

Minors Protection Policy

Katy Christian Community Church

General Purpose Statement

Katy Christian Community Church (hereinafter KCCC) seeks to provide a safe, secure, nurturing, and fruitful environment for the minors who participate in our programs and activities. By implementing the below practices, our goal is to protect the minors of KCCC from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff and volunteers (workers) from false accusations.

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the terms “minor” or “minors” include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years. The term “worker” includes both paid and volunteer persons who work with minors.

Selection of Workers

All people who desire to work with the minors participating in our programs and activities will be screened. This screening includes the following:

a) Six Month Rule

No volunteer will be considered for any position involving contact with minors until she/he has been involved with KCCC for a minimum of six (6) months. This time of interaction between our leadership and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant for working with minors.

b) Written Application

All persons seeking to work with minors must complete and sign KCCC’s “Application Child/Youth Volunteer Form”. The application will request basic information from the applicant and will inquire into previous experience with children, previous KCCC affiliation, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal convictions. The application form will be maintained in confidence on file at the church.

c) Personal Interview

Upon completion of the application, the Children or Youth Minister will conduct a face-to-face interview with the applicant to discuss his/her suitability for the position.

d) Criminal Background Check

A national criminal background check is required for all employees (regardless of position) and for the following categories of volunteers:

- Those who will be serving in KCCC’s children or youth ministries.
- Those who will be involved in overnight activities with minors.
- Those counseling minors.
- Those involved in one-on-one mentorship of minors; and
- Those having occasional one-on-one contact with minors (such as, church sponsored athletic team coaches).

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Before a background check is performed, prospective workers will be emailed a background check consent form allowing the church to initiate the check. If an individual declines to sign the authorization form, s/he will be unable to work with minors.

e) Child Protection Training

KCCC will provide Sexual Abuse Awareness Training to all children and youth workers. All workers must be certified by passing the training prior to serving in the Children's Ministry and/or Youth Ministry. A compatible Chinese version of the training is available upon request. The respective ministers of the ministry they are seeking to serve (e.g. Children's Minister, Youth Minister) will verify the completion of the examination.

f) Teenage Workers

We recognize that there may be times when it is necessary or desirable for babysitters (paid or volunteer) who are themselves under age 18 to assist in caring for minors during programs or activities. The following guidelines apply to teenage workers:

- Must submit a written application form.
- Must be interviewed.
- Must complete child protection training and pass the examination.

Open Door Policy

Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or a side window beside it. Doors should never be locked while people are inside the room.

Two Adult Guideline

We highly recommend that a minimum of two adult workers be in attendance at all times when minors are supervised during our programs and activities. If this is not possible, the adult worker must follow the Open Door Policy stated above.

Physical Contact Guidelines

Physical touch is a powerful form of communication. It can comfort a minor, communicate acceptance and love or show approval. However, when used inappropriately, physical touch can also have a serious negative impact on a minor's life. The following guidelines must be adhered to when caring or teaching a minor.

Appropriate Contact:

- ☐ shake hands with a minor
- ☐ hold a minor's hand
- ☐ a brief sideways hug
- ☐ a brief "A-shaped" hug
- ☐ a light pat on the head, hand, back, or shoulder as comfort or encouragement
- ☐ hold or carry a crying child under 3

Inappropriate Contact:

- ☐ kiss
- ☐ full contact, body-to-body hug
- ☐ extended hugging or tickling

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- ☐ touch below the waistline or areas where a bathing suit covers
- ☐ touch a minor in discipline or anger

Responding to Allegations of Abuse to Minors

For purposes of this policy, “abuse to minors” is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a minor’s physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:

- **Physical abuse** – any physical injury to a minor that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.
- **Emotional abuse** – emotional injury when the minor is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and persistent teasing.
- **Sexual abuse** – any sexual activity between a minor and an adult or between a minor and another minor at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
- **Neglect** – depriving a minor of his or her essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.

Workers may have the opportunity to become aware of abuse or neglect of the minors under our care. In the event that an individual involved in the care of minor at this church becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a minor under his/her care, this should be reported immediately to the Children and/or Youth Minister for further action including reporting to authorities as may be mandated by state law.

In the event that an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred at this church or during our sponsored programs or activities, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The parent or guardian of the minor will be notified.
2. The worker alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave from work with minor pending an investigation and instructed to remain away from the premises during the investigation.
3. Civil authorities will be notified, and the church will comply with the state’s requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists. The church will fully cooperate with the investigation of the incident by civil authorities.
4. Our insurance company will be notified, and we will complete an incident report. Any documents received relating to the incident and/or allegations will immediately be forwarded to the insurance company.
5. The Chair of the Board of Trustees or a person appointed by the Chair will be our

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spokesperson to the media concerning incidents of abuse or neglect, unless he or she is alleged to be involved. We will seek the advice of legal counsel before responding to media inquiries or releasing information to the congregation. All other representatives of the church should refrain from speaking to the media.

6. A pastoral visit will be arranged for those who desire it.

7. Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position working with minors.

Sick Child Policy

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all of the minors at KCCC. Parents are encouraged to be considerate of other minors when deciding whether to place a minor under our care. In general, minors with the following symptoms should NOT be dropped off:

- Fever, diarrhea, or vomiting within the last 24 hours
- Green or yellow runny nose
- Eye or skin infections
- Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease

Minors who are observed by our workers to be ill will be separated from other minors and the parent or guardian will be contacted to request that the minor be picked up for the day.

Medication Policy

It is the policy of KCCC not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the minors under our care with the exception of ointments to help prevent infection of cuts and scrapes, anti-itch, and band aids. Medications should be administered by a parent at home. Parents are reminded of our sick child policy. Exceptions to the medication policy may be granted to parents of minors with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions). Parents of such minors should address their situation with the children minister to develop a plan of action.

Discipline Policy

It is the policy of KCCC 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 punishment of minors. Workers should consult with the Children's Minister or Youth Minister if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues.

Accidental Injuries to Minors

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

1. For negligible injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and the parent or guardian will be notified of the injury at the time the child is picked up.

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2. For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First Aid, the parent or guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the worker's supervisor. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
3. Once the minor has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed in the case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional.