

Hampton Park Baptist Church

# Children's Ministries

Policies

&

Procedures



Updated 2/12/2019

At Hampton Park, we take our responsibility to care for children very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which children can grow in relationship with Jesus Christ. Thank you for investing in our HPBC children.

This handbook provides a general overview of procedures and guidelines for our church's screened volunteers and staff members. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for children, and to protect children, you, and the ministry of Hampton Park. The following procedures have been adopted, written and will be strictly enforced by our child safety committee. This committee currently consists of the following:

- The Pastor for Student Ministries: Joel Gearhart
- The Pastor for Ministry Operations: Brent Honshell
- The Child Safety Coordinator: Patty Fitzgerald
- The Nursery Director: Johnette Christ
- The Facilities Manager: Glenn Fitzgerald
- The HPCS Administrator: Kevin Priest

## **16.000 Child Safety Policies**

### **16.100 Overview of the HPBCM Safety System**

Because we love minors and desire to protect them, HPBCM requires all staff members and screened volunteers working with minors (and other vulnerable populations) to complete 4 SAFETY STEPS before ministry work or volunteer placements begin.

#### **STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training**

HPBCM policies and procedures require that staff members and screened volunteers avoid abusive behavior of any kind. Staff members and screened volunteers are required to report any policy violations to the Child Safety Coordinator, Children's Ministry Director or a member of the pastoral body. Staff members and screened volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in 'grooming' a minor for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a minor, win the minor's trust (and the trust of the minor's parent or 'gatekeeper'), manipulate the minor into sexual activity and keep the minor from disclosing the abuse.

To equip HPBCM staff members and screened volunteers with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, HPBCM requires all staff members and screened volunteers to complete annual sexual abuse awareness training.

#### **STEP TWO: Screening Process**

Staff members and screened volunteers are required to complete the following:

- Join HPBCM (Children [under 18] of HPBCM members may serve in children's ministries, provided they meet all of the other qualifications for serving. However, on reaching age 18, all staff and screened volunteers must be members of HPBCM in order to serve in children's ministries.)
- Attend HPBCM for six months before being eligible to serve in positions providing access to minors or vulnerable populations. (Associate members may begin serving immediately, providing they meet the following qualifications: (1) they have been a committed member of a local church in their home town for at least twelve months; and (2) they have received a pastoral recommendation from their home church, confirming their membership of at least twelve months and commending their fitness for ministering to minors.)
- Complete an Employment Application (staff only)
- Complete the Volunteer Application (screened volunteers only)
- Complete a live interview (staff and screened volunteers, effective July 1, 2012)
- Provide two recommendation forms from non-relatives (staff and screened volunteers, effective July 1, 2012)
- Provide references to be checked (staff and screened volunteers)

### **STEP THREE: Policies & Procedures**

Staff members and screened volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement indicating that he or she has read and understood the material, received training in child safety and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

### **STEP FOUR: Criminal Background Check**

HPBCM requires that all staff members (regardless of position) and screened volunteers serving in all ministries involving minors undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required.

#### **16.110 Definitions**

**HPBCM:** Hampton Park Baptist Church and affiliated ministries

**Staff/Staff Member:** A paid employee of HPBCM

**Screened Volunteer:** A volunteer who has gone through the required steps of screening and training and has been approved to work with minors

**Child/Minor:** Any person under the age of 18 participating in a HPBCM sponsored program/event

**Abuse, Neglect and Harm:** "Child abuse or neglect" or "harm" occurs when the parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's welfare:

- a) inflicts or allows to be inflicted upon the child physical or mental injury or engages in acts or omissions which present a substantial risk of physical or mental injury to the child, including injuries sustained as a result of excessive corporal punishment, but excluding corporal punishment or physical discipline which: (i) is administered by a parent or person in loco parentis;<sup>[SEP]</sup> (ii) is perpetrated for the sole purpose of restraining or correcting the child; (iii) is reasonable in manner and moderate in degree;<sup>[SEP]</sup> (iv) has not brought about permanent or lasting damage to the child; and<sup>[SEP]</sup> (v) is not reckless or grossly negligent behavior by the parents.
- b) commits or allows to be committed against the child a sexual offense as defined by the laws of this State or engages in acts or omissions that present a substantial risk that a sexual offense as defined in the laws of this State would be committed against the child;

\*\* See SC law, Title 16, Chapter 15. Included in this law is the exposure or subjection of minors to sexual contact, activity or behavior, including solicitation, exhibitionism and exposure to pornography.

- c) fails to supply the child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, or education as required under Article 1 of Chapter 65 of Title 59, supervision appropriate to the child's age and development, or health care though financially able to do so or offered financial or other reasonable means to do so and the failure to do so has caused or presents a substantial risk of causing physical or mental injury. However, a child's absences from school may not be considered abuse or neglect unless the school has made efforts to bring about the child's attendance, and those efforts were unsuccessful because of the parents' refusal to cooperate. For the purpose of this chapter "adequate health care" includes any medical or nonmedical remedial health care permitted or authorized under state law;
- d) abandons the child;
- e) encourages, condones, or approves the commission of delinquent acts by the child and the commission of the acts are shown to be the result of the encouragement, condonation, or approval; or
- f) has committed abuse or neglect as described in subsections (a) through (e) such that a child who subsequently becomes part of the person's household is at substantial risk of one of those forms of abuse or neglect.

