



Policies for Staff and Volunteers

September 1, 2009 - Revision E

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Introduction¹

We at SGBC consider our children as one of the most significant blessings and stewardships of our church. We agree with the psalmist, “Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb is a reward.” (Psalm 127:3) We desire that our church activities promote their well being and growth as they are encouraged to seek and know the Lord. As a church it is our goal to provide a safe and friendly environment in which such growth can take place for our children and adults.

We are also blessed with adults who are gifted and desire to serve and care for the little ones of the Lord’s flock. We consider it a significant responsibility when parents place their children in the various children’s ministries of SGBC and under the care and supervision of our staff and volunteers. We have all our staff and volunteers go through a screening process and training to ensure it is appropriate for them to serve in these capacities with children. This screening process and training are described in SGBC’s policies for staff and volunteers.

As a church in the center of a major metropolitan area it is wise for us to be aware of risks to which our children may be exposed. It grieves us to write that within the last 20 years a wave of increased physical and sexual abuse of children and youth has permeated our culture. And even more sadly some of this is occurring within our churches. We desire our church to be open to all who walk through it’s doors and our Lord shunned no one who approached Him to listen to Him, ask Him questions and seek His wonderful and powerful saving grace (Luke 15:1). As a body in which the Lord Himself dwells (Eph. 2:19-22) we are called to do nothing less. However, in so doing, we must exercise the right caution to protect our children. So we have established the practices described in the policies and encourage those serving in positions of trust and parents to join with us to make our church gatherings and activities a safe place for all who participate.

Those who serve as volunteers and leaders are also exposed to the danger of false (for whatever reason) allegations. We also desire to protect these servants, the church, and the honor of Christ’s name from harm which can come from these types of situations.

The three goals of; the safety of our children, the avoiding of false allegations and liability for workers and the church, and the promotion of edifying relationships *across all ages*, may sometimes seem contradictory to one another. We have strived to avoid such unfortunate compromises. In establishing our policies we should keep in mind that these are *our* policies. We ought to change and improve them as we learn better ways to promote all three of these goals. As a family we possess a collective wisdom which we can use to improve the Lord’s house for His honor and our blessing!

Foreseeing evil and guarding oneself and others from it is what we are all called to do as we love our neighbors as ourselves. These policies attempt to promote this. We also must not forget that “unless the Lord guards the city the watchman stays awake in vain” (Psalm 127:1). These policies are sent forth in an awareness of our deep dependence on our Lord to keep and preserve us.

SGBC Elders
July 2007

1. This introduction and appendix D are not considered “policy”. Sections 1-10, and Appendices A-C, & E-G contain SGBC’s policies for staff and volunteers.

Section 1: Procedure for entry into staff and volunteer ministries¹

All staff, leadership² and volunteers for all ministries go through the following screening and approval process:

- A. As a minimum read the following sections of these policies:
 1. Introduction
 2. Section 1: This section
 3. Section 2: Requirements for all volunteers and staff members.
 4. The policy relating to the *area of service* for which you are volunteering (this is not applicable to adult ministries except for elders, deacons and security).
 5. Appendix D: Common risks.
- B. Complete the application (contained in appendix A).
- C. Attend a training session which, as a minimum, covers the *area of service* for which you are volunteering.
- D. After the training session sign the policy for *the area of service* for which you are volunteering and submit the signed policy *and* the application (appendix A) to the elders for approval. The *areas of service* are listed in appendix F.
- E. All elders review the application documents. Once approved your service may begin. Shepherding care and re-direction will be provided by the elders to those who are not approved for the areas of service for which they applied.
- F. Minors who are “helpers” in children’s and youth ministries are to follow this process except their parents are to complete the minor’s application in appendix A.1. Minor “helpers” are not required to attend training or read Appendix D.
- G. The table in Appendix F summarizes the application procedure relating to each area of service for adults and minors. Refer to it to see exactly what to read and which documents to submit.

Throughout these policies wherever “parent” is referred to it is understood that a parent designated guardian may act in the place of the parent. Parent designated guardians must be at least 21. We recommend that parents give guardians something in writing when they place their children in their care.

“Children’s ministries” are church sponsored activities for children 12 and under. “Youth ministries” are church sponsored activities for children 13 to 17 years of age.

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1. The following resources have been used in the development of these policies: “Guidelines for sex offender management in the church”, Clay Jones, Second Glance Ministries, Aurora, CO. “Reducing the Risk II, Making Your Church Safe from Child Sexual Abuse”, by Church Law & Tax Report/Christianity Today international; Community Christian Reformed Church, “Child Abuse Prevention Policy”; West Olive Christian Reformed Church, “Abuse Prevention and Child Protection Policy”, “Mending the Soul”, by Steven R. Tracy, Zondervan; “Preventing Child Abuse”, by Beth Swagman, Faith Alive Christian Resources.
 2. Elders and deacons

Section 2: Requirements for all staff members and volunteers

I. Introduction

The following is required of all volunteers and staff members serving in church sponsored activities.

II. Length of membership

Prior to serving in any children's or youth ministries one must have been a member in good standing for a minimum of six months.

III. Documentation

- A. Complete and sign the volunteer application (appendix A).
- B. Read and sign the policy for each *area of service* for which you are applying. For those areas of service where there is not a specific policy (all adult activities except elder, deacon, security) only the application is required.
- C. Submit A and B to the elders for approval.
- D. A background check is required for all elders, children's ministry and youth workers. Positive identification including name, address, SSN and DOB is required. A signed consent form is required for the check to be performed. Appendix C explains the background check procedure and contains the consent form.

IV. Approval

Applications are reviewed and approved by *all* elders. Applications are filed in the church office and treated as confidential. Additional information may be requested and additional screening steps may be taken at the discretion of the elders.

Each area of service requires a separate review and approval.

Staff and volunteers may view their application and section IV of appendix A upon request.

V. Training

As a minimum all volunteers and staff members must receive policy training annually. Records of training completed are kept on file in the church office.

The training, as a minimum, will include familiarization training on the policies given in sections 1-10. Elders and deacons receive training on all sections. All others, as a minimum, receive training on sections 1, 2, 7 and the area of service for which they are volunteering.

