

ICBC CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

*Indian Creek Baptist Church,
Mill Run, PA*

Updated June 2016

Mark 10:13-16

People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

of the Indian Creek Baptist Church, Mill Run, PA

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The material in this manual is a combination of material from:

- * Safe Church Manual of the Bare Memorial Church of God
- * Safe Church Child Protection Manual – Guide One Insurance
- * WEC International Child Protection Policy
- * Hope Baptist Church Safe Church Policy Concerning Abuse Prevention
- * Somerset Church of Christ Child & Youth Protection Policy
- * <http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/>
- * <http://www.legis.state.pa.us/>
- * Safe Sanctuaries, Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church by Joy Thornburg Melton, 2006.

INTRODUCTION

We live in a sinful, broken world. Every day we see more crime, violence, and loss of life. It is easy to wonder why God still allows us to exist and why He allows all the evil to continue. But God is still in control and God is still love. We should not be discouraged by the things we see around us, but rather we should stand firm in our faith. As Christians, we are to be salt and light in our world and we need to seek how to make the world a safer, better place.

Because of sin, abuse happens in all demographic, socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, and religious groups. We at Indian Creek Baptist Church (ICBC) adopt this policy and procedures to reduce the risk of abuse in our church, and to protect those whom God places in our care. We seek to protect our children, youth, and vulnerable adults. We desire to honor the name of Jesus Christ, as well as our workers, and our church. We are committed to providing a safe community in which people can safely grow, learn, and serve.

OUR PURPOSE

Indian Creek Baptist's purpose is to be God's light to the mountain by preaching the gospel, winning souls to Christ, making disciples and ministering to the whole person through missionary outreach.

OUR BELIEFS

At Indian Creek Baptist Church, we believe:

- * The Bible to be the inspired word of God.
- * The birth of Jesus Christ as evidence of His deity, in that He was virgin born.
- * The blood of Christ shed on the cross to be the only atonement for sin.
- * The bodily resurrection of Christ from the tomb and His ascension into Heaven.
- * The body of Christ, called also the Church, to be composed of all believers.
- * The blessed hope and His personal return to earth.
- * The believer's call to a life of consecration.

OUR POLICY

It is the conviction of the Indian Creek Baptist Church (ICBC) that abuse is contrary to and is a violation of God's Scriptures and Pennsylvania State Law. As such, it will not be tolerated. Therefore, we establish these policies to reduce the risk of abuse happening within the church body and building; to protect our children, youth, vulnerable adults, members, leaders, and volunteers; and to ensure that any possible situations that may involve abuse will be handled responsibly.

All volunteers and staff, ages 14 and older, who interact with those under the age of 18, or vulnerable adults:

1. Must be given and read a copy of this manual.
2. Must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ that is lived out in your personal and public life. (An exception to this may be teen helpers for Kings Kids Club.)
3. Must attend the church regularly for six months prior to being assigned as a volunteer in a leadership role.
4. Must be actively attending church while being in a position of leadership.

5. Must satisfactorily (in accordance with PA Title 23, Section 6344c) complete, maintain, and return the following documentation to the chairperson of the Child Protection Committee:
 - a. ICBC Volunteer Information – Working with Children and Youth
 - b. Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Background Clearance (SP 4-164)
 - c. Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance (CY 113)
 - d. The FBI National Clearance OR a signed statement that you have been a resident of PA for the previous 10 years and are not disqualified from working with children or youth according to PA Code, Title 23, Section 6344c. (Exception: Volunteers who have lived outside PA in the last 10 years and employees MUST submit the FBI Clearance.)
 - e. All clearances listed in b, c, and d must be current within 60 months of hire or assignment, and be renewed every 60 months from the date of the previous clearance.
 - f. Any volunteer or employee arrested or convicted of an offense that would disqualify them from service, must provide written notification to ICBC within 72 hours after the event. (Note – if a record exists of a crime, the Deacons will review the information and determine if the volunteer would be allowed to work in the capacity requested.)
 - g. Those under age 14 do not need to complete the forms listed in 5 b, c, and d.
6. Are encouraged to attend the trainings given by ICBC.
7. Must adhere to prescribed safeguards as outlined below.
8. Must Report any suspected abuse to the Child Line Hotline **1-800-932-0313**. Then notify the Pastor and/or the Child Protection Chairperson and make an electronic report within 48 hours.
9. Volunteers under the age of 18 must be supervised by an adult who is at least 18 years old.
10. Volunteers must have the approval of the person heading the program they want to volunteer with. This may include an informal interview where questions can be asked.
11. A list of everyone who has completed all of the above requirements will be kept on file with our church and insurance company.

Accountability

1. All ICBC volunteers are expected to interact with children in a mature, capable, safe, caring and responsible manner, with a high level of accountability.
2. All work with children and youth should be planned in a way that minimizes risks as far as possible. This plan includes being visible to other adults when working with children and youth. Visibility can be accomplished by planning activities in areas where other adults are present and at a time when other activities are occurring. Isolation can also be overcome by avoiding being alone with children.
3. Always be accountable to other adults regarding your interactions with children and youth. All volunteers should expect regular interaction with other staff members and other volunteers.
4. All events must be held in open areas, or at least, where activities can be viewed from outside the room (i.e. window in a door, or an open door).
5. All volunteers should ask only other approved volunteers to be substitutes.
6. Children under the age of 8 should not be left unattended.
7. Record should be kept of all children and youth activities, including the date and name of participants. This could be as simple as an attendance chart.
8. Staff and parents are encouraged to periodically and randomly visit classrooms and other areas where children and adults are together.
9. Should an event take place outside of ICBC, the person in charge should make sure that the setting is appropriate and that the children or youth are properly supervised. Signed permission forms should be completed for any activity where children or youth are leaving the premises. The person in charge is responsible to approve any drivers for the event.

Adult Supervision Policy

1. There must be at least one adult over the age of 18 and who is at least 5 years older than the children or youth being supervised present for any programs, activities, or interactions with youth and children. This protects both the worker and the child. If there is only one child for a class or activity, that child should join another class.
2. One-on-one interactions should occur only with parental permission, and church staff should be informed. For meetings at the church, another adult should be in close vicinity, aware that the meeting is occurring and willing to stay in the vicinity until it is completed.

Touch

Because healthy, caring touch is valuable to children but unhealthy touch is abusive, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. Touch should be in response to the need of the child and not the need of the adult.
2. Touch should be open rather than secretive. For example, a hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
3. Touch must be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the adult. It must be with the child's permission and any resistance from the child should be respected.
4. Touch should always communicate respect for the child. Adults should avoid doing things of a personal nature for children that they are able to do for themselves.
5. Adults and other youth or children are not to hit, slap, pinch, push, hold against their will or otherwise assault children.
6. The following signs of affection may be appropriate within specific contexts: verbal praise or side hugs (shoulder to shoulder hugs). For smaller children, this may include touching their hands, faces, shoulders and arms, arms around their shoulders, hugs or holding them when others are present.

Windows / Open Door Policy

Classroom doors should have a window or door must be open. Doors should never be locked or windows blocked while persons are inside the room.

Teenage Workers

We are happy to have teenagers under age 18 helping with our children's programs such as Junior Church and King's Kids Club as well as at times babysitting (paid or volunteer). The following guidelines apply to teenage workers:

- Must be at least age 12 or in 7th grade. (King's Kids Club is an exception to this and those age 11 or in 6th grade are allowed to help.)
- Must be screened as specified above.
- Must be under the supervision of an adult.

Medications Policy

It is the policy of ICBC not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children under our care. Exceptions to the medications policy may be granted to parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions). Parents of such children should address their situation with the teacher or leader of the program to develop a plan of action.

Discipline Policy

It is the policy of ICBC not to administer corporal punishment, even if parents have suggested or given permission for it. There should be no spanking, grabbing, hitting, or other physical discipline of children. Workers may find it helpful to talk to another worker to find positive ways to deal with discipline issues,

such as rewarding good behavior, using time out if necessary, or talking to the parents. Workers should consult with the parents if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues.

Restroom Guidelines

If a child needs to use the bathroom, a worker should escort the child or group of children to the bathroom. The worker should check the bathroom first to make sure that it is empty, and then allow the children inside. The worker should prop open the main bathroom door and should then remain outside the stall door until the child is finished. If a child needs help, the worker should leave the stall door open as they assist the child. Then they should escort the children back to the classroom.

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

Accidental Injuries to Children

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

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

Note: If an adult receives injuries on the church premises, an incident report should also be completed.

First Aid Kits

First Aid Kits will be checked annually and any supplies needed will be restocked. A list of where the kits are located will be kept in the Pastor's office.

Key Policy

1. The Directors will maintain a list of people who have keys to the church or other ICBC buildings. A list of these key holders will be kept in the Pastor's office.
2. Keys should not be loaned out to unauthorized individuals.
3. A key holder should not use his or her key to access the church with a child or children not his or her own (or who are not grandchildren or under their care as a legal guardian or foster parent) when there is no church related activity being held in which the child or the key holder are involved. This is to prevent a situation where an adult key holder is alone with a child in the facility.

Child Abuse and Police Clearance Records:

1. All police / child abuse clearances and other relevant information will be kept in the Pastor's locked office. This information is confidential and will only be available to the Pastor, Deacons, and Child Protection Chairperson as needed.
2. A master list of those working with children and the date of their clearances will be kept updated by the Child Protection Chairperson. Clearances must be renewed every five years.
3. The Child Protection Chairperson will review all clearances. If there are questions or someone has a police record, the Chairperson will consult with the Pastor and the Deacons. Having a police record

does not determine that a person is not allowed to work with children but they must be evaluated and decided whether it is safe / wise for a person to work with children.

Child Protection Committee:

A Child Protection Committee will be appointed annually. They will review the ICBC Child Protection Policy each year and also will be available to deal with any issues that arise in this area.

Training

ICBC will provide training on this child protection policy to all new childcare workers and will strive to provide opportunities for additional training classes or events on an annual or semi-annual basis. Other possible trainings include: CPR / First Aid, appropriate boundaries regarding physical touch and discipline; mandatory reporting, signs and symptoms of abuse; and basics of what we believe. All workers are strongly encouraged to attend these training events.