#### **16.120 Reporting Violation of Policy**

In order to maintain a safe environment for our minors, staff members and screened volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission or situation that is a violation of these policies. All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to an immediate supervisor in the ministry area, the Child Safety Coordinator, the Children's Ministry Director or the Pastor for Ministry Operations.

#### **16.130 Consequences of Policy Violation**

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by the church to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participation in children's ministries. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective agencies.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act will be removed from future participation as a staff member or screened volunteer in all activities and programming that involves minors or vulnerable populations at HPBCM. If the person is a staff member, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from HPBCM.

Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination of employment of a staff member. Screened volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any activities involving minors or vulnerable populations at HPBCM.

### **16.140 Enforcement of Policies**

HPBCM staff members and screened volunteers who supervise other staff members or screened volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all HPBCM policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action or reassignment from children’s ministry positions for both screened volunteers and staff members. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the pastoral body.

### **16.200 Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse**

#### **16.210 Abuse Tolerance**

HPBCM has a zero tolerance for abuse. It is the responsibility of every staff member and screened volunteer to act in the best interest of all minors in every program.

In the event that staff or screened volunteers observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual), it is their responsibility to immediately follow the guidelines set forth in this manual, as well as those for mandated reporters, as defined by South Carolina law. Furthermore, staff or screened volunteers must report any suspected abuse or official reports of abuse or suspected abuse to the Child Safety Coordinator, the Children’s Ministry Director or the Pastor for Ministry Operations. *See section 16.240 for specific details.*

#### **16.220 No Retaliation**

No church member, staff member or screened volunteer will be discredited, criticized or disciplined for making a good-faith report of suspected child abuse or neglect. The pastoral body and members of the Child Safety Committee will make every effort to protect the privacy of the reporter as well as the privacy of the minors involved.

#### **16.230 Legal and Moral Mandates**

South Carolina law requires certain individuals who, in their professional capacity, have knowledge or reasonable suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect to report the situation to the appropriate agencies. These individuals are known as ‘Mandated Reporters.’

Mandated reporting is required of:

Teacher	Pastors/Clergy	Childcare Workers	Allied Health Prof.
Doctors	EMS Workers	Film Processors	Funeral Directors

Dentists	Principals	Asst. Principals	Dept. of Juvenile Justice Workers
Nurses	Judges	Optometrists	Computer Technicians
Police	Guardian ad Litem	Social Workers	Substance Abuse Counselor
Coroners	Foster Care Workers	Guidance Counselors	Mental Health Workers

HPBCM is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for minors and their families. While not every individual is a Mandated Reporter, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to the Child Safety Coordinator, Children’s Ministry Director, Pastor for Ministry Operations, as well as the Police Department or the Sheriff’s Department, Department of Social Services or other appropriate agency. *See 16.240 for specific details concerning reporting.*

An element of the safe environment referenced above includes the fostering of a culture of reporting relevant information to a supervisor or a member of Child Safety Committee. Because sexual abusers ‘groom’ minors for abuse, it is possible a staff member or screened volunteer may witness behavior intended to ‘groom’ a minor for sexual abuse. Staff members and screened volunteers are asked to report ‘grooming’ behavior, any policy violations or any suspicious behaviors to the Child Safety Coordinator or the Children’s Ministry Director.

**16.240 Reporting Suspicions of Abuse to Law Enforcement Agencies and HPMBC**

South Carolina law requires that certain individuals (Mandated Reporters) having cause to believe a child’s physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect must make a report to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Mandated Reporters should note that sharing knowledge or suspicion of abuse or neglect with a ministry supervisor or member of the pastoral body is not sufficient to meet the statutorily required duty of mandated reporting. Each Mandated Reporter is fully responsible for the reporting process.

While not every individual is a Mandated Reporter, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with state law and this policy. Whenever possible, screened volunteers should immediately include a staff member regarding inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse. A staff member or screened volunteer may ask the Child Safety Coordinator, the Children’s Ministry Director or the Pastor for Ministry Operations to serve as a witness when making a report to DSS, the police department or sheriff’s office.

Below are the phone numbers should the need arise that a report be made.

**Department of Social Services (DSS) Child Abuse Hotline: 864.467.7750**

**Greenville County Sherriff: 864.467.5300**

In addition to reporting to the appropriate agencies, staff members and screened volunteers are required to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect, or any inappropriate behavior of a colleague, co-worker or fellow screened volunteer to the Child Safety Coordinator, Children's Ministry Director or the Pastor for Ministry Operations. Staff members and screened volunteers are required to report an incident to supervisory staff the same day. After receiving a report from a staff member or screened volunteer, the Children's Ministry Director or the Pastor for Ministry Operations will speak with the person or screened volunteer to whom the minor spoke in order to get detailed information about the entire conversation. The Business Administrator will be notified as soon as reasonably possible. The conversations will be documented in writing as soon as possible.