VI. Failure to follow policies

At the discretion of the elders a staff member or volunteer will be dismissed from serving for repeated failures to follow policies. If annual training is not completed a staff member or volunteer will be dismissed from serving. Records of failures to follow policies are recorded in section IV of appendix A.

Section 3: Nursery policies

I. Policy for nursery workers

- A. There are to be two adult attendants in nursery at all times (regardless of how few children are present). A helper as defined in C does not qualify as an adult. See appendix B for definitions on the “two adult” policy.
- B. The ratio of nursery workers to children shall not be less than one worker per three children.
- C. Children 12 years old or older may be nursery helpers when serving with their parent. Helpers require an approval process similar to adults. See section 1.
- D. Attendants should be in the nursery/toddler rooms 10 minutes before the church event begins.
- E. If a security worker has not contacted the nursery by the service start time, the nursery workers are to have a parent contact any deacon or elder and inform them of the situation. In order to ensure this, at least one parent must remain until the security contact has been made.
- F. Attendants who have been (or whose family members have been) sick during the week, please arrange for a substitute.
- G. The nursery is for children ages infant to two years old. When a child turns two he/she “graduates” from the nursery.
- H. Children are to be received into the nursery *only* from parents. Children are not allowed to be picked up from nursery by anyone but one of the child’s parents.
Children are to be handed over the divided door when they are being put in or removed from the nursery. Parents are not allowed to enter the nursery except in the case of nursing mothers.
Nursery attendants are to have parents “sign in” and “sign out” their children using the form shown in Appendix E. A nursery attendant is to initial the sign in form when the child is admitted.
- I. Doors are to be locked once the church event begins.
- J. All infants (too young to walk) must not be left unattended on the floor.
- K. Attendants must wash their hands with disinfectant soap after each diaper change.
- L. See appendix B on the “two adult” policy for how trips to the bathroom are to be handled.
- M. If you cannot serve at your designated time please be sure to arrange with another approved attendant to take your place. A list of approved attendants is available in the nursery, on the security board in the office lobby, and in the members section of the church’s web site. Do not assume that someone will fill in for you. If you cannot find an approved substitute, contact the nursery coordinator.
If you wish to discontinue service, or to change your time of service, please let the nursery coordinator know with as much notice as possible.
- N. If a parent is repeatedly ignoring the rules regarding nursery and ignoring the nursery attendant’s instruction, then the attendant is to ask the elders / deacons for help in the situation.
If a parent dislikes or is concerned about the rules (or has good suggestions) and begins to express this to an attendant, the attendant is to encourage the parent to express these concerns (and suggestions) directly to the elders.
- O. Corporal punishment (slapping, hitting, pushing) is not permitted. Abusive verbal discipline (yelling, insulting, threatening) is not permitted. Parents are to be informed whenever a child misbehaves beyond minor correction or if a pattern of misbehavior increases. If a child cannot be controlled contact the security worker and request that he notify and insist that the child’s parent come to the nursery.
- P. Trash must be emptied into the women’s restroom trash receptacle at the end of each church event.
- Q. Make it your goal and seek the Lord’s grace to be a good testimony at all times. Have an attitude of service to the Lord and His kingdom. Pray for the children you care for and their families. Maintain order and discipline as you serve. The nursery and its attendants are a critical matter of concern to families who visit.

- R. *Thank you!* You miss the public means of grace when you serve here, and we miss you in the congregation. May the Lord bless and reward you and enrich your souls as you serve Him and the littlest ones among us and their families (CDs of the messages are available to buy or borrow from our media ministry).
- S. By agreeing to serve in the nursery, I agree to the following:
 - 1. That I have read, understood, and am able and willing to comply with the nursery policies.
 - 2. That I have completed, signed and submitted the application which requires approval of the elders.

Please sign, copy, and return. Thank you.

Date

II. Nursery policy for parents

- A. No children over 2 years old are to be in the nursery rooms.
- B. Names are to be placed on each diaper bag and parents are to write any instructions for their child’s care for that day and attach them to the handle of the diaper bag. Parents, please include diapers in the bag. Parents are to “sign in” and “sign out” their children on the sign in / sign out sheet supplied by the attendants (see appendix E).
- C. Parents may not bring sick children to the nursery or toddler room (fever, green discharge from nose, cough (non allergy), diarrhea). The nursery attendant has authority to judge in these matters and may instruct a parent to take their child home.
- D. Parents only may deliver and pick up children. Children should be picked up as soon as possible after each church event, ideally within five minutes after the event.
- E. Parents are to follow the directions of the nursery attendants on duty and should read Section I of this policy before placing your children in the nursery.
- F. Please encourage your un-diapered children to use the rest room prior to the beginning of nursery. If they need to use the rest room during nursery you will be called out of your activity to assist your child.
- G. Parents must be on facility at all times while their children are in the nursery.
- H. Parents who repeatedly fail to follow the nursery policies will no longer be allowed to place their children in the nursery.

Section 4: Sunday School and Children’s Church policies

I. Policy for Sunday School and Children’s Church (am and pm) workers

- A. This policy applies to children’s classes and activities for children 17 or younger.
- B. Children 12 years old or older may be Sunday School or Children’s Church helpers when approved by their parent(s) and the Sunday School teacher. These helpers also require an approval process similar to adults. See section 1.
- C. There are to be two adults in class at all times (regardless of how few children are present). A helper as defined in B does not qualify as an adult. See appendix B for definitions on the “two adult” policy.
- D. Parental drop off and pick up between Sunday School and morning worship for classes age 12 and below is required. Sunday School workers are not to release children onto the facility unless a parent has come to pick them up.
- E. If a security worker has not contacted the class by class start time, the workers are to ask a parent to locate the Sunday School superintendent (or any deacon or elder) and inform him of the problem. In order to ensure this at least one parent must remain until the security contact has been made.
- F. See appendix B on the “two adult” policy for how trips to the bathroom are to be handled.
Children 13 or older may be released from class for bathrooms trips, one at a time.
- G. Curtains are to be open while classes are in session.
- H. Doors are to be locked while classes are in session in room A (children 12 and under) which opens to the parking lot.
- I. Corporal punishment (slapping, hitting, pushing) is not permitted. Abusive verbal discipline (yelling, insulting, threatening) is not permitted. Parents are to be informed whenever a child misbehaves beyond minor correction or if a pattern of misbehavior increases. If a child cannot be controlled contact the security worker and request that he notify and request that the child’s parent come to the nursery. Only physically restrain a child if he/she is physically endangering other children of himself/herself.
- J. The Sunday School Superintendent or his designee is required to be on facility during the Sunday school hour.
- K. By agreeing to serve in Sunday School or Children’s Church, I agree to the following:
 - 1. That I have read, understood, and am able and willing to comply with the nursery policies.
 - 2. That I have completed, signed and submitted the application which requires approval of the elders.

