



Grandview Baptist Church

Child & Student Safety Policy

Approved by the Elders Board & ratified by Membership

October 2003

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1 Intent

The church has a spiritual, moral and legal obligation to provide a secure environment for children participating in church ministries who are under its care to minimize the risk of abuse or injury of any kind. This policy arises out of our recognition of the depravity of man, our desire to maintain a safe environment for our children, and our obligation to protect our children from those who may be inclined to prey upon them. In no way does the policy imply a lack of trust or appreciation for those who have faithfully contributed to Children’s Ministry or Student Ministry in the past and will in the future.

This policy arises out of a recognition that God expects us to act wisely and diligently to protect those under our care. However, more fundamentally we acknowledge that the only true safety comes under the protection of our sovereign and loving God. Therefore, we commit ourselves also to praying for the safety of our children.

2 Definitions

“Children” means anyone to whom Children’s Ministry ministers, and in some contexts may also include those to whom Student Ministry ministers. When the context requires a distinction, “younger children” means the former group only, and “students” means the latter group only.

“Children’s Ministry” means any programs or services provided by Grandview intended for those in the age range from infants up to and including Grade 6.

“Emotional abuse” means a pattern of hurting another person’s feelings to the point of damaging their self-respect. It includes verbal attacks, insults, humiliation and rejection.

“Grandview” means Grandview Baptist Church.

“Harassment” means any objectionable conduct, comment, material or display that demeans, belittles, intimidates or humiliates another person which is known, or ought reasonably to have been known, to be unwelcome.

“Ministry Leader” means the person responsible for overseeing a particular event in Children’s Ministry or Student Ministry, and would normally be the Director, Children’s Ministry or delegate, or the Director, Student Ministry or delegate, respectively.

“Parent” means a parent or legal guardian of the child, or one authorized to act temporarily in this capacity by a parent or legal guardian.

“Physical abuse” means using physical force or action that results, or could result, in injury to another person. It is more than reasonable discipline.

“Sexual abuse” means using a less powerful person for sexual stimulation or gratification. It may or may not involve touching.

“Student Ministry” means any program or service provided by Grandview intended for those who have completed Grade 6 but not completed high school, or those of comparable age.

“Worker” means a staff member of Grandview or a volunteer active in Children’s Ministry or Student Ministry.

3 Scope

This policy applies to the qualifications and actions of workers in Children’s Ministry or Student Ministry who are in contact with children. Each is asked to be familiar with the policy and associated procedures, and to agree in writing to follow them.

4 Qualification of Volunteers

Those wishing to become volunteers are required to do the following:

1. Give evidence of being a Christ-follower.
2. Attend Grandview for at least six months. (Exceptions may be made for students attending post-secondary school who are temporarily attending Grandview, on recommendation from the pastor of their home church.)
3. Make a written application, which includes some personal history and references.
4. Provide an acceptable criminal-record check from the police.
5. Agree to follow this policy and its associated procedures, and to support Grandview’s statement of faith and vision.
6. For those who co-ordinate, lead in cells, teach or shepherd, be a member of Grandview, or be in the process of becoming a member. There may be some exceptions, as allowed by section 6.1 of the bylaws, which require approval of the Board.

6.1 Service in the ministries of the Church is normally restricted to Members, but in exceptional circumstances the Board may approve service by non-members. Such approval will be for specific forms of service and for whatever time period the Board may determine. Each non-member approved will be required to sign a statement affirming his faith in Jesus Christ and his willingness to submit to the standards and procedures of discipline which are applicable to Members.

Grandview’s Children’s Ministry and Student Ministry staff and designated volunteers support the process in the following ways:

1. Maintain a confidential file of applications and criminal records checks.
2. Interview applicants.
3. Check references and review criminal records checks.
4. Ensure that applicants are trained in this policy and associated procedures.
5. Provide additional training as required to ensure that the volunteer is able to engage in Children’s Ministry or Student Ministry in a safe and effective manner.

A new criminal-record check is required at least every 5 years.