#### **16.250 Response to Report of Abuse**

The HPBCM Child Safety Committee will take appropriate action on behalf of the church when a report of abuse occurs. The Pastor for Ministry Operations will be the spokesman for the church in all such matters.

#### **16.300 Hampton Park Baptist Church Ministries Child Safety Committee**

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for minors, HPBCM will appoint and maintain a Child Safety Committee, which will meet at least twice each year.

#### **16.310 Mission Statement**

The purpose of the Child Safety Committee is to enable HPBCM to carry out appropriate ministries for minors while safeguarding program participants against emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

#### **16.320 Composition**

The Child Safety Committee will be composed of the following members:

1. The Children's Ministry Director
2. The Pastor for Student Ministries
3. The Pastor for Ministry Operations
4. The Child Safety Coordinator
5. The Nursery Director



6. The Facilities Manager
7. The Hampton Park Christian School Administrator

### **16.330 Meetings**

The Children's Ministry Director will chair the meeting of the Child Safety Committee to discuss risk management practices and updates. The Child Safety Committee will also meet on an emergency basis upon the recommendation of a member or following the report of any incident or allegation.

### **16.340 Responsibilities**

The Child Safety Committee will be charged with the following duties:

1. Applying existing policies and procedures related to safety and risk management issues concerning minors.
2. Monitoring all programs for minors for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
3. Making recommendations to the pastoral body and deacons regarding safety issues.

### **16.400 Children's Ministry Staff Monitoring Plan**

Monitoring of staff and screened volunteers will include regular (announced and unannounced) visits in each program to provide supervisors the opportunity to observe staff members and screened volunteer interactions with minors.

1. The Children's Ministry Director, a member of the pastoral body or a member of the Children's Ministry Leadership Team conducts an unscheduled observation regularly for programs occurring weekly.
2. The Children's Ministry Director conducts written performance evaluations every twelve months for individuals in paid staff positions who work at least 20 hours per week.
3. The Children's Ministry Director conducts periodic verbal performance evaluations with paid staff and the Children's Ministry Leadership Team that include items that address participation in child safety training and adherence to child safety procedures.
4. The pastoral body meets with the Children's Ministry Director regularly to discuss Children's Ministry, including safety training and procedures.

### **16.410 Building Safety**

The Children's Ministry Director will be responsible for ensuring that the children's wings are monitored during Sunday classes or programming. This will include

unobserved monitoring of staff members, screened volunteers and minors in children's classrooms.

No minor will ever be left unattended in the children's wings or on the children's playground during children's ministry programming or classes. Staff members or screened volunteers are prohibited from being alone with an individual minor in any room or building. In the event a staff member or screened volunteer finds himself/herself alone with a single minor, they will take the minor to a room or building occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others. (Example: if a minor is the last in a class to be picked up by a parent, move to an adjoining room where other staff members or screened volunteers are present.)

On the children's playground, staff members and screened volunteers are to circulate, watching minors during play periods, giving particular attention to the areas which are not easily seen from all viewpoints. (Example: under slides, in corners, behind structures). Staff members and screened volunteers should maintain an accurate head count at all times.

Any minors together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area of the playground.

Emergency Contact Information on Sundays: For emergency assistance on Sunday, call the front desk at extension 1220.

"Help Needed" information on Sundays:

- Workers needed pager number (will show on the small screens above the doors in the main auditorium): 400.
- Process for getting extra workers to a class:
  - A class that needs extra help should call the reception desk at extension 1220, and let them know the number of helpers needed.
  - The number 400 is the "approved workers needed" number.
  - Approved staff and screened volunteers who are in the main service and available to help, should head to the reception desk in answer to the need. The usher there will direct staff and screened volunteers to the appropriate class.
  - Once one or two people have answered the call for help, please wait until the number is displayed again, in order to prevent ten people from responding to a need for only one person.

### **16.420 Worker to Child Ratios**

HPBCM is committed to providing adequate supervision in all children's ministries. Accordingly, the following worker to minor ratios will be observed:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Workers</b>	<b>Minors</b>
Infant Nursery	2	6
Other Nurseries	2	10
Preschool, 2 and 3 years old	2	12
Preschool, 4 and 5 years old	2	18
Elementary	2	40
Junior High	2	50
Senior High	2	50

Spouses count as two in ratio when in public or highly visible settings. Spouses count as one in ratio when in private settings, such as in the restroom or when the number of minors present in a classroom or on an activity is below three. One volunteer may minister to minors in a classroom or public setting, which is defined as the following: (1) it is a room with high visibility windows or (preferably) an open door; and (2) there are three or more minors present; and (3) it is a setting in which other people may or will regularly pass by the class room (e.g., "roamers" are assigned, during the Sunday School or children's church hour, when other classes and adults are using the same building).