Please sign, copy, and return. Thank you.

Date

II. Sunday School policy for parents

- A. Parents *only* may deliver and pick up their children. Children should be picked up as soon as possible after each church event, ideally within five minutes after each event.
- B. Please encourage your children to use the rest room prior to the beginning of class. If they need to use the rest room during class you will be called out of your class to assist your child.
- C. You are responsible to supervise your children during the time between Sunday School and Morning worship. SGBC does not provide direct supervision for your children during this time.

Section 5: Youth ministry policies

I. Policy for youth workers

- A. This policy applies to SGBC ministries for ages 13 to 17 (activities outside of Sunday School). If parents desire younger children to participate they are to get approval of youth ministry leaders.
- B. All youth ministry activities are to be supervised by two or more adults at all times. See appendix B for definitions relating to the two adult policy.
- C. Youth ministry workers are to be present 10 minutes prior to the activity start time.
- D. If youth ministry workers provide transportation of youth to and from activities two adult workers are to accompany any youth who are transported and parental permission is required. Any youth worker transporting youth must have a valid Arizona driver's licence.
- E. In personal counseling situations, i.e. a youth spending time with a SGBC youth worker without his or her parents present the following is to be done:
 - 1. The youth worker is to notify at least one parent of the time, location and subject of the meeting and obtain the parent's approval for the meeting.
 - 2. Two youth ministry workers are to be present during the meeting or one youth worker and a Children's Sunday School worker are to be present.
- F. Appropriate displays of affection are often part of conveying support and encouragement. Displays of affection between youth leaders and youth should be limited to actions like a brief hug, an arm around the shoulder, an open-handed pat on the back, or a handclasp. A youth leader's or member's right to refuse such displays of affection is to be respected.
- G. The following are applicable for youth activities which involve driving out of town and/or overnight activities.
 - 1. A parental health release form is to be completed and signed by at least one parent. Youth workers are to take these forms with them on the trip. See appendix H for the form to be used.
 - 2. Youth workers are not to share sleeping quarters with any youth unless there are two approved adults in the quarters.
 - 3. When youth share sleeping quarters the age disparity between them is to be no more than 2 years.
 - 4. Youth workers are not to spend significant amounts of time alone with any youth. i.e. hikes, drives, etc. Activities are to be, at a minimum, "threesomes", i.e. two youth workers and one youth, or one youth worker and two youths.
- H. By agreeing to serve in youth ministry I agree to the following:
 - 1. That I have read, understood, and am able and willing to comply with the youth ministry policies.
 - 2. That I have completed, signed and submitted the application which requires approval of the elders.

Please sign, copy, and return. Thank you.

Date

II. Youth ministry policy for parents

- A. During services youth are expected to be in the services unless they are serving as helpers in Nursery, Sunday School or Children's Church, or have temporarily left a service to use the rest room or have left for some other parent directed reason.

During the Sunday School hour approved musicians (minors) may be in the sanctuary for the purpose of instrumental or vocal practice.

Section 6: Security policies

I. Policy for Security Workers

- A. Workers must be 18 or older.
- B. Workers must be on facility 10 minutes before the church event begins.
- C. Check the monthly Events Calendar (distributed in the bulletin last Sunday of each month, posted in narthex, and available on our web site SovGracePhoenix.com) and the bulletin for your scheduled time of service. You are responsible for that time slot, so if you are not able to be there, you must make arrangements to trade times with another of the approved security workers. If you cannot find a substitute contact the security leader.
- D. The security worker on duty is to wear an identifying pin or badge.
- E. You must “man” the walkie talkie used to communicate with our child care workers and Sunday School teachers during the service.
 - 1. At the start of a service (9:30am, 10:45am, 6:00pm) you should use the walkie/talkie to initiate a test to talk to the nursery care workers, childrens Sunday School classes, and Children’s Church. If they do not respond go to the area and fix the problem or provide the necessary training to the workers so they are able to use the walkie/talkie to make calls and respond to calls.
 - 2. If the nursery care workers, Sunday School workers or Children’s Church workers need assistance they will call you and inform you of what is needed.
 - 3. You should have the walkie/talkie active during the entire service time.
 - 4. See appendix B regarding your assisting with contacting parents if their child must use the bathroom during Sunday School or Children’s Church.
- F. Take a walk all the way around the auditorium building checking that all external doors, except the one leading to the rest rooms, are locked. If room A is not locked, inform the child care workers that they must lock this door at the start of services. If room B is not locked inform the Sunday School teachers that they must lock the door during services. Check that curtains to these rooms are open, if not, inform the workers that they must open these curtains during their classes.
- G. Keep an eye on the parking lot. As a general policy don’t confront a person without getting one of our officers to assist. See paragraph I.
- H. During the Sunday School hour the church sanctuary is left open even though it is not in use. So check the sanctuary a few times to be sure no one from the street has gone in there for the purpose of any bad reason, etc. People may sit in the sanctuary during the Sunday School hour.
- I. Keep in mind that Shane Forbes, Lou DiPietro and Scott Shaeffer are trained law enforcement officers so if there is any situation that might possibly be beyond your control be sure to find one of these men to help.
- J. You are to verify compliance with the “two adult rule” for the service you are working so you must check that two adults are present with children in these services (all children’s Sunday School classes, Children’s Church and the nursery) during Sunday School, Morning Worship, Evening Worship, and Wednesday evening. If two adults are not present then the activity must be canceled (see appendix B).
- K. Review the sex offender notebook which contains notices sent to us by the City of Phoenix of convicted sex offenders living within a few miles of our facility. If you recognize any of these individuals on our facility you should obtain another person and confront them immediately. Inform them that we have policies that we enforce (see section 8) and that we must discuss these policies with them before they will be allowed to be on our facility. Escort them off the facility.
- L. If you believe someone is under the influence of drugs or alcohol obtain another man to assist you and graciously ask the person to leave the facility. Express that we would like to help them and they may return to seek our help when they are no longer under the influence. If after a few minutes they do not leave contact one of our officers (see I above) or call the police.

