completed by all applicants for any volunteer position involving the supervision or custody of minors (under 18 years of age) at Brockport First Baptist. This is not an employment application form.

General Information

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Date of Birth ____ / ____ / _____ (MM/DD/YYYY)

Do you regularly attend our worship services? **Yes / No** (Circle One)

If yes, when did you start attending? _____ (approx. date)

Ministry Information

Are you currently serving in another ministry of our church? If so, please list: _____

What experience (if any) do you have working with children, youth, or minors in other settings?

Please list any other churches where you’ve attended, been a member, or volunteered in the last ten years.

Have you personally and publicly accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior and are you committed to striving to display the character of Jesus through your life?

Yes / No (Circle One)

How are you growing in your relationship with Jesus?

References

List 3 adults you have known for at least 2 years, who are not related to you who have specific knowledge of your character and ability to work with children and who fit the classifications set forth below.

1. Our Church (or previous church) member or staff person:

Name: _____ Nature of association: _____

Length of time known: _____ Phone: _____

2. Employer or fellow employee:

Name: _____ Nature of association: _____

Length of time known: _____ Phone: _____

3. Friend or neighbor:

Name: _____ Nature of association: _____

Length of time known: _____ Phone: _____

Previous Addresses

If you have lived at your current address for less than 5 years, provide the following information for all addresses at which you lived during that period. (*Attach additional paper if necessary*)

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Dates (from / to): _____

Present Employer: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Personal Disclosure Information

1. Do you have children of your own? **Yes / No** Ages: _____

2. Have you ever been treated for a psychiatric disorder? **Yes / No**

3. Have you ever been arrested, convicted, or plead guilty to a crime? **Yes / No**

If yes, please explain: _____

4. Have you ever been accused, charged, or alleged to have, or have you ever committed any act of neglecting, abusing, or molesting any child? **Yes / No**
5. Have you ever been concerned that you may have an addiction to drugs, alcohol, pornography or any other addiction; or has anyone ever suggested that you may have a problem with any of the above? **Yes / No**
6. Have you ever been convicted of the possession, use, or sale of drugs within the last 7 years? **Yes / No**
7. Within the past 30 days have you abused alcohol, legal or illegal drugs? **Yes / No**
8. Has your driver's license been suspended or revoked within the last 12 months?
Yes / No
9. Is there any fact, circumstance, or pattern involving your background that would make it inappropriate for you to serve with minors or would compromise the integrity of the church?
Yes / No

If yes, please explain: _____

Applicant's Statement

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references, churches, or organizations listed in this application to give you any information (including opinions) that they have regarding my character and fitness for children's ministry. I authorize the release of the information contained in this application to any individuals who make decisions about placing applicants in available positions. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application by our church, I hereby release the church and any individual, church, youth organization, charity, employer, reference, or any other person or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family, on account of compliance or any attempts to comply, with this authorization. I waive any right that I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me in this application.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to refrain from unethical conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the church.

I further state that I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF AND SIGN THIS RELEASE AS MY OWN FREE ACT. This is a legally binding agreement that I have read and understand.

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature (if applicant is under 16): _____

Request for Criminal Records Check and Authorization

Important: Every applicant, regardless of criminal record must complete this section.

I hereby request and authorize the release of any information which pertains to any record of convictions contained in law enforcement files or in any criminal file maintained on me whether local, state, or national. I hereby release local, state, and national law enforcement agencies from any and all liability resulting from such disclosure.

Applicant's signature: _____

Print name, including maiden name (if applicable): _____

Date of birth: ____ / ____ / _____ place of birth: _____

Driver's license number and state: _____

Place completed forms in the pastor's mailbox.

Brockport First Baptist Children's Ministry Incident Report Form

This form is to be completed by an adult witness whenever an incident requiring medical attention occurs. The completed form should be given to the parent/guardian of the child or young person, and a copy should be filed at the church for future reference.

General Information

Name of injured child: _____ Age: _____

Names of adult witness(es) of the incident: _____

Date of incident: _____ Time of incident: _____

Description of Incident

Describe the incident:

- i. Where in the did the incident occur?
- ii. What area of the child's body was injured?
- iii. What was the child doing when the incident happened?
- iv. How was the child cared for after the incident happened?

Was first aid administered or similar action taken? Yes / No (Circle One)

If yes, by whom & what was given? _____

Confirmation of Receipt by Parent or Guardian

Name of parent/guardian: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____