If a worker is 'out of ratio' it is his or her responsibility to immediately notify the Child Safety Coordinator, the Teacher Coordinator, the Children's Ministry Director or the Pastor for Student Ministries. Supervisors will make diligent efforts to find substitute workers to immediately bring worker to minors' ratios into compliance with church policy.

### **16.430 Discipline**

It is HPBCM's policy that staff members and screened volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of minors. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by minors. Minors are to be disciplined using time-outs and other non-physical methods of behavior management. In employing this procedure, staff members and screened volunteers should observe the following guidelines:

1. Verbally redirect the minor before physically intervening. With younger minors some physical redirection may be necessary (for example, removing a toy from the hands of a minor that is hitting another). <sup>[[L]]</sup><sub>[[SEP]]</sub>
2. If the behavior does not cease, remove or direct the minor away from the group to a corner of the room where the group is meeting (avoid being alone with the minor). <sup>[[L]]</sup><sub>[[SEP]]</sub>
3. Provide the minor with a simple, understandable reason for the time-out, and provide the minor with clear explanation of your expectations. (“Jamie, you didn’t stop hitting Chris when I asked you to, so you need to sit quietly in the blue chair for three minutes.”) In addition, be verbally reassuring, as being removed from the group will likely upset the minor. Do not physically hold the minor in time-out.
4. Provide the minor with a chair to sit in or a “spot” to sit on (using a pillow, blanket, carpet square, etc.) until their time-out is complete. <sup>[[L]]</sup><sub>[[SEP]]</sub>
5. Follow the rule of thumb that a time-out is ineffective if it lasts longer than one minute for every year of the minor’s life (3 years old, 3 minutes). <sup>[[L]]</sup><sub>[[SEP]]</sub>
6. Monitor the minor through the entire time-out without giving your undivided attention. For longer time-outs give intermittent praise to reassure the minor and keep them on task. (“Jamie, you’re doing a great job of sitting quietly – just 2 more minutes.”) <sup>[[L]]</sup><sub>[[SEP]]</sub>
7. Praise the minor once he or she has completed the time-out and tell them that their reward is being able to rejoin the group. Remind them that repeating their initial behavior will result in further time-out. Follow this with praise. <sup>[[L]]</sup><sub>[[SEP]]</sub>
8. Staff members and screened volunteers should work closely with parents in communicating behavior, as well as correction taken, since parents are primarily responsible for the care of their minors. <sup>[[L]]</sup><sub>[[SEP]]</sub>

Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to parents and the Children’s Ministry Director.

## **16.500 Bathroom Supervision and Assistance Guidelines**

### **16.510 Nursery Children**

Because minors in the nursery may require complete assistance with their bathroom activities, all staff members and screened volunteers will observe the following policies:

#### Diapering

1. Only female nursery workers or the minor’s parent or legal guardian will undertake the diapering of minors of either sex. <sup>[[L]]</sup><sub>[[SEP]]</sub>

2. Changing of diapers should be done in plain sight of other nursery workers. [L] [SEP]
3. Minors will never be left unattended on changing tables. [L] [SEP]
4. Any special instructions given by parents leaving minors in the nursery will be recorded on the registration sheet (“Seth Adams has a medicine in the bag for rash.”) [L] [SEP]
5. Minors should be re-diapered and re-clothed immediately upon the completion of changing their soiled diaper. [L] [SEP]
6. Minors should be changed on changing stations only. [L] [SEP]
7. Workers should wear protective gloves while changing diapers. [L] [SEP]

#### Toilet training

1. No minor will be forced to toilet train. [L] [SEP]
2. Only female nursery workers or the minor’s parent or legal guardian will participate in toilet training efforts with minors of either sex. [L] [SEP]
3. When minors are taken into bathrooms the door will be left partially open. [L] [SEP]
4. Young minors will never be left unattended in bathrooms. [L] [SEP]
5. Parents should be consulted on each minor’s progress in the toilet training process before leaving the minor with staff members or screened volunteers. Any special instructions given by parents leaving minors in the nursery will be recorded on the registration card (“Georgia can use the toilet, but she needs to be reminded – ask her if she needs to go.”) [L] [SEP]
6. Minors should be assisted in straightening their clothing before returning to the room with other minors. [L] [SEP]
7. “Accidents” should be handled by reassuring the minor and completing the changing of diapers or underwear and clothing. Extra clothing and diapers are available in the nursery area if the parent has not furnished a clothing change.
8. Workers may assist a minor with wiping. Gloves should be worn.

#### **16.520 Preschool and School Age Children**

Parents of preschool age minors should take them to the restroom immediately before dropping them off for care. This will assist the classroom screened volunteers in providing proper supervision and meeting ratio within the classroom at all times.

School age minors may be accompanied to the restroom for supervision and assistance when needed. (However, minors should receive the minimum amount of assistance

needed based upon their individual capabilities.) Staff members and screened volunteers should never take a lone minor to the restroom.

If a staff member or screened volunteer must go into the restroom to check on an individual minor, he or she should seek out another worker to accompany him/her. If another worker is not available to accompany, he/she should go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the minor needs assistance. If the minor requires assistance, the worker should leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the minor in completing their activities, while the minor remains behind the door of the bathroom stall.

Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another staff member or screened volunteer.

Special Needs: Parents will offer instruction to staff members or screened volunteers to change the diapers of special needs individuals. After the age of 4, parents or legal guardians will change all special needs individuals.

### **16.600 Guests in the Children's Ministry**

Only those who have gone through the Four Safety Steps described on page 5 of this manual may be with the minors. Any staff member or screened volunteer planning to bring a guest (friend or relative) to church should make arrangements for a substitute.

### **16.610 Identification Badges**

All individuals approved to work in children's ministries will be easily recognized by a church issued ID badge. Any individual who forgets his/her badge should contact the Reception Desk (x1220) for a temporary badge. Any individual who loses his/her badge should immediately report the loss to the Children's Ministry Director, the Pastor for Student Ministries or the Child Safety Coordinator. No individual without a badge is permitted to work with the minors.

### **16.620 Medication**

To the greatest extent possible, parents should plan to administer routine medications at home. Certain essential medications such as inhalers, epi-pens and seizure medications may be administered by a staff member when the prescription is secured in its original container. The only exceptions to this policy are diaper ointments and insect bite creams and all medications, including the aforementioned ointments and creams, must be indicated on a signed parent information sheet.

### **16.630 Nudity**

Staff members and screened volunteers in HPBCM's children's ministries should never be nude in the presence of minors in their care. In the event there is a situation that may

call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes during a pool party, weekend or overnight retreat, etc.), the staff member/screened volunteer will submit a plan to the Children's Ministry Director or Pastor for Student Ministries concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.

### **16.640 One-to-One Interactions with Children**

#### **Minors 6<sup>th</sup> Grade and Under:**

Staff members and screened volunteers should never conduct one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interaction with minors 6<sup>th</sup> grade and under. Another adult who has completed the HPBCM application and screening process should always be present.

#### **Minors 7<sup>th</sup> Grade and Above:**

We acknowledge that as our minors get older, there is valuable discipleship and interaction that can take place during one-on-one meetings. For this reason, staff members and screened volunteers may meet one-on-one with a minor 7<sup>th</sup> grade and above in a public area (during that location's open hours) with the permission of a parent and knowledge of another non-family staff member. During the one-on-one, physical separation from the minor should be observed via a table, a desk, observable distance, etc.

A staff member or screened volunteer may meet individually with a minor for counseling with the knowledge of at least one non-family staff member. At any such session with minors, the door of the room used should remain open, unless there is glass in the door which gives a clear view to the meeting. The counselor should maintain physical separation from the minor via a table, a desk, observable distance, etc.

### **16.650 Planning Activities**

All activities, both those held on HPBCM property and those held away from HPBCM, must be approved by the Children's Ministry Director or Pastor for Student Ministries four weeks in advance. Signed parental consent is required for all activities and the worker to minor ratio must be maintained at all times.

### **16.660 Overnight Activities**

1. Parent/Guardian Permission Forms and Medical Consent Forms must be completed prior to all trips. <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
2. Under no circumstances may one adult alone take or accompany minors on an overnight outing. <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
3. The total number of adults on each trip will be adjusted according to the requirements of the planned activities. <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

4. All adult chaperones supervising overnight events must be cleared by the pastoral body. [SEP]
5. Rooming arrangements
  - a. Ordinarily, adults should not share rooms with minors. An individual minor may share a room with an individual adult if the two are related as parent/minor, or if written permission has been granted prior to the event by the parent or guardian. (An exception may include sickness, emergency, etc.)
    - i. If it is necessary for adults to room with minors, two adult males will dorm with boys and two adult females will dorm with girls during overnight trips. Under no circumstances may unrelated adults and minors share a bed. [SEP]
    - ii. For an overnight there will be at least two adults. If both boys and girls are present there must be at least two male and two female chaperones. [SEP]
  - b. Rooming arrangements should provide for minors of the same sex and approximately the same age to room together and adults of the same sex to room together. [SEP]
  - c. The lodging situations on overnight trips will be assessed before each trip to determine the best sleeping arrangements for those in attendance. Final arrangements must be approved by the Pastor for Student Ministries, Children's Ministry Director or another member of the Child Safety Committee. All chaperones will be provided with a copy of the sleeping arrangements and no changes may be made to the plan without the permission of two or more activity leaders. [SEP]
  - d. The group leader will strive to have all of the rooms together in a block when possible. [SEP]
  - e. Parents or guardians will agree to pick up their minors ~~or youth~~ in the case of inappropriate behavior. [SEP]
  - f. There should be two adults with minors ~~or youth~~ in cabin, tent, hotel or other similar situations whenever possible.