- M. A Security worker while on duty is never, by himself, to escort a child 12 or younger. If a child must be moved during services, the child’s parent is to be contacted and escort their child.
- N. Security workers are not approved as children’s ministry workers, but may stand in as the second adult when a children’s ministry worker requires a rest room trip.
- O. If you are serving during Sunday School hour you must do a “face to face hand off” with the security worker scheduled for the Morning Worship hour. If this worker does not arrive you are to continue serving during this hour until another approved security worker is located.
- P. Your willingness to serve is sincerely appreciated by the elders and this congregation. Remember to serve with prayer.
- Q. By agreeing to serve in security, I agree to the following:
 - 1. That I have read, understood, and am able and willing to comply with the security policies.
 - 2. That I have completed, signed and submitted the application which requires approval of the elders.

Please sign, copy, and return. Thank you. Date

II. Policy for congregation

- A. Unfortunately as the consciences of unbelievers in the culture that surrounds us become increasingly calloused to the commands of God our church facilities, personal property, families, and our children may increasingly become the target of various crimes. Therefore we ask you to comply with the following rules to promote the protection of your family and others.
- B. We require that children age 12 and under not be allowed to use the rest rooms during church services (Sunday School, Morning Worship, Children’s Church, Evening Worship, and Wednesday evening) without a parent. The fact that our rest rooms are outside of the sanctuary and accessible from the street poses special risks, particularly when adults are all gathered in a service in another building.
If your child attempts to leave a service without an escort our ushers will return him/her to you. If your child is in Sunday School or Children’s Church and requests to use the bathroom, the teacher will contact our security worker and he will locate you so you can come to the class and escort your child. We encourage you to train your children to use the bathroom prior to the beginning of services.
- C. Room A (the entrance to our nursery care area) will remain locked during normal service times (9:30-10:30 am, 10:45-12:00 pm, 6:00-7:00 pm). If you need to access these areas, knock on the door and workers will allow you in if they recognize you. If not they will contact our security worker to assist you. If no one comes to the door, find the security worker who has the walkie talkie and ask him to get the attention of the attendants. You may want to ask the security worker, or an usher to “call” the nursery or class prior to your going to the area.
- D. During the time period between Sunday School and morning worship, and after the morning worship service you are to supervise your own children. You should not assume others will be supervising them during these times. They should not be allowed to do bathroom trips on their own. You strongly encourage you to treat the bathrooms in our church facility just as you would those in any other public facility.
- E. The following church activities are under the umbrella of “Children’s and Youth Ministries”. Nursery, child care during communion services, Beginners, Primary, Teen Sunday School classes, Children’s Church (am and pm), and youth ministry activities. For these activities SGBC provides adult supervision for your children as defined in these policies. It is also SGBC policy that your children of any age are welcome in any of our other services. However, for all *non* “Children’s and Youth Ministries” activities, whether held on the church facility or elsewhere, SGBC does not provide direct supervision for your children. Parents are required to supervise and ensure the safety of their children during these activities.

Section 7: Bloodborne pathogens policies¹

- A. All workers with children or youth should ensure that they do not expose children to any of their body fluids via coughing, contact with skin infections or breaks in one's skin, or blood from an accident which occurred while with children.
- B. Workers are to ensure children do not expose other children, or workers, to their body fluids.
- C. Universal precautions should be used at all times. Many people feel that it is important to know who is infected with HIV and hepatitis. However, they develop a false sense of security when they find that certain individuals are infected with these viruses, because, unfortunately, others may be infected and not know it or choose not to disclose it. Infections showing no symptoms occur with HIV and notably with hepatitis C. One may be highly infective and have no knowledge of it or not reveal it. Therefore, all people should be treated as though they are infectious. This approach is known as "Universal Precautions" or "Standard Precautions". "Universal precautions" should be followed by all church workers at all times.
- D. Universal precautions:
 - 1. Wear latex gloves before touching anything wet - broken skin, mucous membranes, blood or other body fluids, or soiled instruments and contaminated waste materials. This should also be done when washing and disinfecting cuts or bites, changing diapers and cleaning areas that have been soiled by blood or body fluids. Remove gloves carefully without contacting contaminated areas with bare skin.
 - 2. Avoid handling needles, lancets or other sharp objects. Avoid recapping used needles, removing used needles from syringes, breaking or manipulating used needles by hand. If these objects are found on the facility they should be placed in a puncture-resistant trash container.
 - 3. Protect mucous membranes of eyes and possibly nose and mouth when contact with blood and body fluids is likely. Glasses, goggles, and/or masks should be worn.
 - 4. Use mouthpieces, resuscitation bags or other ventilation devices to avoid direct contact during mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
 - 5. Always wash hands thoroughly after removing rubber gloves. Thoroughly lather hands with soap and rub together for at least 15 seconds. Be sure to include fingernails, crevices and webbing of the hands.
- E. Post Exposure of a child evaluation and management
If you think a child may have been exposed to blood or other body fluids from another child or worker, the following immediate actions should be taken:
 - 1. Notify the child's parent and inform them of the situation. If the child was exposed by another child, also notify this child's parent.
 - 2. If a skin puncture has occurred, suggest that the parent induce bleeding at the puncture site by applying gentle pressure and wash the area with soap and water.
 - 3. If skin or mucous membranes have been splashed by body fluid rinse the area thoroughly with water and wash with soap. This may be done without the parent being present.
 - 4. Recommend that the parent discuss the situation with his/her physician.
 - 5. Report the incident to one of the elders.
- F. Post Exposure of a worker evaluation and management
 - 1. If a skin puncture has occurred induce bleeding at the puncture site by applying gentle pressure and wash the area with soap and water.
 - 2. If skin or mucous membranes have been splashed by body fluid rinse the area thoroughly with water and wash with soap.
 - 3. Report the incident to one of the elders. If the exposure was caused by a child inform the elders of the child and the elders will notify the child's parent(s).
 - 4. Contact your physician and discuss the situation with him/her.

1. Paragraphs C-F are from Dr. Noel Habib with minor alterations.

Section 8: Policy regarding *known* risks

I. Definitions

The following definitions apply throughout these policies

A. Child Physical Abuse (17 and under)

Physical abuse is any non accidental injury to a minor by an adult or older caregiver. This can include blows, shakings, or assaults that cause injury to the child. Disciplinary spankings by a parent that do not cause physical injury to the child are not considered physical abuse.

B. Child Sexual Abuse (17 and under)

Sexual abuse is the exploitation of a minor for the sexual gratification of another person. Sexual abuse includes intercourse, sodomy, oral sexual contact, fondling, prostitution, the production of pornography, exhibitionism, and the deliberate exposure of a minor to pornography or sexual activity.

II. Disclosure of all *known* risks and allegations amongst the elders

Elders are responsible to inform one another of the full details concerning any known risk that an individual may pose to other members of the congregation. This disclosure of risks is to be done regardless of the source by which an elder became aware of the risk.

The same disclosure policy applies for allegations unless the allegation is against an elder in which case the other elders are to be informed. See section 9 regarding handling of allegations.

III. Known Sex Offenders

A. SGBC leadership may become aware in various ways that a person is or has been a sex offender. The most likely means of becoming aware are:

1. City notices mailed to the church
2. Counseling situations
3. The offender is on probation and is required to inform us of their status when they begin attending services.
4. Someone in the congregation informs the elders regarding themselves.

Cases where someone in the congregation informs leaders *that another person* is or may be a sex offender are to be handled as allegations (see section 9).

B. Any individual, regardless of age or gender, who is identified by the laws of any state, or country as a sex offender will be considered so by SGBC and the monitoring and disclosure described in section 8.III.D will be done.

Any individual, regardless of age or gender, who is known by credible means¹ to have sexually abused others (of any age) will be handled in accordance with section 8.III.D.

C. SGBC reserves the right to forbid any individual who is deemed too great a risk, or for whom resources are not available for monitoring to attend services or be present on the church facility.

D. Monitoring and disclosure of known sex offenders.

1. The elders are to inform the individual that he or she will be monitored from the time he or she is on our facility to the time that they depart. When participating in church activities at other locations the same applies. Participation in any activity may be denied. A specific plan for his or her management will be put in writing which includes off limit areas and other restrictions deemed appropriate for the individual.
2. This plan will be signed by the individual, given to those responsible to monitor the individual, and given to the security workers, elders and deacons. The plan is to be added to the sex offender notebook which contains the city of phoenix notices.
3. If the individual has guardians they also will be informed regarding 1-2 and expected to enforce these restrictions. They will be required to sign the plan to be enforced for their dependent.

1. This is defined in section 9 dealing with allegations.

4. A disclosure of the offenses of the individual will be made in writing to all households that regularly attend SGBC. This disclosure will also be made to new households joining SGBC over time.
5. If this individual leaves SGBC and begins attending another church we will disclose in writing this information to the leaders of that church.
6. There is no time limit to 8.III.D. A sex offender's life in our society will never be the same and those who are genuinely repentant will accept such. In these matters the recidivism rates of offenders cannot be dismissed even if the individual makes a credible profession of faith. A genuinely repentant individual will understand and accept these restrictions. This policy is for the protection of others *and* the offender.
7. This policy does not imply that sex offenders are unredeemable, they are. It does acknowledge that only the Lord *knows for certain those who will not re-offend* and the SGBC elders are not willing to take on this level of responsibility by calling for an end of monitoring or disclosure described in 1-6.

IV. Individuals known to have exposed minors to pornography

- A. We consider this type of activity a significant evil and of great potential harm to the victims (see definition in 8.I.B). It also often "steals" the opportunity of parents to be the first ones to explain to their children regarding their sexuality.

There is a wide range regarding this evil: from one adult to another adult, to two teens of near age who are peers, to a minor exposing a minor significantly younger than himself, to an adult exposing a minor significantly younger than himself. Some of these exposures are not predatory in nature while others definitely are.

- B. Among minors, the exposing of another minor to pornography will result in some level of disclosure (see VI below). This will be done as a means of protecting children in our congregation. We expect parents of a child who has done this to be supportive of this policy. Such disclosure will become a means of protection for all involved.
- C. If the exposure has been initiated by an adult (18 or older) with a minor this may be considered as a sex crime by SGBC and reported to the local authorities. Depending on the nature of what was done, this individual may be treated as a known sex offender in accordance with section III.
- D. All other cases, including verbally engaging in sexually explicit dialogue, will be investigated and treated on a case by case basis.

V. Other risks

Other situations which may pose an abnormal level of risk to members of the congregation besides those described in Sections III and IV will be investigated and treated on a case by case basis by the elders.

VI. Degrees of disclosure of risks

There are various degrees of disclosure of risks that may be used in different situations as deemed appropriate by the elders to promote the safety of our members. The degree used is to be based on a reasonable "need to know" basis. Typical degrees of disclosure are:

- A. Disclosure to all elders only as described in II above (always done).
- B. Elders directing parents to disclose a matter to those families whose children may be at risk from their children in some significant manner. In this case elders will follow up to ensure disclosures are being made.
- C. Disclosure to all elders and deacons only.
- D. Disclosure to elders, deacons, and one or more teachers/leaders of our children's ministries.
- E. D plus disclosure to all nursery/child care workers.
- F. Disclosure to all security workers in combination with any of the above as appropriate.
- G. Disclosure to all regular attenders/members of SGBC at a given point in time.
- H. Disclosure to all regular attenders/members of SGBC at a given point in time and new members over time and the leadership of other churches.

