

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

SIBC is committed to protecting infants, preschoolers, children, and youth from sexual, emotional, and physical abuse. SIBC has a zero tolerance policy prohibiting any act of sexual, emotional, or physical abuse. The zero tolerance policy requires of all SIBC employees and volunteers the immediate reporting to the SIBC Staff of any occurrence or suspected occurrence of any abuse.

A. Any paid employee or volunteer who works with children (age 17 or under) will be given the definition of child abuse in writing, as well as the policy on reporting child abuse. All paid employees and volunteers are required to participate in Ministry Safe training and pass a Training test before being permitted to serve the children or youth areas.

B. SIBC practices the two adult rule, which requires a reasonable number of adult workers to be maintained in each situation involving the supervision of children and youth, but with a minimum of two workers at all times. An accommodation for this rule might be a worker in a room with open doors with another adult outside the room (like a hall monitor, or neighbor classes with doors open).

C. At SIBC we believe that hugs and other forms of appropriate affection are important for a child's development and are generally suitable in our church setting. However volunteers/paid staff must show discretion.

1. Physical affection must be appropriate to the age of the youth or child. (For example, it is generally appropriate for a two-year-old to sit in a worker's lap and give a kiss on the cheek, but this is not appropriate for a teenager and youth leader to behave this way.)

2. A child's preference not to be touched should be respected. Do not force affection upon a reluctant child.

3. Church staff and volunteers are responsible to protect children under their supervision from inappropriate touching by others and must promptly discuss inappropriate touching or other questionable behavior by others with the supervisor or ministry staff.

D. To protect children from any abuse, we do not permit volunteers/paid staff/students or other persons (who are not the parents of the child) to:

1. Enter a room alone with a minor alone, including restrooms.
2. Physically discipline a child in any way.

E. We do not permit volunteers/paid staff/students or other persons

to inappropriately touch a child.

F. The SIBC ministry team leader/staff supervise on an ongoing basis and make unannounced visits into classes or other sites from time to time.

G. All paid employees and volunteers are required to have a background check screening prior to serving in any children or youth area. A criminal background check will be conducted on all paid employees. A criminal background check will also be conducted on all volunteers having an assignment working with children or youth.

I. The check in system will be utilized during SIBC events/ministries so that when adults drop off a child they are the same adults or the adult's designee who picks up the child.