### **16.700 General Transportation**

Staff members and screened volunteers may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for minors. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of minors:



1. Minors should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place are not permissible. Staff members and screened volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one minor in transport.
2. Staff members and screened volunteers should avoid physical contact with minors while in vehicles. [L]  
[SEP]
3. There should be at least two adults (the driver plus one) whenever transporting minors on a bus. The second adult should generally sit at least half way back and in a seat by themselves or with another adult. Spouses count as two adults provided there are at least 10 minors on the bus. It is acceptable to only have one adult when driving the mini-bus, though two adults is preferred.
4. No cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving for HPBCM functions or while using vehicles owned or rented by HPBCM, unless in an emergency. [L]  
[SEP]
5. No drivers under age 21 may drive HPBCM owned or rented vehicles. [L]  
[SEP]
6. No staff member or screened volunteer is ever to be in a car with one minor. All transportation of minors requires parental approval.

When transporting minors there must at least 3 minors at all times and there is to be no physical contact with the minors. When transporting minors 7<sup>th</sup> grade and above two minors may be transported with knowledge of a non-family staff member (not a spouse). If this is the case, both minors should sit in the back seat.

NOTE: If these ratios cannot be maintained, staff members and screened volunteers are not to provide transportation until such time as appropriate ratios can be maintained.

7. Parents should inform staff and screened volunteers if there are individuals that their minors are not to ride home with. Parents are to make sure their minor children are aware of this information.

### **16.710 Driver Requirements**

Drivers must meet the following requirements:

- Approved through the volunteer service application process and subsequent background check.
- At least twenty-one (21) years of age.
- Have a clean driving record.
- Maintain personal insurance coverage.
- Follow safe driving standards (as detailed in the section “Safety Standards.”).

- Submit proof of insurance (updated yearly) and photocopy of driver’s license to HPBCM.
- Ensure that parental or legal guardian consent forms are filled out for minors.
- Driving record cannot have a current license suspension or more than 8 points.

### **16.720 Attendee Requirements**

All attendees must meet the following requirements: <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

- Be at least four (4) years old. Or if younger, must be accompanied by a legal guardian.
- Parental or legal guardian permission forms for all regular attending minors must be on file at HPBCM.
- Verbal permission from parent or guardian if attending one time only (e.g. a cousin riding along.)

### **16.730 Insurance Expectations**

Volunteer drivers are covered under the “Non-Owned or Hired” component of the HPBCM insurance policy. Volunteer drivers use their private vehicle(s) to transport minors to and from church each week. When there is a vehicle accident there are liability issues for both the volunteer driver and the church or organization for which they were driving. Liability is not a pre-determined formula, but depends on the legal examination and determination of what happened and who is found to be negligent or at fault. <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

As the person who owns and operates the vehicle involved in the accident, YOU will be the primary focus of the liability. HPBCM highly recommends and strongly urges volunteers using their personal vehicles to transport minors to carry at least \$100,000/\$300,000 liability coverage plus a personal liability umbrella policy.

### **16.740 Safety Standards**

When minors are under the care or supervision of a staff member or screened volunteer, that adult has the responsibility to make decisions about safety and to avoid danger as a reasonable and prudent person would do. An important consideration in establishing negligence is whether the accident was caused by conditions that were foreseeable and could have been avoided by taking necessary precautions.

Drivers must commit to the following safety standards:

- To obey all traffic laws (especially speed limits).
- To not use mobile phones while driving.

- To use seat belts at all times for all passengers (in any vehicle with seatbelts).
- To use minors car seats when required by South Carolina law. <sup>[[L]]</sup><sub>SEP</sub>
  - Note: As a general rule, under the age of 12 must be in a child safety seat and may not ride in the front passenger seat. For specific details see the information at: [http://www.buckleupsc.com/safety\\_seat\\_law.asp](http://www.buckleupsc.com/safety_seat_law.asp)

### **16.800 Parental Contact**

Parents who leave a minor in the care of HPBCM staff members and screened volunteers during church services or activities will be contacted if their minor becomes ill, injured or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in Children's Ministries programs.

### **16.810 Parental Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to visit any and all services and programs in which their minor is involved at HPBCM. Parents have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in which their minor is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their children's programs at HPBCM will be required to complete the volunteer application and screening process.

### **16.820 Physical Contact**

HPBCM is committed to protecting minors in its care and promoting a positive, nurturing environment for our minors. Staff members and screened volunteers should follow the guidelines below.

1. Side-to-side hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members or screened volunteers and minors are important for minors' development, and are generally suitable in the church setting.
2. Infants, toddlers and preschool age minors may be held when in need of attention or comfort. Toddlers and preschoolers should be held on the knees rather than on the lap.
3. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden.
4. Physical contact should be for the benefit of the minor, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or screened volunteer.
5. Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other minors or children's staff members and screened volunteers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation. <sup>[[L]]</sup><sub>SEP</sub>

6. Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of staff members or screened volunteers must foster trust at all times. Personal conduct must be above reproach.
7. Do not force physical contact, touch or affection on a reluctant minor. A minor's preference not to be touched must be respected. [L]  
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8. Children's staff members and screened volunteers are responsible for protecting minors under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.
9. Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by a staff member or screened volunteer must be reported immediately to the Child Safety Coordinator, the Children's Ministry Director, Business Administrator or Pastor for Ministry Operations.