5 Standard of Behaviour

The Bible gives us our standard of behaviour. The specifics mentioned here are a subset of what God requires of us. All workers are expected to:

1. act in a loving manner toward all children,
2. model servant-leadership as a Christ-follower, and
3. refrain from harassment and any form of physical abuse, emotional abuse or sexual abuse toward children or other workers.

The Ministry Leader, the Director, Children's Ministry, the Director, Student Ministry, the Senior Pastor or the Chairman of the Board of Elders may suspend any volunteer from Children's Ministry or Student Ministry at any time and without advance notice. If such a suspension occurs, the one issuing the suspension as soon as practical notifies the Elders.

The appendices include several specific behaviours required in dealing with children.

6 Reporting Incidents

Any worker who witnesses or becomes aware of any form of illness, injury, or abuse of a child or another worker must report the incident to the Ministry Leader, as soon as possible, consistent with meeting the immediate needs of the child or worker. The appropriate procedure in Appendix 1 or 2 is to be followed as closely as reasonable.

A report of any illness, injury or alleged abuse suffered by a child is made to the parents as soon as possible. Workers must comply fully with the requirements of Children and Family Services about reporting suspected abuse. All allegations of abuse are treated as serious, and never dismissed without investigation.

If a worker is accused of any abuse, either in the church or elsewhere, the worker will be suspended immediately. The suspension is a recognition of the importance of protecting our children; it does not imply agreement with the accusation. Grandview will support the worker, whether guilty or innocent, with love, comfort, and if necessary, discipline.

7 Procedures

More detailed procedures are needed to implement this policy, and changes will be needed from time to time. The procedures and changes to them take effect when approved by the Board. The approved procedures appear with the policy as appendices.

Appendix 1: Safety Procedures – Children’s Ministry

You, the worker in Children’s Ministry, should be aware of these safety procedures and follow them as closely as you reasonably can.

For convenience, procedures are listed in alphabetical order.

1 Absence of Worker

We seek to maintain a safe worker/child ratio at all times. If you are unable to fulfill your scheduled time to serve, contact your Ministry Leader as far ahead as possible.

2 Attendance

2.1 Nursery & Preschool

1. Parents sign their child in and receive a coded number tag to take with them.
2. Child must wear a nametag with same coded number and any “alert” information necessary for worker to know.
3. Parent must return the coded number tag matching their child’s to retrieve their child and sign them out on same sheet they signed in.

2.2 JK – Grade 4

1. Children must check in at children’s Welcome Desk. Welcome Desk Greeters will record their attendance on proper sheet.
2. Children receive their name tag at Welcome Desk
3. Children proceed to designated group room / area.
4. Parents must come to pick up their child from the room or area.
5. Following the program, group leaders collect and return the nametags to the Welcome Desk.

2.3 Grades 5 & 6

1. We will at various times choose between two arrangements for starting these classes.
 1. Children sit in first part of adult Worship Service with their families and are dismissed at an arranged time. The teacher meets the children at the designated location and escorts them to their class, greeting and noting any newcomers.
 2. Children go directly to their class.
2. Attendance is taken in the classroom.

3. We will communicate to the parents that it is their responsibility to inform the teacher if they wish their child to remain in the classroom for pick-up following the program.
4. Remind children who are dismissed on their own that they must not interrupt programs and services still in progress.

3 Conduct of Workers

Conduct yourself toward each and every child in the same manner that you would if a parent were in the room. In particular:

1. Do not speak in an abusive, sexually suggestive or condemning way.
2. Do not use corporal (physical) punishment.
3. Do not put a child in a vulnerable situation in which their safety could be in jeopardy.
4. Do not touch a child except in a manner of which a parent would approve.

If a child is in need of specific attention (due to behavioural, emotional or physical needs) beyond your ability to handle, direct the child to their parents if they are on site.

Otherwise, contact the Ministry Leader as soon as possible.

4 Discipline

The team of workers for each age group should establish together a few, simple rules of expected conduct for the children at the beginning of each ministry term. These should be explained clearly and posted within the room as a reminder. The following is an example, which would not be appropriate for all ages:

1. Be a good listener.
2. Be respectful with actions and speech.
3. Be involved (participate).

If discipline is necessary, conduct yourself toward each and every child in the same manner that you would if the parents were in the room. The following actions are acceptable.