Section 9: Policy regarding alleged abuse and other alleged risks

I. Introduction

- A. See section 8.I for definitions of child physical and sexual abuse.
 - B. This policy also covers abuse relating to adults and the elderly.
 - C. Definition of an allegation.
 - D. All allegations are to be taken seriously, documented, reported and investigated in accordance with this policy and state law.
- (to be completed)

Section 10: The role of elders and deacons

SGBC elders and deacons play a special role in the implementation of these polices.

I. Elders

- A. Ensure annual training for all staff and volunteers is performed.
- B. Ensure that new members read, as a minimum, the security policies relating to the entire congregation, section 6.II. If they have nursery age children ensure they read section 3, nursery policies. If they have children 12 and under ensure they read section 4, Sunday School and Children’s Church policies. If they have children 13 - 17 ensure they read section 5, Youth Ministry policies.
- C. Ensure the nursery, Sunday School, youth ministry and security polices relating to congregation members are published at least once a year and called attention to.
- D. Oversee section 10.II.
- E. Maintain a list of approved staff and volunteer workers posted on the security board in the office lobby and on the web site.
- F. Attend yearly training covering *all* policies.

II. Deacons

- A. Facilities are to be opened 10 minutes prior to start of services.
- B. As facilities are opened for services deacons are to confirm that the a security worker(s) is on duty. If not they are to find an approved substitute or take on the role themselves and report the absence to the security leader.
- C. Ensure that security policy 6.II.B is being followed which requires that children age 12 and younger are allowed out of services only when escorted by their parent(s). Ushers may be enlisted to assist here.
- D. Post current versions of Security, Sunday School and Nursery of Policies in their appropriate locations.
- E. Provide training to groups or individuals as necessary. It is permissible to train a single worker, such as a new volunteer, and not wait until the yearly training sessions are available. In these cases a deacon is to go through the appropriate policies with the new volunteer and then submit the signed application to the elders. A record of this “individual” training is to be made using the form in appendix G.
- F. Ensure that unused rooms, closets, and buildings remain locked.
- G. Maintain a notebook of public sex offenders. This notebook is reviewed by the security workers.
- H. Ensure first aid kits are available in appropriate locations. Ensure each kit also has a supply of protective plastic gloves for use in situations when one may come into contact with a person’s body fluids.
- I. Maintain the communication equipment (walkie talkies) used by security and children’s workers.
- J. Deacons must attend yearly training covering *all* policies.
- K. By agreeing to serve as an elder or deacon, I agree to the following:
 - 1. That I have read, understood, and am willing to follow the policies required of elders and deacons.
 - 2. That I have completed, signed and submitted the application which requires approval of the elders.

Please sign, copy, and return. Thank you.

Date

Appendix A: Staff and volunteer application

We are delighted that you have expressed interest in serving in our church body. Many opportunities exist. This application and screening process helps the church become familiar with your gifts and desires and provide a safe and secure environment for the children and youth under our care. Applications are reviewed only by the elders and are kept in a secured, confidential file. The elders will review all applications with confidentiality, sensitivity and compassion.

I. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Phone(s): _____

Area(s) of service volunteering for. Check all that apply. The policy section you must read and sign is indicated in the “(##)”. Be sure to submit this application *and* the signed policy. A “*” means you also need to submit a background consent form (appendix C).

- (10) Elder* (10) Deacon (3) Nursery* (6) Security (5) Youth ministry leader*
- (4) Childrens SS Class supervisor* - please indicate age(s): -----> 2-5s, 6-12s, 13-17s
- (4) Childrens SS Class supervisor & teacher*, indicate age(s): -----> 2-5s, 6-12s, 13-17s
- (4) Childrens Church supervisor* (4) Childrens Church supervisor & teacher
- (N/A) Adult activity leader (N/A) Adult activity leader & teacher

Please note that supervisors have full authority and responsibility for supervision of the children but are not required to prepare and deliver a lesson.

Please give a brief testimony of your conversion experience and coming to know the Lord and His forgiveness.

If volunteering for children’s ministry and you have served previously in children’s or youth ministries please describe.

If volunteering for children’s ministry, in what ways do you desire to help children and what do you enjoy about working with children?

- Confidential -

If volunteering for children's ministry, list any gifts, training, education or other factors that have prepared you to work with children.

Please list other non children or youth related service you have done in past. Also list new areas of service in which you would like to serve.

Are you CPR certified? Yes No Are you medically trained? (please explain below) Yes No

Have you read the doctrinal statement of SGBC and are you in agreement with it? Yes No If no, please explain.

Are you able to commit to attend training opportunities as they become available? Yes No

The questions listed below are a part of our screening process that is helpful in enabling us to provide a safe and secure environment for our children. All information is held strictly confidential. A yes answer to any of the following questions does not automatically disqualify one for service. We know that every true believer in Christ has been transformed by His powerful, redeeming grace. We are not now what we used to be (1 Cor. 6:11, 2 Cor. 5:17)! Thank you for your honesty.

1. As an adult have you ever engaged in any form of sexual activity with a minor? No Yes
2. Have you ever exposed minors to pornography, to verbal sexual references, or exposed yourself to a minor? No Yes
3. Have you ever been investigated, indicted or convicted of any abuse or sexually related crimes? No Yes
4. Within the last three years have you had a problem with drugs or alcohol (Prov. 23:29-35, 1 Cor. 6:9-10, Eph. 5:18)? No Yes
5. At any age have you ever physically or sexually abused a minor? No Yes
6. Have you ever been convicted of or pled guilty to a felony? No Yes
7. Do you have any bloodborne viruses (hepatitis B, C, HIV, other)? No Yes

If you have answered "yes" to any of the above questions please reference the number(s) and explain.

Please note that background checks will be performed for elders and those working in children's and youth ministries. These require name, address, SSN and DOB. The cost is covered by the church.

- Confidential -

II. References

Last two churches you previously attended (name, phone): _____

Supply three personal references (not family members), name, association, phone

III. Applicant's Statement

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or churches listed in this application to give SGBC any information (including opinions) they may have regarding my character and fitness for children's or youth work. I release all such references from any liability for any damage that may result from furnishing such evaluations to SGBC. I understand that any omission of material fact on this application may be grounds for rejection of this application and/or termination of children's or youth ministries responsibility. If I am applying for the eldership, children's or youth ministry service, I consent to having a background check performed.

Applicant's Name (please print): _____

Applicant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

IV. TO BE COMPLETED AND MAINTAINED BY ELDERS

Staff or volunteer's name: _____

A. Approved area(s) of service

Date	Area of Service	Elder	Elder	Elder	Elder	Elder

B. Training Record

Date	Training	Date	Training	Date	Training	Date	Training

C. Failures to follow policies

Date: _____ Occurrence: _____

Date: _____ Occurrence: _____

Date: _____ Occurrence: _____

Date: _____ Discussion with elders held: _____

Date: _____ Dismissed from service. Elder's initials: _____

Date: _____ Reinstated for service. Elder's initials: _____

Appendix A.1: Minor helper application

To be completed by parent(s)

We are delighted that your child has expressed interest in serving in our church body. Many opportunities exist. The purpose of this application is to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth under our care. Applications will be reviewed only by the elders. All applications are kept in a secured, confidential file. The elders will review all applications with confidentiality, sensitivity and compassion.

I. TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT(S) ON BEHALF OF THEIR CHILDREN.

Child's Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Phone: _____

Area(s) of service volunteering for. Check all that apply. The policy section you must read and sign is indicated in the "(##)". Be sure to submit this application *and* the signed policy.

- (3) Nursery helper (4) Childrens Church helper
- (4) Childrens SS Class helper - please indicate age(s): 2-5s, 6-12s, 13-17s

Are you aware of anything in your child's past or present that may indicate your child could be a risk to other children?

Yes ___ No ___ If yes, explain: _____

Are you a (the) legal guardian/custodial parent of this child? Yes ___ No ___ If not, please explain _____

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Parent'(s) Signature(s): _____ Date: _____

Appendix B: Implementing the two adult policy

The two adult requirement is met by two adults who are not near relations. A husband and wife, brother and sister, parent and child, do not fulfil the requirement for two adults to be present. This does not mean that near relations are not encouraged to serve together as Sunday School teachers or in other capacities.

Since children 12 and under are not to be alone or with non parents in the bathrooms, bathroom trips needed by children under 13 when under the supervision of church workers must be handled by the child's parent. The ministry worker is to call the security worker and ask him to call the child's parent from the service and bring him/her to the class. The parent will take his/her child to the bathroom. This policy will encourage parents to train their children to use the bathroom prior to the beginning of their classes.

If an adult worker must use the rest room (or leave for another reason) the worker is to call the security worker on duty and ask him to stand in as the second adult until the worker returns.

If a second adult is not present when children are delivered to the nursery or a class or a youth ministry activity the worker present is to have the parents remain with their child(ren) until the second adult arrives. If the second adult does not arrive within a few minutes of the scheduled start time the worker is to find another approved adult to stand in. The worker may contact the security worker and ask for assistance. The security worker has a list of approved workers. If a church worker has encountered some unforeseen delay they are encouraged to call someone who they expect is at the church facility who could inform others of the situation. In these cases a longer wait may be initiated if parents remain with their children until the worker arrives. Those serving as "two adult teams" are encouraged to exchange cell phone numbers and have their phones active during these times. If a second worker cannot be found then the activity is to be cancelled and the children are to remain under the supervision of their parent(s).

Appendix C: Consent for a Criminal History Background Check

SGBC has contracted the services of First Advantage Enterprise Screening / the Safe Churches Project to perform criminal background checks on all applicants for service as elders and in children’s and youth ministries. A *national* criminal records search is performed. The following information is required.

Name: First _____ Last _____ Middle _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Reports are confidential and viewed only by SGBC elders and filed in the applicant’s secured file.

If a criminal history is reported, a copy of the report will be given to the applicant.

An applicant may dispute the contents of a report directly with First Advantage Enterprise Screening / the Safe Churches Project. A toll free number is available.

If an applicant may not be approved for the area of service applied for, based in whole or in part on the background check report, prior to and during the disapproval process, SGBC will follow the procedure stated in Exhibit C, sections c, d & e of the Safe Churches Project Service Agreement.

- Once the application process is completed the DOB and SSN in this document will be physically cut out and shredded. Reports obtained from First Advantage Enterprise Screening will be shredded.

Applicant’s statement:

As a part of the application process to serve as an elder or in children’s or youth ministries I have been advised that SGBC conducts a criminal history background check. I have read the above and I do hereby consent to this check being performed. To the best of my knowledge the above information which I have supplied is correct.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D: Common risks

Unfortunately in our culture there are risks both to children and to our church institutions. Being aware of the most common risks and being on the alert for them can go a long way in preventing them. Some of the most common are mentioned below. These descriptions are very brief but intended to increase our awareness to further the creation of safe environment for our children.

I. Child Abuse

A. Physical

Physical abuse of children usually occurs from parents, guardians, sitters, older siblings or others who are given authority to supervise them.

B. Emotional

Children can be abused emotionally especially by verbal abuse. The power of death and life is in our speech and degrading speech directed toward a child leaves deep emotional scars and leads to both withdrawal and rage on the child's part.

C. Sexual

The sexual abuse of children is especially heinous. Abusers look for situations of children being alone with them. 80% of sexual abuse of children is done by someone known to the child and family. Siblings sexually abuse younger siblings. Abusers are often people in positions of trust or a relative of the family. When children are alone with adults or older youth it is wise that parents have a high degree of trust in those individuals with whom they have left their children.

Sexual abuse of children often comes in the form of exposing them to pornography. Adult abusers expose children to pornography as a means of leading them to actual physical contact. Younger children are especially vulnerable because they have no knowledge of right or wrong regarding the sexual aspects of their bodies. When those older than them lead them they easily imitate the adult, older sibling or older "friend".

