



Dear Children/Youth Worker,

Let me first thank you for following the Lord's leading to work with either our children or youth at MVBC. One of the church policies we have is that we perform a background check on every adult who works with our children and/or youth in any capacity. We are doing this for two reasons: (1) to protect our children from anyone who already has a history of hurting children, and (2) to protect the church should an abuse situation arise. Therefore, it is required that you fill out the enclosed papers and return them to me as soon as you can. You can be assured that no one except myself will ever see the contents of this record check, and I will keep any information that I receive completely confidential.

We do not want you to be concerned regarding information on your record that does not apply to child abuse (for example, a speeding ticket, etc.). We are only looking for information that would indicate that an individual may be a risk to have working with children.

We realize that this is asking a lot from everyone who works with our children/youth, however, we feel that our children/youth are worth protecting. Therefore, we thank you for your cooperation.

**Please fill out pages 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18. Keep the section that contains our policies for your records.**

In His Service,

Pastor Jeff Raffery  
Associate Pastor/Education & Outreach  
JSR/ck

**Policies & Procedures**

**For the Prevention of**

**Child Abuse**

## **PURPOSE**

It is the purpose of the members and staff of Mountain View Baptist Church to provide a safe and secure environment for preschoolers, children, youth and mentally disabled persons entrusted to our care. We do this to encourage those preschoolers, children, and youth and their families to grow in their relationship with God and with one another.

A safe and secure environment includes a formal, written policy to help prevent the occurrence of child abuse. The following policy and procedures are for the protection of our preschoolers, children, youth, employees, volunteers and our entire church family at Mountain View Baptist Church.

## **SCOPE**

This policy shall apply to all current and future workers, compensated and/or volunteer, who will have the responsibility of supervising the activities of preschoolers, children, youth, and mentally disabled persons.

## **DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions shall apply:

1. "Preschooler," "child," "children," "youth," and "minor" shall be defined as any individual under the age of eighteen (18) (or whose mental capacity is that of a minor).
2. "Adult" shall be defined as any individual at least eighteen (18) years of age.
3. "Worker" shall be defined as any adult who serves as a volunteer and/or paid person given the responsibility of working with or caring for minors.
4. "Teenage Worker" shall be defined as any worker at least fourteen (14) years old or older, but under the age of eighteen (18) enlisted to assist with the care of minors.
5. "Child Abuse" shall be defined as verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse of a preschooler, child, youth, or minor.

## **WHAT IS CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE?**

“Any sexual activity with a child - the abuser may be an adult, an adolescent, or another child, provided the child is four years older than the victim.”

Child sexual abuse may be violent or non-violent. All child sexual abuse is an exploitation of a child’s vulnerability and powerlessness in which the abuser is fully responsible for the action.

Child sexual abuse is criminal behavior that involves children in sexual behaviors for which they are not personally, socially, and developmentally ready.

Child sexual abuse includes behaviors that involve touching and non-touching aspects.

## **WORKER ENLISTMENT**

1. All paid employees of Mountain View Baptist Church will be required to complete an Employment Application.
2. Whether a paid employee or a volunteer, each worker desiring to work with minors, will also be required to complete a Worker with Minors Application which is specifically designed for workers who will be working with minors.
3. After an application is received, prior employment, volunteer service and personal references will be checked.
4. Any prospective worker that has prior incidents of sexual misconduct or child abuse should not be allowed to serve in any capacity where they would have contact with minors.
5. Criminal background checks will be performed on each applicant after the applicant has signed the authorization/waiver/indemnity for, and prior to being enlisted as a worker. Annual criminal background checks will be performed on workers, randomly or as deemed necessary. (Only qualified representatives of Mountain View Baptist Church will have access to the criminal background check report. Recommendations will be given by this individual(s) to the Nominating Committee as to the qualification of applicants.)
6. No volunteer will be allowed to work with minors until they have been a member of the church for a minimum of six (6) months.
7. At the applicant’s request, Mountain View Baptist Church shall allow the applicant to review his/her criminal history record transcript at the church,

but in no event shall the church allow the applicant to retain and/or copy his/her transcript.

## **WORKER TRAINING**

Each new worker will be given the legal definition of child abuse in writing, as well as the policy of the church on reporting of child abuse. New workers will have training once a year and be required to view child abuse prevention video(s), and read the written materials available on this subject to help them gain an appreciation for the reality of the concern. This will help workers identify child abuse in the future if they see signs of it.

