



## Arise Church Child Protection Plan

For the purposes of this document, staff means anyone (paid or volunteer) who works with children under the age of 18 years old in any capacity at Arise Church.

### Purpose

This plan was created in order to:

- Protect the children: Children and parents/guardians need to know that children in our church are cared for in a safe environment.
- Protect adult volunteers: By completing the information record and developing appropriate guidelines and procedures, we are in a better position to waive off false allegations.
- Ministry Support: The completion of the Child Protection Plan enables ministries to know the level of accessibility to children that each volunteer is given and develop policies and procedures to ensure the safety of each child.
- Protect the Church: God calls us to be good stewards of the resources that He has given us. We desire to be as organized and thorough as possible with regard to abiding by existing state and local laws in order to ensure the well-being of our church community.

### General Policies

#### *Discipline*

- Children are to be regularly informed of age-appropriate behavioral expectations.
- Any touching used to express power or control over another person is inappropriate, such as grabbing a person's arm or wrist, punching, slapping, or poking a finger into a person's chest to make a point. Staff may use and apply reasonable force or restraint to quell a disturbance that may cause physical injury to oneself or others – or for the protection of persons or property.
- Any use of discipline that is intended to humiliate a child/youth is not permitted.

Appropriate forms of discipline include the following:

- Helping the child/youth focus on more acceptable behavior through redirection, reminders, and "reconnection" through child/staff interaction.
- Using a "take-a-break" strategy: The child may be placed in a time-out area or chair until they have regained control of their actions or attitude.
- Removing the child from the activity and requesting the parent/guardian to take them.
- Asking the child's parent/guardian to attend the next meeting and participate in the activities.

#### *Displaying Affection*

- When Jesus ministered to people, he showed his love through words and touch. Touch is important in our ministry today. However, such touch and affection must be illustrated in a positive manner that mirrors God's love for us. Touch must be used at all times to show love and respect for children.
- Appropriate touching should come as an expression of affirmation (such as non-demanding, gentle touch on the shoulders, hands, arms, head or back).
- Examples of inappropriate touching would be kissing, demanding kisses or hugs, touching of the chest, waist, stomach, bottom or private areas.
- Hugging can be a positive way of showing love and support. All full contact or body-to-body hugs are to be given only in public. One-arm hugs or hands to arm hugs are to be encouraged.

### Prevention

All staff is required to read Arise Church's Child Protection Plan and sign the Agreement in order to continue to work with the children.

## **Supervision**

- Whenever possible, there should be at least two unrelated staff members with each group of children. When this is not possible and only one adult is present, a coordinator will monitor all rooms being used by children/youth.
- The windows in the doors of any room used by children/youth may not be covered for any reason. Staff members/coordinators should wait until all children/youth are picked up before leaving their area. If only one group is in the building, two staff members should wait until all youth/children have been picked up.

## **One-on-One Conversations/Small Groups**

Discussions between staff members and students are an important part of ministry. The following guidelines will direct these meetings:

- Parents will be given the agenda of the event, the address and telephone/cell phone number of the place where the group will be present, and the anticipated departure and return time.
- Leaders of the same gender will be present in all sleeping areas for supervision for overnight activities.
- All medical release and permission forms specific to the event will be secured. The form must be signed by the parent/guardian prior to departure and in possession of the staff member.

## **Bathroom Use**

- No child shall be assisted in the restroom by a staff of another gender.
- For those needing assistance, staff members must stay outside the bathroom stall door unless the child requests assistance.
- If a child requests assistance, the bathroom stall door must be left ajar.

## **Nursery**

When possible, the nursery is available for children ages 0-2 years old, or children with special needs.

### *General Nursery Policies*

- All children must be checked in by a parent and have a name tag/number. Parents/guardians will be given a corresponding tag with their child's number.
- The first aid kit will be kept on hand in church office.
- Toys will be inspected and cleaned regularly. All broken toys will be discarded.
- Parents/guardians of children in the nursery will remain in the church building or be attending a ministry of Arise Church for which nursery is being provided.
- Parents/guardians will be notified if their child needs a diaper change.

## **Staff Procedures**

- All adults who work with the children in any capacity will complete a staff/volunteer information record. This information will be kept with the church administrative assistant in a locked file cabinet. No one will have access without proper authorization.
- Adults who desire to be in a leadership and/or teaching position with children/youth need to attend Arise Church with regularity and consistency.
- All adults who work with children are responsible for reading Arise Church's Child Protection Plan.
- All adults who work with children are required to sign the Agreement contained within this plan. This form will be kept on file and will be valid as long as he/she continues in that or a similar position. Follow-up and screening are the responsibility of the Pastoral Staff.

## **Reporting and Response Procedures**

- All church workers are required to report an alleged abuse situation immediately to pastoral staff or consistory member.
  - An investigation will immediately be convened to discern whether there is any substance to the charge. If it is determined that there is substance to the allegation, the situation will be reported to the proper state authorities.
  - When an allegation is made of abuse, the alleged offender must be informed of these allegations and will be suspended from participating in all service roles in the church until a thorough investigation has been conducted. If the allegations are found to be false, the suspension of services will be lifted. If the allegations are found to be true, the offender will either be asked to discontinue any further service, or must continue under suspension depending upon the allegations.
  - During an investigation or suspension, the alleged abuse will be kept as confidential as possible.
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### **Agreement**

- I am aware and agree to comply with the policies and procedures of Arise Church's Child Protection Plan.
- I understand that I am doing work for the Kingdom of God, and I agree to conduct myself in a manner that will be pleasing to Jesus Christ on behalf of Arise Church.
- I understand that as a member of Arise Church, I am here to assist in carrying out the mission of the ministry that I am serving in. I understand that I am responsible to carry out a safe and enjoyable atmosphere for all people involved in this ministry.
- I understand the importance of being spiritually, emotionally, and relationally mature. I know that learning the principles in the Bible and growing more like Jesus is important to my growth.
- I understand that the best way to achieve this growth is through a commitment to Jesus Christ exemplified in personal devotion, regular attendance of worship, and regular involvement in the life of the church.

I have read all of these statements and by signing this form agree to act accordingly in the fulfillment of my ministry commitment.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_