
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Newington Baptist Church Child Protection Policy and Procedures, Background Checks, and Child Safety Classes

Article 5 - Board of Directors Section 3-4: To establish governing principles, policies, and determining practices for the Church, including the creation and/or approval and maintenance of policies and procedure manuals, which will contain all controlling policies and procedures governing any and all aspects of the Church's affairs, including, but not limited to, committee task descriptions and policies regarding the handling of funds, use of facilities, and employment policies and practices;

Article 10 Section 1 Church Operation Manual: The Policies and Procedures Manual of Newington Baptist Church will provide more specific and detailed information on how NBC will operate beyond what is covered in the Constitution and Bylaws. The purpose of the Policies and Procedures Manual is to define orderly functional processes, and to protect the Church from financial, criminal, civil, and reputational risks. This Manual should include policies for all Ministries that require particular attention to detail in their processes to reduce risk or increase accountability. The manual will be maintained by the Church Administrative Assistant on the church website and other cloud storage.

Year:	B.O.D. Signature:	Date of Review:
2020	Gerald German	2/15/2020
2021	No Review due to COVID	
2022	Jennifer Young	2/19/2022
2023	Juli Semanski	3/7/2023
2024	Juli Semanski	2/7/2024
2025	Juli Semanski	6/17/2025
2026	Emily Matthews	3/17/2026

Policy and Procedures Established 2019
NEWINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH
6169 Main Street, Gloucester, Va. 23061

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6169 MAIN STREET

GLOUCESTER, VA 23061

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

(Updated February 7, 2024)

Child Abuse Prevention Policy

and Procedures

I. Purpose

1. To help Newington Baptist Church provide a caring and secure environment for children in all phases of church life.
2. To help Newington Baptist Church reduce its legal risk and liability exposure.

II. Biblical Foundation

Newington Baptist Church seeks to express God's love of children and provide for their personal wholeness. This caring community seeks to prevent child abuse of any form to our children and youth and to be in ministry to families where abuse may occur. The Bible is foundational to our understanding upon which all policies, procedures, and ministries must stand.

And they were bringing children to him, that He might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it He was indignant, and said to them "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the Kingdom of God. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." And He took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them. Mark 10:13-18

Jesus teaches us explicitly that children have the right and the keys to the Kingdom of God; He demonstrated this through blessing and touch. Our goal in response to this Biblical mandate is to maintain a safe, secure and loving place where children may grow. A place where caregivers, teachers and leaders (both paid and volunteer) minister appropriately to their needs.

III. Virginia's Child Abuse Law

Code of Virginia 63.2-100

"Abused or neglected child" means any child less than 18 years of age:

Whose parents or other person responsible for his care creates or inflicts, threatens to create or inflict, or allows to be created or inflicted upon such child a physical or mental injury by other than accidental means, or creates a substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or impairment of bodily or mental functions

See entire list at: [§ 63.2-100. Definitions \(virginia.gov\)](#)

Code of Virginia 63.2-1509. Requirement that certain injuries to children be reported by physicians, nurses, teachers, etc.; penalty for failure to report.

The following persons who, in their professional or official capacity, have reason to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child, shall report the matter immediately to the local department of the county or city wherein the child resides or wherein the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred or to the Department's toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline:

1. Any teacher or other person employed in a public or private school, kindergarten, or child day program, as that term is defined in § [22.1-289.02](#);
2. Any person providing full-time or part-time child care for pay on a regularly planned basis;
3. Any person 18 years of age or older associated with or employed by any public or private organization responsible for the care, custody or control of children;
4. Any person 18 years of age or older who has received training approved by the Department of Social Services for the purposes of recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect;
5. Any athletic coach, director or other person 18 years of age or older employed by or volunteering with a public or private sports organization or team;
6. Administrators or employees 18 years of age or older of public or private day camps, youth centers and youth recreation programs;
7. Any minister, priest, rabbi, imam, or duly accredited practitioner of any religious organization or denomination usually referred to as a church, unless the information supporting the suspicion of child abuse or neglect (i) is required by the doctrine of the religious organization or denomination to be kept in a confidential manner or (ii) would be subject to § [8.01-400](#) or [19.2-271.3](#) if offered as evidence in court.

