



Child/Youth Protection Policy

The following policies are required by our Taylorville Baptist Church insurance regulations.

General Purpose Statement

Taylorville Baptist Church seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for the children and youth who participate in our programs and activities. By implementing the below practices, our goal is to protect the children and youth of Taylorville Baptist Church from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff and volunteers from false accusations.

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the terms "child" or "children" include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years.

Selection of Workers

All employees and all persons who desire to work with the children participating in our programs and activities will be screened. This screening includes:

- a. **Six Month Rule**
No volunteer will be allowed to work with children until s/he has been a member or regular attendee of Taylorville Baptist Church 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 children.
- b. **Written Application**
All persons seeking to work with children must complete and sign a written application in a form to be supplied by us. The application will request basic information from the applicant and will inquire into previous experience with children, previous church affiliation, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous investigations, charges, and/or criminal convictions. The application form will be maintained in confidence on file at Taylorville Baptist Church.
- c. **Personal Interview**
Upon completion of this application, a face-to-face interview may be scheduled with the applicant to discuss his/her suitability for the position.

d. Reference Checks

Before an applicant is permitted to work with children, at least two of the applicants' references will be checked. These references should be of an institutional nature as opposed to personal or family references, preferable from organizations where the applicant has worked with children in the past. Documentation of the reference checks will be maintained in confidence on file at Taylorville Baptist Church.

e. 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 involved in our school/preschool/day care center;
- Those who will be involved in overnight activities with minors;
- Those counseling minors;
- Those involved in one-on-one mentorship of minors;
- Those having occasional one-on-one contact with minors (i.e. church-sponsored athletic team coaches and vehicle drivers).

Before a background check is run, prospective workers will be asked to sign an authorization form allowing the church to run the check. If an individual declines to sign the authorization form, s/he will be unable to work with children.

What constitutes a disqualifying incident, charge, or offense that will keep an individual from working with children will be determined by the Pastor, Associate Pastor/Minister of Youth, and the Insurance Compliance Committee at Taylorville Baptist Church on a case-by-case basis in light of all the surrounding circumstances. Generally, convictions for an offense involving children and/or for offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude someone from being permitted to work with children. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on the application form will also be a disqualifying event.

The background check authorization form and results will be maintained in strictest confidence on file at Taylorville Baptist Church. "A new State and/or Sex Offender report will be required for all employees and volunteers every 3 years if they have not moved outside of Alabama during the previous 3 years. If the employee or volunteer has moved outside of Alabama during the previous 3 years, a full background check will be required at that time."

Two Adult Rule

It is our goal that a minimum of two unrelated adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during our programs and activities. Some youth classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during the class session; in these instances, doors to the classroom should remain open and there should be no fewer than

three students with the adult teacher. We do not allow minors to be alone with one unrelated adult on our premises or in any sponsored activity unless in a counseling session.

Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse

For purpose of this policy, “child abuse” is any action (or lack of action) which endangers or harms a child’s physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes:

- Physical abuse – any physical injury to a child which is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.
- Emotional abuse – emotional injury when the child 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 child and an adult or between a child and another child at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
- Neglect – depriving a child of their essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and emergency medical care.

Childcare workers may have the opportunity to become aware of neglect of the children under our care. In the event that an individual involved in the care of children at Taylorville Baptist Church becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a child under his/her care, this should be reported to the Pastor, Associate Pastor/Minister of Youth, or a member of the Insurance Compliance Committee 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 Taylorville Baptist Church or during our sponsored programs or activities, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The parent or guardian of the child will be notified.
2. The worker alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave from working with children pending an investigation.
3. Our insurance company will be notified, and we will complete an incident report.
4. We will comply with the state’s requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists.
5. We will cooperate with any investigation of the incident by state or local authorities. In the event there is no investigation of the incident by state or local authorities, a team will be formed to investigate the circumstances of the incident. The team should act only in consultation with our insurance company and/or attorney.
6. Any person who is investigated for an alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position with children or youth if the allegation is determined to be substantiated.