1. Use the child's name to redirect to activity.
2. Place hand on the shoulder, arm or back to help focus attention.
3. Review group rules and verbalize the correct behaviour you are expecting.
4. Remove the child from the group to discuss the problem and suggest an alternative activity or behaviour.
5. Try to re-integrate the child into group activity.
6. Have an assistant take the child to the parent if on site, or call the Ministry Leader.

Be generous in your praise of good behaviour, always affirming your love, care and concern for the child and always ready to forgive. In this way you have the privilege of

modeling the character of Jesus, thereby drawing these children ever closer to desiring to follow Him.

5 Fire Safety & Evacuation Procedure

Know the exit route and location of fire alarms and extinguishers at all times in the building.

A fire presents grave danger, not just for those in the room where the fire starts, but also for all occupants of the building. No set of guidelines will be right for all possible circumstances. It is vital for each worker to show good judgement. The priority is clearly on protecting lives rather than protecting property. However, for the worker at the site of the fire there will always be a difficult choice. Are the lives of all the occupants better protected by attempting to put out the fire, or by starting the evacuation earlier? If the fire can be put out quickly, putting out the fire will be best for all. If the fire is already beyond the ability of the worker to put it out, evacuating immediately will be the best choice.

If there is a fire in your classroom, the following lists a reasonable priority of actions, but the actual circumstances may require that you follow a different order. If there is another worker in the classroom (and there should almost always be), one of you must concentrate on the safety of the children in the class, and the others on the safety of the other occupants and the building.

1. Get the children out of the room as soon as possible.
2. Call for help.
3. Fight the fire if the fire appears containable. Fire extinguishers are nearby.
4. If the fire cannot be contained,
 1. Pull the fire alarm to warn the rest of the occupants and to call the fire department.
 2. Follow the Emergency Exit Procedure.
5. If you put out the fire, report incident to the Ministry Leader. The children may be allowed to return only if there is a minimal impact on the classroom.

If you hear the fire alarm, immediately start the Emergency Exit Procedure.

The Emergency Exit Procedure is as follows:

1. Gather all groups together, and assign a worker to each group.
2. The worker in charge picks up the Attendance Record and takes it with him or her so that all children can be accounted for.
3. Check all areas of the room(s) before exiting (Nursery: especially sleeping and nursing rooms).
4. Shut all doors and windows behind you as you leave.
5. The worker in charge is to be the last to leave.

6. Lead the children out of the building by the designated exit route, unless that route is blocked by fire, to the designated assembly point.
7. Do not stop for coats.
8. Take attendance at the assembly point to ensure that all are safely out.
9. Do not re-enter the building until told it is safe to do so.

6 Injury

Take note of the marked location of First Aid Kits on the Floor Plan layout. With each Kit you will find an attached list of names of medical professionals within our Grandview family.

1. Assess the severity of the injury, comfort the child, and inform a parent and Ministry Leader as soon as feasible consistent with the child's safety.
2. Give appropriate medical attention as able, remembering to always wear the provided latex gloves whenever blood is involved.
3. If needed, seek the help of a medical professional from Grandview who may be on site at the time, or call "911"
4. If an ambulance is called, acquire the child's health card number from the Ministry Leader's records to accompany the child to hospital.
5. Complete Grandview's Incident Report with noted signatures and copies.
6. Communicate your concern to parents, and make a follow up call after treatment for an update of the child's condition.

7 Off Site Events

The Ministry Leader must give approval of any event which takes children off the church premises before it is mentioned to the children. The Ministry Leader will prepare a parent consent form for the event. You must receive the completed permission form prior to departure. You must make some provision for those who are unable to participate.

8 Registration Procedure

1. The parent provides the necessary registration information for the particular program the child is entering.
2. A copy of any personal information needed to provide a safe and caring atmosphere for the child will be retained by the Ministry Leader in the room.
3. The original registration information will be handed in to the Director, Children's Ministry for recording on the church data base system.