See entire list at: [§ 63.2-1509. Requirement that certain injuries to children be reported by physicians, nurses, teachers, etc.; penalty for failure to report \(virginia.gov\)](#)

Any person required to file a report pursuant to this section who fails to do so as soon as possible, but not longer than 24 hours after having reason to suspect a reportable offense of child abuse or neglect, shall be fined not more than \$500 for the first failure and for any subsequent failures not less than \$1,000. In cases evidencing acts of rape, sodomy, or object sexual penetration as defined in Article 7 (§ [18.2-61](#) et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 18.2, a person who knowingly and intentionally fails to make the report required pursuant to this section shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

IV. Types of Child Abuse

A. Definition

Child abuse refers to an act committed by a parent, caregiver or person in a position of trust (even though he/she may not care for the child on a daily basis) which is not accidental and which harms or threatens to harm a child's physical or mental health

or welfare. The following definitions and explanations in this section are from the Virginia Department of Social Services.

B. Types of Abuse

1. Physical Abuse

A physical injury, threat of injury or creation of a real and significant danger of substantial risk of death, disfigurement or impairment of bodily functions. Such injury or threat of injury, regardless of intent, is inflicted or allowed to be inflicted by non-accidental means. Examples: asphyxiation; bone fracture; brain damage; skull fracture; subdural hematoma; burns; scalding; cuts, bruises, welts, abrasions; internal injuries; poisoning; sprains; dislocations; gunshot; stabbing wounds.

2. Physical Neglect

The failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, or supervision for a child if the child's health or safety is endangered. Physical neglect may include multiple occurrences or a one-time critical or severe event that results in a threat to health or safety, such as a toddler left alone. Other types of neglect include abandonment, inadequate supervision, inadequate clothing, inadequate shelter, inadequate personal hygiene, inadequate food and malnutrition.

3. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse includes any act defined in the Code of Virginia which is committed, or allowed to be committed, upon a child by his/her parent or other persons responsible for the child's care. Examples of such abuse are: sexual exploitation, sexual molestation, intercourse/sodomy and other sexual abuse.

4. Medical Neglect

Refusal or failure by caretaker to obtain and/or follow through with a complete regimen of medical, mental or dental care for a condition, which if untreated, could result in illness or developmental delays.

5. Failure to Thrive

A syndrome of infancy or early childhood which is characterized by growth failure, signs of severe malnutrition, and variable degrees of developmental retardation. Children are considered to be in this category only when the syndrome is diagnosed by a physician and is caused by non-organic factors.

6. Mental Abuse/Neglect

A pattern of acts or omissions by the caregiver which result in harm to a child's psychological or emotional health or development.

7. Educational Neglect

The child's caretaker is directly responsible for the failure of the child to attend school or an approved alternative program of study.

8. Bizarre Discipline

Any actions in which the caretaker uses eccentric, irrational or grossly inappropriate procedures or devices to modify the child's behavior.

V. Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse

In an effort to create the safest possible environment within Newington, several abuse prevention measures will be utilized. These measures include screening of paid and volunteer workers for past child abuse convictions or expungements, provision for regular training on child abuse issues to paid and volunteer staff members, use of the two adult rule, standards for appropriate classroom discipline and open classrooms.

1. Six Month Rule

Newington will not use anyone as a worker for children or youth in the church unless they have been a member of the church for at least six (6) months. The fellowship of Deacons may waive this requirement upon receipt of a satisfactory background check.

2. Background Screening for Staff and Volunteers Working with Children

Before beginning the first year of service, each employed or volunteer children's teacher, child care worker, or youth worker will complete a background check. With their permission, their email will be sent to Ministry Safe. Ministry Safe will email them and obtain all proper permissions, required information and perform the background check. Anyone who has had a child abuse conviction or expungement, as well as anyone refusing to complete this background check, will not be permitted to work with children. In addition, applicants for paid staff positions will undergo a criminal record check. The applicant will be asked to cover the cost of these checks. **These background checks will be updated every three years.**

3. Staff Training

Before beginning their first year of service, all paid and volunteer childcare workers, children's Sunday School teachers, and youth workers and teachers will be required to read the church's child protection policy summary and sign a form indicating that they have read and understand the policy and agree to abide by it. If they need training, they will be sent a link to the video through Ministry Safe. After they have completed the video and the quiz, the church will be notified and their record in Breeze will be updated.

If the teacher does not complete this training, they will not be permitted to serve.

Vacation Bible School teachers and workers at Newington Baptist Church will be required to read the policy and sign the acknowledgment form before the start of Vacation Bible School. Anyone refusing to read the policy and sign the form after being contacted will not be permitted to serve. When Vacation Bible School is held at other churches, only teachers from the Newington congregation will be asked to comply with this policy. Leaders of community groups of children or youth who use the church facilities will be required to read the policy and sign this acknowledgment form. Church facilities will not be available to groups whose leaders refuse to read and sign the policy.

4. Two Adult Rule

Teachers will be assigned in teams of two or more for all children and youth activities including, Sunday School Children's Church, and any church-sponsored group. Non-related male and female leaders should be present when the group includes both boys and girls. Classes should merge if two leaders of only one gender are available or request a third adult to be in the room for safety. The third adult can volunteer twice before completing a background check and child protection training.

When church sponsored groups stay overnight at any location, two or more leaders must be present and must include at least one male and female if the group is mixed.

Youth (11-17) years of age are welcome to volunteer in children's ministries with children's ministry leader approval. Their requirements are completion of child protection training and the recommendation of the youth leader as applicable/appropriate. They are then considered a second adult. Youth volunteers are requested not to take part in the following: assisting children to the restroom, changing diapers, or for any reason being left solely in charge of a group of children.

No children's or youth class (birth – 18 years) may be taught by one adult.

5. Classroom Discipline

All teachers and workers will use the following discipline measures. If a child is behaving inappropriately, the teacher or worker will tell the child specifically what he/she is doing that is not acceptable and state what the expected behavior is. e.g., "We do not throw blocks. We use blocks for building." If this measure is not effective, the child will be guided to another

activity. If inappropriate behavior continues, the child may be placed at a table to work alone away from the other students. If the child's disruptive behavior continues after these steps have been taken, the child may be taken to the church office and the parents or responsible guardian will be contacted and the child will be left under their supervision. No physical punishment or verbal abuse, e.g. ridicule, are to be used at any time. If isolating the child within the classroom or removal of the child from the room becomes necessary, the situation will be discussed with the child's parents or guardians as soon as possible.

6. Open Classrooms

Classrooms or child care rooms may be visited without prior notice by church staff, parents, or other volunteer church workers, e.g. Sunday School Superintendent. Brief observations of child care rooms and classrooms of children or youth are conducted by the Sunday School Superintendent during Sunday school hours. **Windows are in doors to Sunday school classrooms.**

7. Bathroom Policy

If a child needs assistance going to the bathroom, the leader/volunteer assisting the child must first inform another leader/volunteer before leaving the classroom. The leader may then escort the child to the bathroom, leaving the classroom door open, and wait outside of the door until the child is finished. If the child needs further assistance in the bathroom, the leader must leave the door of the bathroom open at all times upon entering. If the child is of an age that no escort or assistance is needed to/in the bathroom, child may walk to the bathroom as leader/volunteer supervises from the doorway of the classroom (as long as the bathroom is in sight of classroom door). Youth volunteers are prohibited from taking any child to the bathroom at any time. Only volunteers/leaders who have completed the child protection training may take a child to the bathroom.

VI. Reporting Child Abuse

Should there be allegations of child abuse at Newington Baptist Church these procedures will be followed:

1. Treat any allegation of child abuse seriously.
2. Pray for the church and all persons affected by the allegation.
3. Immediately begin documenting all procedures observed in the handling of the allegation.

4. Immediately notify the staff member in charge. The Response Team will send a representative to Newington Baptist Church within 24 hours to conduct an investigation.
5. Immediately notify the Virginia Department of Social Services of the allegation.
6. Immediately notify the parents if it is not known that they have previous knowledge.
7. Immediately notify the church's insurance company.
8. Do not confront the accused with the allegation unless and until advised by the Response Team to do so. If the accused has assigned duties within the life of the church, that person must be temporarily relieved of the duties until the investigation is concluded.
9. The pastor should extend whatever care and resources necessary, but under no circumstances should the pastor or any church leader or member investigate the allegation. In providing care to the principals (alleged victim and the accused) and their families, the pastor or church leader, should under no circumstances be drawn into a discussion of the truth or falsity of the allegation which could contaminate the investigation. Do not assign blame or take any steps that involve establishing or refuting the allegation.
10. It is appropriate to show care and comfort for the alleged victim. This should be the pastoral objective from the moment the allegation is received or otherwise made known.
11. Observe confidentiality for both the alleged victim and the accused until advised to the contrary by the Response Team.

VII. Policy Review

The Child Abuse Prevention Policy and Procedure of Newington Baptist Church shall be reviewed annually by the Trustees. A verification follow-up report will be made each year at Charge Conference to insure the integrity of the policy and procedures.

Newington Baptist Church
Child Protection Policies & Procedures Summary
As of 04/2023

We want to keep kids safe!

Here are 10 things we do here at Newington to help protect children:

1. If you see something that makes you uncomfortable or fearful for a child's safety or wellbeing, please let Heather King know (757-592-7632) or contact a church deacon or the pastor. This may be signs of neglect, signs of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, etc.), or a person who is near the children whose behaviors seem "off" or who is breaking our child protection policies.
2. Our classroom doors have windows so that outsiders can see in at any time. Please don't cover the windows with any decorations.
3. Children can only be released to a parent/guardian or approved pick-up person. Children are not sent out of children's classrooms on their own.
4. All volunteers working with minors in the church need to go through the volunteer approval process, including a background check (for those over 18) and child protection training.
5. We have a two-volunteer policy here. Volunteers shouldn't be with the kids one-on-one and should remain in spaces where other volunteers or church members are nearby. Even off of the church campus, church volunteers should not offer one-on-one rides to minors or be with them in a one-on-one setting.
6. Bathroom use:
 - a. Whenever possible, kids are to be taken to the bathroom in a group with the volunteer waiting outside the restrooms in the hallway or standing in an open doorway (in cases where there are multiple stalls).
 - b. If a child needs to go to the bathroom outside of the normal group restroom time, only an adult volunteer over 18 may walk that child to the restroom. The volunteer should remain outside the restroom while the child uses the bathroom.
 - c. If there is any case where a child needs help in the actual bathroom stall such as help flushing or fixing their clothing, one volunteer can assist the child only while another volunteer is nearby as a witness.
 - d. Once a child ages out of our nursery, he or she is considered too old to receive help cleaning themselves after using the restroom. Children need to be fully potty-trained in order to participate in Deeper Kids, KidzWorship, VBS, etc.

e. In the nursery, diaper changes and helping toddlers in the bathroom occurs with two volunteers in the nursery area to ensure safety.

7. Once a child has passed nursery age, children should be encouraged to sit next to a volunteer, but not on their lap. Hugs may be given only if the child initiates the hug. Children older than nursery-age should not be picked up and carried around. Volunteers can offer to hold a child's hand and walk with them instead. (Babies/toddlers in the nursery may be held, rocked, hugged, picked up, etc.).

8. All volunteers should be focused on the children they are caring for rather than talking to the other volunteers, using their phone, etc. Please engage with the children in your care, listen to them, pay attention to them, play games with them, help them with crafts and activities, learn their names, correct their misbehavior, redirect them when they aren't attentive, review rules with them and reward them for following the rules.

9. In case of a child running out of a classroom or in any way becoming an elopement risk, physically harming another student or volunteer, or causing disruptions in the classroom beyond a volunteer's ability to handle with simple classroom management strategies, please text or call Heather King immediately: 757-592-7632. When possible, have a volunteer follow any child who has run out of a classroom in order to monitor for safety, but do not physically restrain the child unless it looks like he/she will cause imminent harm to themselves or another child. Block external exits whenever possible so that the child does not leave the church. It is imperative that two witnesses are present for any encounters with a child who seems out of control.

10. If the building is evacuated, all infant, children, and youth classes will leave the building by the nearest exit door that is unblocked/safe and proceed directly to the Clothes Closet Collection Bin in the back parking lot. Volunteers should take attendance and ensure that all children are accounted for before allowing them to be reunited with parents.

Child Abuse Prevention Policy and Procedures

Acknowledgment Form

Please answer the following, sign, date and return to indicate you have read, understand and accept the Child Abuse Prevention Policy and Procedures of Newington Baptist Church.

Name _____

Phone () _____

Email: _____

I have read and understand the Child Safety policy and agree to abide by it. I have no convictions for child abuse or expungements of such convictions.

_____ Date _____
Signature



Background Checks Policy and Procedures

Please see “Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse” (Item V) in our Child Protection Policy and Procedures for up-to-date information.

Child Safety Classes Policy and Procedures

Please see “Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse” (Item V) in our Child Protection Policy and Procedures for up-to-date information.