### **16.830 Sexually Oriented Conversations**

Staff members and screened volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with minors, and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any minor in the program.

### **16.840 Sexually Oriented Materials**

Staff members and screened volunteers are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) on church property or in the presence of minors.

### **16.850 Use of Tobacco and Intoxicants**

HPBCM requires staff members and screened volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products in church facilities, while in the presence of minors or their parents, or during HPBCM activities or programs. HPBCM is a tobacco-free facility. Staff members and screened volunteers are also prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while in any HPBCM facility, while traveling with minors or while working with or supervising minors.

### **16.860 Verbal Interactions**

Verbal interactions between staff members or screened volunteers and minors should be positive and uplifting. Staff members and screened volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of minors.

To this end, staff members and screened volunteers should not talk to minors in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening,

intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning or humiliating. In addition, staff members and screened volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of minors.

### **16.870 Digital Interactions**

Digital communication (mobile [personal] phones, email, text messaging, social media, direct messaging via social media, video chatting, etc.) is the preferred means of most teenagers and an increasing number of younger minors. We realize that communicating with students in these ways provides opportunity to grow relationships with them as a vital part of ministry.

Students need to see adults model responsible digital citizenship that displays concern for their safety. Communicate with a minor as you would communicate with both minor and parent or guardian. Use of digital communication methods has a unique set of safe use responsibility guidelines. Below are boundaries for digital communication:

1. Use your real name. Do not hide behind anonymity.
2. Know & follow the terms of agreement for the social media platform you are using.
3. Posting pictures or videos of minors on HPBCM controlled social media and websites requires a signed media release form from their parent or guardian. Posting pictures or videos of minors on personally controlled social media and websites should be done with caution and wisdom. Respect the dignity of every person depicted when you post pictures and videos.
4. Transmission of content that is illicit, unsavory, abusive, pornographic, discriminatory, harassing or disrespectful is prohibited. Use good taste and discretion in all communication, especially communication involving minors.
5. Keep minor's personal communication information (name, email, phone number, etc.) private unless the participant and his/her parents or guardians have signed a consent form, or in an emergency.
6. Watch the time of day you communicate with students through social media. Don't text, chat or email with minors at times you would not normally communicate with them in person (before 8am and after 9pm). If a student contacts you outside of these hours and it is not an emergency or urgent, wait until morning to reply.
7. Chatting face-to-face (Skype, FaceTime, Oovoo, Google Hangout, etc.) with minors is strongly discouraged. If the situation requires video communication be aware of your surroundings and your attire.
8. Focus on the exchange of information in written & verbal communication, not on the exchange of personal feelings. If you have questions or concerns about the content of a text or email, share it with the Children's Ministry Director, Women's Ministry Director, Pastor for Student Ministries or another member of the pastoral body. Meeting face-to-face is the preferred means of communication when dealing with emotionally driven communication or emergencies.
9. Reporting knowledge of possible child abuse through digital communication media is required. Contact the Children's Ministry Director, Women's Ministry Director, Pastor for Student Ministries or another member of the pastoral body.

*Mandated Reporters should note that sharing this knowledge with a ministry director or pastor is **not** sufficient to meet the statutorily required duty of mandated reporting. See 16.140 and 16.240.*

### **16.900 Release of Children**

At any time that a minor has been entrusted to staff members or screened volunteers, the Church incurs responsibility for the safety and well-being of the minor. Staff members and screened volunteers must act to ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of minors in their charge.

Children's Ministries staff members or screened volunteers are responsible for releasing minors in their care only to parents, legal guardians or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians at the close of services or activities.

HPBC uses printed identification stickers for minors and parents. No person may pick up a minor without a printed identification sticker matching the minor's sticker. If the sticker has been misplaced, the parent or guardian must show a photo ID to pick up the minor. Siblings over the age of 14 may pick up a minor, with the appropriate identification sticker. (Effective Promotion Sunday, 2012)

It is presumed a person who drops off a minor has authority to pick up the minor.

In the event that staff members or screened volunteers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a minor, they should immediately locate or contact the Child Safety Coordinator, the Nursery Director or the Children's Ministry Director before releasing the minor.

### **16.910 Substitutes**

From time to time a staff member or screened volunteer may need to find a substitute to cover his or her assigned duty. All substitutes must be listed on the most recently published HPBCM Approved to Work With Minors list. Workers should make every effort to find their own substitute. If a substitute cannot be found, contact the Children's Ministry Director, Nursery Director, Pastor for Student Ministries or Child Safety Coordinator for assistance.

### **16.920 Supervision**

Staff members and screened volunteers are expected to provide adequate supervision for minors in their care while working in church programs.

## **17.000 Hampton Park Baptist Church Sex Offender Policy**

### **17.100 Policy for Accused Sex Offenders**

While recognizing that we have a legal and moral obligation to assume an accused person is “innocent until proven guilty,” we also have a responsibility to act wisely in regard to allegations of any sort of sexual abuse. Because we believe that we have biblical responsibilities to minister to the accused, to the victims, and to the congregation, we will take precautionary steps to protect all of the involved parties.