9 Sickness

If you observe that a child is ill and possibly contagious (fever, runny nose, vomiting), first express concern for the sick child, then inform the parent that it is in the best health interest of the other children to have their child not participate until they are well.

10 Suspected Abuse or Harassment

10.1 Overview

The underlying principle throughout the process is to provide support both to the victim and his/her family and to the person who has been accused. Support must be provided at the earliest possible stage by the most appropriate people. Circumstances will dictate who that should be. The one to support the child should preferably be someone known to the child. The elders may be the best ones to support the accused.

The following subsections list the steps to be followed. All the steps must be followed, but circumstances will sometime dictate a different order than that shown.

10.2 Incident occurring on church property or at a church event

1. You become aware of the incident.
2. Inform parents as soon as it is practical.
3. Investigate the circumstances. This includes talking to both parties involved, or suspected to be involved.
4. Report the incident to the Ministry Leader.
5. Fill out an incident report as soon as reasonably possible and give it to the Ministry Leader.
6. The Ministry Leader undertakes any further investigation, if necessary. This would include any possible third parties who may have some necessary evidence.
7. If there is a reasonable belief that there may be the basis for the complaint, the Ministry Leader and/or staff should:
 1. suspend the person from Children's Ministry.
 2. report the matter to the Senior Pastor and Chairman of the Board.
 3. report the matter to the police.
8. The Ministry Leader files the report in the church files. This report must be confidential and secure.
9. If warranted, the elders begin disciplinary proceedings in accordance with the church by-laws.
10. The Chairman of the Board reports the incident to Grandview's lawyer and insurer, if appropriate.

10.3 Incident outside our ministry but within the church family

1. In the course of Children's Ministry, you observe or are told of possible abuse committed by someone within the church family.
2. Report the matter to the Ministry Leader, who informs staff. Your involvement ends there unless you are asked for information in the investigation.
3. Staff informs the parents as soon as practical unless a parent is accused.
4. Staff conducts any investigation appropriate.
5. If there is a reasonable belief that there may be the basis for a complaint, staff should:
 1. suspend the individual from Children's Ministry or Student Ministry, if applicable.
 2. report the matter to the Senior Pastor and the Chairman of the Board.
 3. report the matter to the police, or if the suspect lives with the victim, Family and Children Services.
6. Staff files a report in the church files. This report must be confidential and secure.
7. If warranted, the elders begin disciplinary proceedings in accordance with the church by-laws.

10.4 Incident outside our ministry and outside the church family

1. In the course of Children's Ministry, you observe or are told of possible abuse committed by someone outside the church family.
2. Report the incident to the police, or if the suspect lives with the victim, Family and Children Services.

11 Transportation

You may not transport children as part of a ministry event without written parental consent and permission from the Ministry Leader. All passengers must be secured by a seat belt.

We encourage you not to transport a child as the only passenger even before or after a ministry event. However, you may, at your discretion, make an exception with parental consent. Please inform the Director, Children's Ministry, of the exception after the fact.

12 Washroom Procedure

12.1 Nursery

1. Diaper changing should be done in designated area which can be visible by other workers.

2. Use of latex gloves is recommended for your health and safety.
3. Wash your hands well when finished.

12.2 Preschool

1. If a child is still potty-training, parents should be asked to have a diaper on child during class time.
2. If child needs to use washroom, let other leader(s) know whom you are escorting to the washroom. (Maximum of 3 children at once)
3. Always be careful to avoid any inappropriate touch when helping with garments.
4. Never enter a stall with a child and close the door.

12.3 JK – Grade 6

1. Escort child(ren) to the washroom.
2. Check the washroom for safety.
3. Stand outside the washroom door with it propped open for supervision and wait for child(ren) to finish.
4. Never enter a stall with a child and close the door.

Appendix 2: Safety Procedures – Student Ministry

You, the worker in Student Ministry, should be aware of these safety procedures and follow them as closely as you reasonably can.

For convenience, procedures are listed in alphabetical order.