II. Allegations of child abuse and sexual misconduct

Another significant risk to churches is that with or without intent allegations of child abuse can be made against innocent parties, either by children or adults. Thus it is wise that those in leadership positions and those working with children not allow themselves to be in compromising situations where they are alone with children or youth, who at a later time may say something that sounds like some form of abuse occurred. The "two adult" policy protects against both actual abuse and false allegations of abuse, and allegations of sexual misconduct of leaders and workers with older children.

Elders and deacons are encouraged to use discretion if they are alone with women for extended periods of time. Perhaps meeting in a public place is better. If church leaders or ministry volunteers meet individually with youth for purposes of counseling and encouraging them it has been suggested by many that the wise way to do this is in some public place.

III. Abduction of children involved in custody disputes

With the widespread breakup of families children become the objects of custody disputes between two estranged parents. In some cases a parent who does not have custody will attempt to abduct his or her child. Such a child at church presents an opportunity for this type of an abduction. Thus it is always important that when children are under the care of staff and workers that they only be returned *directly* to their parent(s) and not an "unknown" parent who has not dropped off the child. Parents who have these concerns regarding their child are encouraged to write explicit instructions on the nursery sign in sheet.

IV. Kidnapping of children

Children have been kidnapped from malls, homes, parks, churches, while walking home from school, and many other places. Our church facility is a *large spread out facility of eight acres*. Much of this space *is not vis-*

ible from any one point of observation. If a child wanders off to areas where there are no adults to protect the child he or she is in a dangerous situation. We must not allow children to wander by themselves on our facility.

V. Use and distribution of drugs

The use of illicit drugs knows no boundaries in our culture: age, gender, ethnicity, “clean cut appearance”, “hard, arrogant appearance”, rich or poor. Most youths obtain drugs from their peers. It would be naive to think that this exchange could not occur while our youths are at church. It is wise and safe to be alert regarding the exchanges our youths have with one another. It is also very beneficial to become educated regarding the signs and symptoms of drug use.

VI. Bloodborne Pathogens

For a wide range of reasons some people are afflicted with bloodborne pathogens which, under the right conditions, may be transferred to others. It is always wise to avoid contact with another person’s blood and body fluids. If an accident situation arises which may involve contact with blood or body fluids plastic gloves are available with our first aid kits.

VII. Physical Accidents

A. In our facility the parking lot is likely the place of most serious hazard for children as they cannot be seen between rows of cars and if they run out into the traffic lanes of the lot a driver will likely not see them until it is too late. Between classroom A / nursery and the parking lot there is only a five foot sidewalk. A small child can easily dart out of a room into the lot in a few seconds.

Our large auditorium has a very high stairwell on the northern end of the room. Some rooms surrounding the large center room are filled with stuff that is certainly not child safe. The kitchen may also pose physical dangers to small children. Aspects of our facility which appear to present physical hazards should be pointed out to our deacons. Please, don’t assume someone else will surely notice!

B. Church work days pose additional physical risks to adults and children. Use of power tools, ladders, lifting heavy burdens, performing electrical work, climbing on roofs, pruning trees, heat exposure, and many other items could be easily thought of. Care needs to be taken not to forget safety first during these activities.

C. Though not directly related to our facility or activities, turning east bound on Bethany Home road is an especially difficult traffic maneuver during dense traffic hours. An alternative route may be wise at times. North on 30th Ave. to Rose lane, then east to 27th Av. works well.

Appendix F: Summary of application procedure

Area of Service	Complete application. Appendix	Read policy sections ^a	Attend training ^b	Sign area of service	Back-ground check	Elder approval
Eldership	A	All	X	sec-10	X	X
Deaconship	A	All	X	sec -10		X
Nursery worker	A	I, 1-3, 7, B-E	X	sec-3	X	X
Nursery (minor helper)	A.1	3		sec-3		X
Children’s SS & CC ^c church supervisor or teacher.	A	I, 1,2,4,B-D	X	sec-4	X	X
Children’s SS & CC church (minor helper)	A.1	4		sec-4		X
Security worker	A	I, 1-4, 6, B, D	X	sec-6		X
Adult teacher / activities ^d leader	A	I, 1-2, D	X			X
Youth ministry leader	A	I, 1-2, 5,B-D	X	sec-5	X	X

- a. “I” refers to the Introduction. A, B, C, D, E, F refer to the appendices.
- b. When training in accordance with 10.II.E is being done it is to cover the policy sections for the specific area of service indicated in the “Read policy sections” column.
- c. CC - Childrens Church
- d. These activities currently include: Adult Sunday School, Men’s Fellowship breakfast, Women’s fellowship, Home Bible studies sponsored by church, Wednesday evening study.

Policy Sections

- Section 1: Procedure for entry into leadership, children’s, youth, and security ministry
- Section 2: Requirements for all volunteers and staff members
- Section 3: Nursery policies
- Section 4: Sunday School and Children’s Church policies
- Section 5: Youth ministry policies
- Section 6: Security policies
- Section 7: Bloodborne pathogens policies
- Section 10: The role of elders and deacons
- Appendix A: Staff and Volunteer Application
- Appendix A.1: Minor Helper Application
- Appendix B: Implementing the two adult policy
- Appendix C: Background check consent form
- Appendix D: Common risks
- Appendix E: Nursery Sign in / Sign out Record

Appendix H: Medical Release Form

MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION

I/We give permission for _____ to participate in the youth activity of Sovereign Grace Bible Church.

I/We authorize the youth leaders to follow these policies in case of a medical emergency:

- 1) Give immediate, limited first aid.
- 2) Call parent/guardian immediately.
- 3) Call 911, if necessary.

I/We can be reached at _____ (ten digit phone number)

I/We believe the youth leaders need to know the following information or instructions about my child's health needs: (limitations, allergies, etc.)

I/We understand that we are responsible for all costs not covered by the church's liability insurance.

Signature: _____ Relationship _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Relationship _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