Therefore, while the accused is on church property for any church event, we will ensure that at least one, and preferably two, mature members of the congregation, appointed by the business administrator, will greet the accused person upon arrival and be observing the accused at all times to ensure that no children are harmed and also to protect the accused from further accusations of misconduct that may be directed at him/her. Furthermore, no accused person may actively minister to young people in an official capacity while under investigation. Once the case is settled, if the accused sex offender is cleared, formal observation may be suspended.

### **17.200 Policy for Convicted Sex Offenders**

1. *We will comply with the law.* The Children’s Ministry Director or a member of the pastoral body will speak with the offender’s probation officer and with the local prosecutor’s office to determine if the offender can lawfully attend services or other functions at which children are present. If the offender is prohibited from attending public gatherings at which children are present, we will inform the offender that under no circumstances will the church participate in a violation of the law. Once these boundary lines are clearly drawn, we can then determine how to meet the offender’s spiritual needs. [SEP]
2. *We should consult with the sex offender’s treatment provider.* If it is known that the offender is or has been in sex offender treatment, we will require the offender to sign a release so the appropriate church leaders can speak with the treatment provider. This will assist us in determining the potential dangers the offender poses to children and will also help us in meeting the needs of the offender. HPBC pastors will engage convicted sex offenders in regular spiritual counseling and regularly report to the pastoral team whether the offender is growing spiritually. [SEP]
3. *We shall seek to review court and investigative records of the offender’s conduct.* The Children’s Ministry Director, Business Administrator, or the Pastor for Ministry Operations should review the original complaint filed against the offender, as well as any records generated as a result. In many cases, an offender may have pled guilty to sexually abusing one child in exchange for dismissing allegations of abuse against other children. At times, the offender may have even confessed to abusing other children, but the other cases may have been dismissed

as part of a plea bargain. A complete review of these records will be more telling than simply examining the offender's conviction record.

4. *We will determine the level of supervision necessary to protect children.* An offender is prohibited from walking through or being present in any children's ministry areas of the campus. If the offender is considered a low risk by civil authorities and his/her treatment provider, HPBC may choose to allow the offender to attend services. In that case, we will ensure that at least one, and preferably two, mature members of the congregation, appointed by the business administrator, will greet the offender upon arrival and be observing the offender at all times to ensure that no children are harmed and also to protect the offender from new accusations of misconduct that may be directed at him/her. If the offender is at a higher risk, or if there is any question as to risk, the church should arrange for recordings of services to be available to the offender at his home or another location in which he can be ministered to. It may be appropriate to select a group of mature men or women (depending on the gender of the offender) who will also attend these services so that the offender may have some sense of fellowship. This scenario allows the congregation to meet the offender's spiritual needs without placing any child at risk.
5. *Even if the offender is considered a low risk, he should not be allowed to join a congregation where the victim attends services.* If the offender abused a member of the congregation or is awaiting resolution of an accusation by a member, he should be prohibited from joining the church. The congregation should work to find the offender another church body, but the emotional needs of the victim/accuser should always take precedent. In the case of victim and offender already being members of the same body, church leadership will use discretion and seek professional advice in advising the offender about whether he/she should remain a member of our body or seek membership in another local body. If such a step is determined to be necessary, this will be done with full disclosure to the leadership of that body. If it is necessary to find the offender a different church, it is critical to inform the new church of the basis for the offender's removal. Otherwise, the offender may be given a "fresh start"—and access to a whole new set of potential victims.
6. *The church leaders should inform the congregation of the offender's request to attend worship or to join the congregation and take into account the needs of the entire church body.* Offenders thrive on secrecy, and they (and the community as a whole) are best protected when there is an open discussion of their conduct and presence in services. Church leaders should not attempt to keep secret the presence of a convicted sex offender. In an age in which sex offender registries and conviction records are easily accessible online, members of the congregation will likely eventually discover an offender is present and would feel betrayed if the church leadership kept this from the members. Accordingly, the entire congregation should be informed of the situation. [1][2]  
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The church should be particularly sensitive to the concerns of parents who worry that even if an offender is shadowed and otherwise monitored in such a way as to make additional abuse difficult, the offender may nonetheless have sexual thoughts when he/she is watching children. Even more importantly, church leaders should be sensitive to the fears of survivors of abuse who may be emotionally harmed by knowing there is an offender in their midst. Close proximity to a sex offender may be a weekly, painful reminder to survivors of their own suffering. The church must minister to the offender in such a way that survivors are not re-victimized, emotionally or otherwise.

**Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement**

I have received and read a copy of the Hampton Park Baptist Church’s Children’s Ministries Policies and Procedures Manual and understand the importance of the material in the manual. I agree to abide by these guidelines while serving or working at Hampton Park Baptist Church and Christian School.

I understand the manual may be and has been modified, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated by Hampton Park Baptist Church Ministries.

I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines which may be created and distributed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member of Volunteer’s Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member or Volunteer’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

This page should be detached and turned in to HPBC for documentation in the Children’s Ministries files.