1 Absence of Worker

We seek to maintain a safe worker/student ratio at all times. If you are unable to fulfill your scheduled time to serve, contact your Ministry Leader as far ahead as possible.

2 Conduct of Workers

Conduct yourself toward each and every student in a manner that is above reproach. In particular:

1. Do not speak in an abusive, sexually suggestive or condemning way.
2. Do not use corporal (physical) punishment.
3. Do not put a student in a vulnerable situation in which their safety could be in jeopardy.
4. Do not touch a student in any romantic or sexually suggestive way.

3 Fire Safety & Evacuation Procedure

Know the exit route and location of fire alarms and extinguishers at all times in the building.

A fire presents grave danger, not just for those in the room where the fire starts, but also for all occupants of the building. No set of guidelines will be right for all possible circumstances. It is vital for each worker to show good judgement. The priority is clearly on protecting lives rather than protecting property. However, for the worker at the site of the fire there will always be a difficult choice. Are the lives of all the occupants better protected by attempting to put out the fire, or by starting the evacuation earlier? If the fire can be put out quickly, putting out the fire will be best for all. If the fire is already beyond the ability of the worker to put it out, evacuating immediately will be the best choice.

If there is a fire in your room, the following lists a reasonable priority of actions, but the actual circumstances may require that you follow a different order. If there is another worker with you in the room (and there should almost always be), one of you must concentrate on the safety of the students, and the others on the safety of the other occupants and the building.

1. Get the students out of the room as soon as possible.
2. Call for help.

3. Fight the fire if the fire appears containable. Fire extinguishers are nearby.
4. If the fire cannot be contained,
 1. Pull the fire alarm to warn the rest of the occupants and to call the fire department.
 2. Follow the Emergency Exit Procedure.
5. If you put out the fire, report incident to the Ministry Leader. The students may be allowed to return only if there is a minimal impact on the classroom.

If you hear the fire alarm, immediately start the Emergency Exit Procedure.

The Emergency Exit Procedure is as follows (the same procedure for students and children):

1. Gather all groups together, and assign a worker to each group.
2. The worker in charge picks up the Attendance Record and takes it with him or her so that all children can be accounted for.
3. Check all areas of the room(s) before exiting (Nursery: especially sleeping and nursing rooms)
4. Shut all doors and windows behind you as you leave.
5. The worker in charge is to be the last to leave.
6. Lead the children out of the building by the designated exit route, unless that route is blocked by fire, to the designated assembly point.
7. Do not stop for coats.
8. Take attendance at the assembly point to ensure that all are safely out.
9. Do not re-enter the building until told it is safe to do so.

4 Injury

Take note of the marked location of First Aid Kits on the Floor Plan layout. With each Kit you will find an attached list of names of medical professionals within our Grandview family.

Assess the severity of the injury. If you and student agree that the injury is insignificant, the injury can be ignored, other than perhaps giving the student a band-aid. If it needs more than a band-aid, it is not insignificant, and you should do the following.

1. Comfort the student, and inform a parent and Ministry Leader as soon as feasible consistent with the student's safety.
2. Give appropriate medical attention as able, remembering to always wear the provided latex gloves whenever blood is involved.
3. If needed, seek the help of a medical professional from Grandview who may be on site at the time, or call "911"

4. If an ambulance is called, acquire the student's health card number from the Ministry Leader's records to accompany the student to hospital.
5. Complete Grandview's Incident Report with noted signatures and copies.
6. Communicate your concern to parents and make a follow up call after treatment for an update of the student's condition.

5 Off Site Events

Provide clear information on the event to students, including location, start and end times, who is responsible for transportation, and emergency phone number, if possible. (Normally this information will also appear in newsletters of Student Ministry.) It is the student's responsibility to communicate this information to parents.

6 One on One Interactions

One on one interactions involve greater risk than group events, both for worker and student. However, these interactions are important in helping students to grow in wisdom and responsibility, and we care for the students enough to take the risks.

The relationship between you and the student must always remain above reproach. Do not communicate any romantic or sexual interest in students. Do not spend extended time with students of the opposite sex.