7. Our pastor or insurance agent will be our spokesperson to the media concerning incidents of abuse or neglect, unless he or she is alleged to be involved. All other workers should refrain from speaking to the media.
8. A pastoral visit will be arranged for those who desire it.

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 persons are inside the room.

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 children during programs or activities. The following guidelines apply to such workers:

- Teenage workers must be at least age 16.
- Teenage workers will be screened as specified above.
- Teenage workers must be under the supervision of an adult and must never be left alone with children.

In the rare event that a parent has no choice but to bring a student 15 years old and under or any teenager who has not been appropriately screened according to the church policy to a Children's Ministry event, the teenager must remain with his/her parent at all times. The parent has full responsibility for the teenager for the duration of the event.

Check-in/Check-out Procedure

For children below grade 3, a security check-in/check-out procedure will be followed. The child will be signed in by a parent or guardian, who will receive a "child check" for the child similar to a claim check. The parent or guardian must present the "child check" in order to sign out the child from our care. In the event that a parent or guardian is unable to present the "child check," the Pastor, Associate Pastor/Minister of Youth, or a Deacon will be contacted. He will be responsible for releasing the child to the care of a parent or guardian after discussing the surrounding circumstances with the parent or guardian.

Sick Child Policy

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all of the children at Taylorville Baptist Church. Parents are encouraged to be considerate of other children when deciding whether to place a child under our care. In general, children with the following symptoms should not be dropped off:

- Fever, diarrhea, or vomiting within the last 48 hours
- Green or yellow runny nose
- Persistent or severe coughing
- Eye or skin infections
- Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease

Children who are observed by our workers to be ill will be separated from other children and the parent or guardian will be contacted.

Medications Policy

It is the policy of Taylorville Baptist Church not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children under our care. Medications should be administered by a parent at home. Parents are reminded of our sick child policy.

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 Pastor, Associate Pastor/Minister of Youth, or a member of the Insurance Compliance Committee to develop a plan of action.

Discipline Policy

It is the policy of Taylorville Baptist Church 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 should consult with the Pastor, Associate Pastor/Minister of Youth, or a Deacon if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues.

Restroom Guidelines

Children five years of age and younger should utilize a classroom bathroom, if one is available. If a classroom bathroom is not available, workers should escort a group of children to the hallway bathroom. They should always go in a group, never taking a child to the bathroom alone. The workers should check the bathroom first to make sure that it is empty, and then allow the children inside. The workers should then remain outside the bathroom door and escort the children back to the classroom. If a child is taking longer than seems necessary, the worker should open the bathroom door and call the child's name. If a child requires assistance, the workers should prop open the bathroom door and leave the stall door open as he/she assists the child.

For children over the age of five, at least one adult male should take boys to the restroom and at least one adult female should take girls. The worker should check the bathroom first to make sure that the bathroom is empty, and then allow the children inside. The worker should then remain outside the bathroom door and 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 summoned in addition to the worker's supervisor. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
3. Once the child has received appropriate medical attention an incident report will be completed and filed at the church in the case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional.

It is the policy of Taylorville Baptist Church that each child/youth will complete a permission form and a Medical Release Form prior to any trip away from the church.

Motor Vehicle/Travel Policy

It is the policy of Taylorville Baptist Church that all employees and volunteers that drive their personal vehicle or a vehicle rented by the church will consent to a MVR (Motor Vehicle Record) Check to determine past driving history before they will be allowed to drive with passengers on church sponsored youth and children events. **All drivers must be at least 25 years of age, have a good driving record and at least five (5) years of extensive driving experience. Exceptions for drivers who are under 25 years of age can be made at the discretion of the Pastor and/or Insurance Compliance Committee for any hired position in the church.** The Pastor, Associate Pastor/Minister of Youth, or a member of the Insurance Compliance Committee will review the MVR to determine if there are incidents that would disqualify the employee/volunteer to drive with passengers on church sponsored events.

Disqualifying incidents will include:

- More than 3 traffic incidents/violations during a five year period
- Any single significant incident such as DUI, Speeding in excess of 85 mph, etc.

Each employee and volunteer will be required to provide a copy of their personal auto policy Declarations Page to the church office. Each volunteer/employee should have the following automobile insurance coverage in force to the use of their personal automobile for church events:

- Minimum liability limits of \$100,000 per person/\$300,000 each accident/\$100,000 property damage OR \$300,000 combined single limit.
- Minimum Medical Payment coverage limit of \$5,000
- Minimum Uninsured/Underinsured coverage limit to match their liability limits

Any cell phone use, including talking, texting, and/or emailing, while driving on church sponsored trips is prohibited. A new MVR Check may be required every five years.

Youth Ministry Guidelines

At the beginning of each calendar year, a parent or guardian will complete a **Medical Release Form** for each student. This form will be good throughout the calendar year and will only need to be updated should information change during the aforementioned year. For each off-campus opportunity, a **Permission Form** is required for the student to

participate with Taylorville Baptist Church. These forms must be notarized by a notary public.

For each off-campus opportunity of interest, adults and students will submit a deposit by the registration deadline. This deposit will secure their place and participation. Deposits will be forfeited should the adult and student choose not to participate. In the case of an emergency, the Youth Pastor, Ministry Assistant and Church Treasurer will determine if a refund is warranted. Payments should be made according to schedule and lack of payment may forfeit adult or student participation. Arrangements can be made with the Youth Pastor should payment schedule be inconvenient. There is a \$10.00 discount for siblings. Once the deposit has been turned in, students may use any monies within their personal accounts with Parent/Guardian approval. Monies may not be transferred from one account to another without Parent/Guardian approval.

Opportunities, such as Bible study, prayer groups, etc., are provided for students each week. Students are expected to be in the proper meeting place for the duration of the opportunity. Should it be necessary for a student to be in another place during the normal scheduled opportunity, arrangements must be made with the Youth Pastor, Parent/Guardian and/or Ministry Leader. Opportunities will begin fifteen minutes before the scheduled time and conclude fifteen minutes after the scheduled ending time. During this time, Taylorville Baptist Church will provide adult supervision. Two adults who are not related are required by insurance policy to provide proper supervision.

Students will not be allowed to drive their personal vehicle at anytime during an opportunity scheduled by Taylorville Baptist Church. Should a student need to drive, a request will be made in writing within two weeks of the scheduled opportunity by the Parent/Guardian and submitted to the Youth Pastor. Permission will be granted after the Youth Pastor, Parent/Guardian and Student confer. At no time will students be allowed to transport other students during scheduled opportunities of Taylorville Baptist Church. Should it be necessary for an adult to drive their personal vehicle during a ministry opportunity of Taylorville Baptist Church, they will be reimbursed according to the mileage rate set forth by the Finance Committee of Taylorville Baptist Church.

During on-campus opportunities students should refrain from using any electronic devices. These should be left at home or in the car. During off-campus opportunities, there will be times electronic devices will be allowed during transportation, but will be secured by an adult during the duration of the ministry opportunity. Any music or video that is distasteful will forfeit the usage of electronic devices during the remainder of an off-campus opportunity.

Students and Adults will be expected to maintain modest dress which upholds biblical decency at all times during on-campus and off-campus opportunities. The adults who are supervising the opportunity reserve the right to determine that which is decent and indecent. Girls should wear one piece bathing suits or tan-kinis. Guys and girls should refrain from wearing hats indoors.

In the rare event that a parent has no choice but to bring a child 5th grade and under to a student ministry event, that child must remain in the care of his/her parent at all times. The parent has full responsibility for the child for the duration of the event. Students who have not entered 6th grade will not be allowed on overnight trips under any circumstances. Children who have not yet entered school, 4 years and below, may accompany a parent only if the parent is supplying a support role and is not actively chaperoning students.

Training

Taylorville Baptist Church will provide training on this child protection policy to all new and current childcare workers and will strive to provide opportunities for additional training classes or events on an annual basis. All workers are strongly encouraged to attend these training events.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I have received a written copy of the Child/Youth Protection Policy of Taylorville Baptist Church. I understand and I will abide by all of the policies contained in this document.

Signature

Date: ____/____/____