

GRACE COMMUNITY CHAPEL

# CHILD PROTECTION PROGRAM

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REVISION 1.2

APPROVED: JUNE 1, 2015

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ST. PETERS, MISSOURI 63376

## RECORD OF CHANGES

<i>Revision / Date of Change</i>	<i>Description of Change</i>
1.0 / June 8, 2013	Baseline of document.
1.1 / September 8, 2014	Clarified authority of ministry leaders to impose stricter standards regarding the definition of an “adult” in their area of ministry (Section II.D) Updated titles of church staff positions (Sections IV.A.3, IV.C1, and V.A) Expanded requirements to qualify as an “approved children’s worker” (Section IV.A.5) Clarified “2-Person Rule” (Section IV.B)
1.2 / June 1, 2015	Multiple updates defining the term “adult.”

## APPROVAL

The Child Protection Program shall be reviewed annually by the Grace Community Chapel Board of Elders to ensure that the directives and policies expressed herein remain current and to assess compliance across church activities. The annual review and approval shall be recorded in the Board of Elders meeting minutes.

*Thomas K. Bleikamp*

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 Thomas K. Bleikamp  
 Chairman, Board of Elders

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## CHILD PROTECTION PROGRAM

### **I. GENERAL**

Child abuse is a threat that we must all take seriously today. The primary goal of this child protection program is to minimize the risk of child abuse. Grace Community Chapel is committed to the goal of preventing abuse to children or youth while they are involved in the ministry programs of the church. If child abuse is reported, however, a secondary goal of the program is to provide all persons concerned with knowledge as to how to properly respond.

### **II. DEFINITIONS**

#### **A. CHILD ABUSE**

For the purposes of this program, the definition of child abuse is that of the Missouri state law (Section 210.110): "...any physical injury, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse inflicted on a child other than by accidental means by those responsible for the child's care, custody, and control..."

1. Physical injury – Includes violent assault with an implement such as a knife or strap, burns fractures, or other actions leading to possible injury to the child.
2. Sexual abuse – Includes sexual molestation, incest, and exploitation for prostitution or the production of pornographic materials.
3. Emotional abuse – Includes verbal or emotional assault; close confinement such as tying or locking in a closet; inadequate nurturing affection; knowingly permitting antisocial behavior such as delinquency; serious alcohol/drug abuse; or refusal to allow medical care for a diagnosed emotional problem.

#### **B. CHILD**

For the purposes of this program, a child is considered to be any person under the age of eighteen, regardless of physical or mental condition.

#### **C. APPROVED CHILDREN'S WORKERS**

Approved children's workers are those individuals who have met the requirements of this program and have been approved in accordance with this program to minister to children attending the programs of the Chapel. Approved children's workers are responsible for the care, custody and control of children who attend the children's or youth ministry programs of the church.

#### **D. ADULTS**

For the purposes of this program, adults are individuals who are 18 years of age or older. However, those deemed responsible under paragraph V below may establish higher standards for their activities.

#### **E. CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES**

Children's ministries include all children and youth ministries in the Church. These include, but are not limited to: Awana, Children's Camp, Kid's Worship, Nursery, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, youth groups, youth camp, missions trips, and special activities.

#### **F. SUPERVISOR**

Any approved children's worker (paid or volunteer) responsible for a given activity (*i.e.*, Senior High Camp Director, Awana Commander, Children's Camp Director, Nursery Director, Kid's Worship Director, *etc.*)

### **III. POLICIES**

1. Child abuse, in any of the forms listed above, will not be tolerated.

2. All children's and youth workers will be alert to the potential for child abuse and will report incidents of and/or allegations of child abuse to their supervisor immediately in accordance with the procedures listed in paragraph IV below.
3. Upon report of allegations of child abuse, children and youth workers will do their utmost to ensure the well-being of alleged victims.
4. All desiring to serve as children or youth workers (volunteer or paid staff) must apply for that privilege by means of the Ministry Information Packet and be approved by the Church using the procedures in paragraph IV below.

#### **IV. PROCEDURES**

##### **A. SELECTION**

To qualify as an "approved children's worker", an individual must:

1. Read and understand the Grace Community Chapel Doctrinal Statement and the Grace Community Chapel Child Protection Program.
2. Complete and sign the confidential Grace Community Chapel Ministry Information Packet, which includes the submission of two references, a Personal Statement of Faith, a Ministry Information Form, a Missouri Criminal Records Check and an Applicant's Statement, committing to comply with church's program on child protection.
3. Receive final approval from two (2) of the following individuals: Senior Pastor, Director of Adult Ministries, Minister to Students, Director of Children's Ministries, Minister of Worship Arts, Board of Elders Chairman, or Board of Deacons Chairman. One of the approving individuals must be a church pastor or minister.
4. For workers age 18 or older, receive re-verification screening (Missouri Criminal Records Check) at least every five (5) years.
5. All volunteers must be involved with Grace Community Chapel for at least six months before being allowed to work with minors. This requirement may alternatively be satisfied if either of the conditions below is met:
  - a. The person is positively recommended by at least two existing "approved children's workers" or Grace Community Chapel Members, who have known the person for at least six months, and the person has been interviewed and approved by the Responsible ministry head under Section V, or by a member of the Pastoral Staff or Elder Board;
  - b. The person has been involved in a previous church for the last six months and with a positive recommendation from the pastoral staff of that church has been interviewed and approved by the Responsible ministry head under Section V or by a member of the Pastoral Staff or Elder Board.

NOTE: Upon submission of a properly completed Ministry Information Packet, an individual may begin serving in children or youth work with the approval of at least two church pastors or music minister pending final completion of packet processing.

##### **B. "2-PERSON RULE"**

No minor should be alone with only one adult on church premises or in any church-sponsored activity, unless in a counseling situation or one-on-one mentoring situation. In the case of counseling or mentoring, parental/guardian consent will be attained prior to meeting. When two or more workers are present, one of the workers must be an adult.

##### **C. ACTIONS UPON ALLEGATION OF CHILD ABUSE**

1. Immediate reporting. Anyone aware of allegations of child abuse, either by direct observation of otherwise, is responsible for reporting these allegations immediately to the supervisor of the activity or to the Senior Pastor, Director of Adult Ministries, Minister to Students, Director of Children's Ministries, Chairman of the Board of Elders, or Chairman of the Board of Deacons.

2. Investigating. The supervisor or appropriate pastor is responsible for quickly investigating the situation to determine the facts.
3. Reporting to authorities. The appropriate pastor is responsible for contacting the authorities within 24 hours should there be evidence of child abuse. The State of Missouri Child Abuse or Neglect phone number is 1-800-392-3738.
4. Suspension of children's workers. The supervisor or appropriate pastor is responsible for suspending workers from service upon receipt of an allegation of child abuse, until such allegation has been satisfactorily investigated and the individual is exonerated.
5. Termination of children's workers. The supervisor or appropriate pastor is responsible for terminating workers from service for repeated warnings or for an actual violation.
6. Records. Adequate records should be kept by the supervisor or the appropriate pastor to document all efforts at handling the incident.

## **V. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. MINISTER TO STUDENTS**

Responsible for the recruitment, application, selection and screening process for all youth workers serving youth grades 6 through 12, except for the Awana program.

### **B. DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES**

Responsible for the recruitment, application, selection, and screening of all prospective children's workers serving children grade 5 and under, except for the Awana program.

### **C. MINISTER OF WORSHIP ARTS**

Responsible for the recruitment, application, selection and screening process for all children's choir workers.

### **D. AWANA COMMANDER**

Responsible for the recruitment, application, selection and screening for all prospective workers serving the Awana program.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

Grace Community Chapel wishes to reduce the risk of child abuse and provide a safe environment for children and youth and will continue to strive toward this end to protect our children!