It is preferable for the one on one meeting to be in a public place, but it can be in an office or private home as long as there are other people around and you and student are visible at all times. It is not acceptable to meet in a home alone or behind a closed door without a window. Meeting in a car is not encouraged, but it is acceptable if both of you are clearly visible and you are parked in a well-travelled area.

A counselling or ministering conversation should remain confidential unless, in your judgement, the student's interests are best served by sharing the information with someone else. Counsel students to communicate with parents as much as possible, but you are not obligated to inform parents about every counselling or ministering conversation.

7 Parental Consent

At the start of each ministry year or as a student becomes a "regular" in Student Ministry, the Ministry Leader will request a form, signed by a parent, consenting to the student participating in the activities of Student Ministries. The form will also include the health card number and permission to obtain emergency medical attention if required. Student Ministry does not normally require parental consent for individual activities, unlike Children's Ministry. However, the Director, Student Ministry, has the discretion to require express parental consent for any single event.

8 Suspected Abuse or Harassment

8.1 Overview

The underlying principle throughout the process is to provide support both to the victim and his/her family and to the person who has been accused. Support must be provided at the earliest possible stage by the most appropriate people. Circumstances will dictate who that should be. The one to support the student should preferably be someone known to the student. The elders may be the best ones to support the accused.

The following subsections list the steps to be followed. All the steps must be followed, but circumstances will sometime dictate a different order than that shown.

8.2 Incident occurring on church property or at a church event

1. You become aware of the incident.
2. Inform parents as soon as it is practical.
3. Investigates the circumstances. This includes talking to both parties involved, or suspected to be involved.
4. Report the incident to the Ministry Leader.
5. Fill out an incident report as soon as reasonably possible and give it to the Ministry Leader.
6. The Ministry Leader undertakes any further investigation, if necessary. This would include any possible third parties who may have some necessary evidence.
7. If there is a reasonable belief that there may be the basis for the complaint, the Ministry Leader and/or staff should:
 1. suspend the person from Student Ministry.
 2. report the matter to the Senior Pastor and Chairman of the Board.
 3. report the matter to the police.
8. The Ministry Leader files the report in the church files. This report must be confidential and secure.
9. If warranted, the elders begin disciplinary proceedings in accordance with the church by-laws.
10. The Chairman of the Board reports the incident to Grandview's lawyer and insurer, if appropriate.

8.3 Incident outside our ministry but within the church family

1. In the course of Student Ministry, you observe or are told of possible abuse committed by someone within the church family.

2. Report the matter to the Ministry Leader, who informs staff. Your involvement ends there unless you are asked for information in the investigation.
3. Staff informs the parents as soon as practical unless a parent is accused.
4. Staff conducts any investigation appropriate.
5. If there is a reasonable belief that there may be the basis for a complaint, staff should:
 1. suspend the individual from Children's Ministry or Student Ministry, if applicable.
 2. report the matter to the Senior Pastor and the Chairman of the Board.
 3. report the matter to the police, or if the suspect lives with the victim, Family and Children Services.
6. Staff files a report in the church files. This report must be confidential and secure.
7. If warranted, the elders begin disciplinary proceedings in accordance with the church by-laws.

8.4 Incident outside our ministry and outside the church family

1. In the course of Student Ministry, you observe or are told of possible abuse committed by someone outside the church family.
2. Report the incident to the police, or if the suspect lives with the victim, Family and Children Services.

9 Transportation

Normally transportation associated with ministry events is the responsibility of students or their parents. However, you may transport students if you wish. All passengers must be secured by a seat belt. If you drop a student off at home, you should ensure that the student is able to get into the home before leaving.

You may transport a student of the opposite sex alone only with express parental consent and after notifying the parent of the time you will leave and arrive at the destination. However, it is better to make other arrangements that do not require you to transport a student of the opposite sex alone.

Appendix 3: Forms

The following forms are appended:

1. Application form for volunteers for Children's Ministry
2. Application form for volunteers for Student Ministry

Other forms may be developed later as needed.