## **VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORM**

Employees, teachers of minors, and volunteers of activities or programs for minors of Mountain View Baptist Church will be required to complete a Volunteer Information Form providing personal and confidential information necessary to perform security background checks and reference checks on each individual worker. While this process understandably trespasses into the privacy of our lives, the security of our children outweighs the personal invasion inherent with such investigation and disclosures. All personal information voluntarily disclosed, the results of all security background and reference checks or the refusal of any person to participate in a program or activity in lieu of such disclosure requirements will be maintained in the strictest of confidence.

Whether disclosed voluntarily or by result of the security background check, the following items will automatically disqualify a volunteer from participating in the leadership, sponsorship or supervising of any activities or programs with minors:

Any conviction for:

- Criminal homicide;
- Aggravated assault;
- Crimes related to the possession, use or sale of drugs or controlled substances;
- Sexual abuse;
- Sexual assault (rape);
- Aggravated sexual assault;
- Injury to a child;
- Incest;
- Indecency with a child;
- Inducing sexual conduct or sexual performance of a child;
- Possession or promotion of child pornography;
- The sale, distribution, or display of harmful material to a minor;
- Employment harmful to children;
- Abandonment or endangerment of a child;
- Kidnapping or unlawful restraint;

- Public lewdness or indecent exposure;
- Enticing a child.

All charges for these crimes or charges or convictions for any other crimes not listed above will be reviewed by those trained by Mountain View Baptist Church for interpretation of the criminal history record transcript and approved by the church for reviewing applicant transcripts. Only qualified persons (as stated above) may view information obtained on the criminal history record transcript.

## **SPECIFIC ACTS AND OMISSIONS IN VIOLATION OF THE POLICY**

The following acts of omissions are violations of this policy and will not be tolerated or accepted during any activity or program and are to be immediately reported to the designated program staff after the safety of the child, children, youth, or minor involved has been assured.

- Any direct observations or evidence of sexual activity in the presence of or in association with a minor.
- Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or evidence of abusive conduct towards a minor.
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any person and a minor.
- Infliction or physically abusive behavior or bodily injury to a minor.
- Physical neglect of a minor, including failure to provide adequate supervision in relation to the activities of Mountain View Baptist Church.
- Mental or emotional injury to a minor.
- The presence or possession of obscene or pornographic materials at any function of Mountain View Baptist Church.
- The presence, possession, or being under the influence of any illegal or illicit drugs.
- The consumption of or being under the influence of illegal or illicit drugs or alcohol while leading or participating in a function for minors at Mountain View Baptist Church.

### **WORKER SUPERVISION**

1. The church will adopt the “two adult” rule, which means no adult shall be left alone with a child, and requires a reasonable ratio of adult workers to be maintained in each situation involving the supervision of children .
2. Church staff and volunteer directors will supervise on an ongoing basis and make unannounced visits into classes or other program sites from time to time.

3. An identification system shall be adopted (for children five (5) and under) so that the adults who drop off a child are the same adults who pick up the child. Permission slips will be available for adults to sign, authorizing the release of the child(ren) to other adults.
4. In counseling sessions with minors, parental permission shall be obtained prior to a minister meeting privately with a minor, or the two adult rule shall be used in that instance. Prior permission may be granted by parents to cover a particular time period (i.e., a school year) for their child to receive counseling from a particular minister.

#### OCCASIONAL VOLUNTEER WORKERS

1. For those who only volunteer occasionally must go through the entire volunteer screening process. There are to be no exceptions for anyone to go through the complete process.
2. Teenagers under eighteen (18) wanting to serve as teen workers in any capacity with activities, studies, or programs for preschoolers or children will need to fill out a Teen Volunteer Information Form and go through the training. The only step in the process they are exempt from is the criminal background check.

#### SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS

1. Parental permission shall be obtained in advance for involvement in church sponsored programs, activities or whenever an adult might be spending time alone with a child in an unsupervised situation.
2. A door without windows shall remain open at all times.
3. Use a "check-in/check-out" procedure for all kindergarten aged children and younger.
4. Educate all volunteers and paid workers with minors as to the church's policies and procedures concerning this matter.

### CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION REPORTING

Any person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect shall report the person's belief in accordance with this procedure. Non-accusatory reports (reports that identify the victim of abuse or neglect whether or not the person responsible for the abuse or neglect is known) shall be made to the Pastor or full time staff who is in charge. The

Pastor or staff will then report the abuse or neglect to the local or state law enforcement agency by calling 911 or Catawba County Sheriff's Department (828-464-5241).

- 1) Fully comply with the child abuse reporting statute.
- 2) The church should also immediately contact the insurance company to report the occurrence, and should contact its attorney.
- 3) In instances where child abuse is confirmed and a member of the ministerial staff is the perpetrator, the immediate supervisor should be contacted and advised.
- 4) This procedure is not only required as a condition of your job or volunteer position, but is also required by law.
- 5) Upon the first suspicion of an instance of child abuse, the following steps should be taken immediately:
  - a) Do not treat the suspicion as frivolous.
  - b) Commence the investigation immediately, and conclude it as soon as possible.
    - i) If a sponsor or volunteer of minors suspects a case of child abuse, he or she is required by law to report his/her suspicions within 24 hours to Associate Pastor/Education. It is the policy of Mountain View Baptist Church that it also be reported immediately to one of the paid staff ministers of the church.
    - ii) The minister receiving the initial report will be responsible for confirming the facts reported and the condition of the child, on the same day on which the first report was made. Use the "Reducing the Risk Application Checklist" to complete the church/staff responsibilities involved with the occurrence.
    - iii) Data concerning the child, name, address and other pertinent information will be obtained through discussions with the initial reporter and other staff members. The name and address of the person responsible for the care of the child, if available, will be obtained.
    - iv) After the information is secured, the minister will contact Catawba County Sheriff's Department.

- c) Maintain confidentiality of the investigation as much as possible. Emphasize confidentiality of the victim and any accused.
  - i) On the same day that the case is first reported verbally to Associate Pastor/Education, the report will be documented on a Child Abuse Report Form. A copy of this form must be sent within five (5) days to the legal authorities.
- d) Cooperate fully with law enforcement officials.
- e) Suspend any accused from the performance of duties involving children until the investigation has been completed.
- f) Inform the victim and the victim's family of the steps that are being taken, and continue to keep them advised of the status of the investigations. If child abuse is confirmed, ask the victim and the victim's family what action they would like to take in the matter, and fully cooperate to address their request within the bounds of a legal and prudent response (church legal counsel should assist in this determination).
- g) In instances where child abuse is confirmed, the church should immediately dismiss the worker from that position.
- h) In instances where the evidence is inconclusive, the church must take action depending on the strength of the evidence available and after consideration of the victim's family's request.
  - i) Keep the congregation informed of the investigation with respect to matters which are not confidential, so that the congregation will hear about the investigation from within the church rather than from the news media.
- 6) Promptly take steps to plan for a response to the media and attempt to speak to the media only through the Pastor so that the church can emphasize through the media to the public the church's position on child abuse, its concern for the victim, and the extensive steps the church is taking to address the present occurrence and to reduce the risk and provide a safe environment for other children.

Every allegation of sexual offense or molestation should be investigated promptly and thoroughly by officials and reported to the church insurance company immediately. If such allegation is factual, the relationship with the worker should be terminated. It is

unlikely the problem will ever be handled by relying on promises of the employee or volunteer to reform. Failure to take remedial action will make a claim difficult to defend.

## **INSURANCE**

The church shall obtain a sufficient level of liability insurance coverage that would cover child abuse and sexual misconduct claims. If available, the church should have the levels of coverage which are required for limited immunity.

## **CONCLUSION**

Churches need to be prepared! This is the legal reason for creating safety policies, but there's a deeper, more significant reason – to protect the children. Policies are only printed expressions of the value placed on children. If the only reason for safety policies is to protect the organization, the church has missed God's love for children.

Some people may think that our church is too small or that our church "knows" everyone to worry about these safety problems. Remember it's much easier to make plans and develop safety policies as a means of prevention, rather than wait until they are needed as a reaction to an abuse case.

Some churches tend to take the biblical concept of trusting God to an extreme. They think nothing bad can happen to Christians. We must not be unwise regarding children's safety. There is no automatic protection from evil for the faithful. We're to watch and be ready. Accidents will always happen. There will always be unforeseen circumstances that need to be handled, but the church should build into its organization sturdy safety-policy fire blocks into the walls of its ministry to protect children.

Mountain View Baptist Church desires to be "a church that cares" through the implementation of the above policy. Adoption of these provisions will enable Mountain View Baptist Church to provide a more safe and secure environment for each individual of our church family and its guests.

# INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Reason for report \_\_\_\_\_

Date of incident \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) and Age(s) of Minor(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Quote the child's first words verbatim: \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe what happened: \_\_\_\_\_

What action did you take? \_\_\_\_\_

Has the incident been resolved?  yes  no Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Were there any witnesses?  yes  no Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures of witnesses (if possible): \_\_\_\_\_

Report submitted to: \_\_\_\_\_





## WORKER'S STATEMENT

The information contained in this screening form is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references to give you any information, including opinions, which they may have regarding my character and fitness for work with minors or the mentally handicapped. Each reference will be asked to submit the name of one person to be used as a reference. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application by Mountain View Baptist Church, I hereby release any individual, church, youth organization, charity, employer, reference, or any other person or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family, on account of compliance or any attempts to comply with this authorization. I waive any right that I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me or my references in this screening form.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the Bylaws and Policies of Mountain View Baptist Church and to refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of Mountain View Baptist Church.

I further state that I have carefully read the foregoing release and know the contents thereof; and sign this release as my own free act. This is a legally binding agreement which I have read and understand.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print Witness Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witnesses' Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK AUTHORIZATION

I hereby give my permission for the Mountain View Baptist Church to obtain information relating to my criminal history record. The criminal history record, as received from the reporting agencies, may include arrest and conviction data as well as plea bargains and deferred adjudication's. I understand that this information will be used, in part, to determine my eligibility for and employment or volunteer position with Mountain View Baptist Church. I also understand that as long as I remain an employee or volunteer here, the criminal history records check may be repeated at any time. I understand that I will have the opportunity to review the criminal history and a procedure is available for clarification, if I dispute the record as received. I also understand that, by law, I may see a copy of the transcript, for its review, but may not receive a copy of the document in any fashion or form.

I, the undersigned, do for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, hereby remise, release and forever discharge and agree to indemnify Mountain View Baptist Church and each of their officers, directors, employees, and agents harmless from and against any and all causes of actions, suits, liabilities, costs, debts, and sums of money, claims, demands, whatsoever, and any and all related attorney's fees, court costs, and other expenses resulting from the investigation of my background in connection with my application to become a volunteer or employee of Mountain View Baptist Church.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print Witness Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witnesses' Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle Maiden

Sex: (please indicate) Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Race: (please indicate)

W B I A H O  
White Black American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander Hispanic Other

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

Are there any legal charges pending against you? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The signature represents my current legal name and any previously used names are listed below:

Additional names: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant Date

## **SPONSOR/VOLUNTEER CODE OF ETHICS AND RULES**

While acting in our capacity as a Youth/Children/Preschool/Disabled sponsor or volunteer of Mountain View Baptist Church, the following rules shall apply.

- 1) Smoking or using tobacco products in the presence of minors is prohibited.
- 2) Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal, or illicit drugs will not be tolerated.
- 3) Sponsors and volunteers of minors shall not abuse such minors, including:
  - Any direct observations or evidence of sexual activity in the presence of or in association with a minor;
  - Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or evidence of abusive conduct towards a minor;
  - Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any person and a minor;
  - Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind to a minor(s);
  - Infliction or physically abusive behavior or bodily injury to a minor;
  - Physical neglect of a minor, including failure to provide adequate supervision in relation to the activities of Mountain View Baptist Church.
  - Mental or emotional injury to a minor;
  - The presence or possession of obscene or pornographic materials at any function of Mountain View Baptist Church.
  - The presence, possession, or being under the influence of any illegal, illicit drugs;
  - The consumption of or being under the influence of alcohol while leading or participating in a function for minors of Mountain View Baptist Church.
- 4) Limited access to the locked records to the Administrator.
- 5) Periodically update Volunteer Information Forms.
- 6) Sponsors and volunteers must treat all people of all races, religions, and cultures with respect and consideration.

- 7) Sponsors and volunteers shall not use or tolerate the use of profanity in the presence of minors.
- 8) Sponsors and volunteers must be free of physical and psychological conditions that might adversely affect any minor's health, including, but not limited to, contagious disease.
- 9) Sponsors and volunteers will portray a positive role model for minors by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, and maturity.
- 10) Sponsors and volunteers will be expected to act and react with Christian love and understanding in all situations.
- 11) Sponsors and volunteers will do everything in their power to avoid being put in a situation where they are alone with a minor other than their own.
- 12) I understand that as a sponsor or volunteer with minors for Mountain View Baptist Church I will be subject to a background check, including criminal history.
- 13) I understand that any violation of this code may be grounds for removal as a sponsor or volunteer with minors.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_