Children and Youth Ministry Worker’s Handbook

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Welcome to Children and Youth Ministry at Harvest Chapel!

Ministry to children and youth at Harvest Chapel is a dynamic team effort. It takes the efforts and dedication of many people to carry out this ministry -- staff members, parents and volunteers! We are here to come along side the parents in their biblical teaching and encouragement of their children. We desire to see the children of Harvest Chapel rise and take their places in our congregation and world as bearers of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

This handbook contains the policies and procedures of our church, as well as many helpful suggestions for ministering to our young people.

Whether you are the parent of a child in our program, a staff member, or a volunteer who serves in one of our many ministries to children and youth, it is important that you read this handbook. The safety, well being, and faith development of our young people depend on our consistent and loving application of these principles.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide policies and procedures for the Children and Youth Ministry of Harvest Chapel. Changes may be made from time to time in the policies and procedures contained in this handbook without prior written or oral notice. If you have any questions regarding anything in this handbook, please feel free to contact the Children’s Ministry Coordinator in person, by phone, or email. All other issues should be directed to the overseer in the area in which you have questions or concerns.

God be with you in your ministry to the children and youth of our church!

Yours in Christ,

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OUR VISION

Our vision for the body of Harvest Chapel is for us to know Christ and make Him known.
STATEMENT OF FAITH

- Harvest Chapel has been formed as a fellowship of believers in the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Our supreme desire is to know Christ and be conformed to His image by the power of the Holy Spirit. We are not a denominational church, nor are we opposed to denominations as such; only to their over-emphasis of the doctrinal differences that have led to the division of the Body of Christ.
- We believe the only true basis of Christian fellowship is Christ’s (Agape) love, which is greater than differences we possess, and without which we have no right to claim ourselves Christians.
- We believe worship of God should be spiritual; therefore, we remain flexible and yielded to the leading of the Holy Spirit to direct our worship.
- We believe worship of God should be inspirational; therefore, we give great place to music in our worship.
- We believe worship of God should be edifying; therefore, our services are designed with great emphasis upon the teaching of the Word of God that He might instruct us on how He should be worshipped.
- We believe worship of God should be fruitful; therefore, we look for His love in our lives as the supreme manifestation that we have been truly worshipping Him.
- We believe in all the fundamental doctrines of orthodox evangelical Christianity.
- We believe in the inerrancy of Scripture; that the Bible (Old and New Testaments) is the inspired, infallible Word of God.
- We believe that God is eternally existent in three separate persons; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- We believe that God; the Father, is the personal, transcendent, and sovereign Creator of all things.
- We believe that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully human, that he was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, provided for the atonement of our sins by His vicarious death on the cross, was bodily resurrected by the power of the Holy Spirit, ascended back to the right hand of God the Father, and ever lives to make intercession for us.
- After Jesus ascended to Heaven, He poured out His Holy Spirit on believers in Jerusalem, enabling them to fulfill His command to preach the Gospel to the entire world; an obligation shared by all believers today.
- We believe that all people are by nature separated from God and responsible for their own sin, but that salvation, redemption, and forgiveness are freely offered to all by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. When a person repents of sin and accepts Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior, trusting Him to save, that person is immediately born again and sealed by the Holy Spirit, all of his/her sins are forgiven, and that person becomes a child of God, destined to spend eternity with the Lord.
- We believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in the Scriptures, and that they are valid for today and are to be exercised within scriptural guidelines. We, as believers, are to covet the best gifts, seeking to exercise them in love that the whole Body of Christ might be edified, we believe that love is more important than the most spectacular gifts, and without love, all exercise of spiritual gifts is worthless.
- We believe that the church government should be simplistic rather than a complex bureaucracy, and that we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead, rather than on fleshly promotion.
- We await the pre-tribulation rapture of the church, and we believe that the Second Coming of Christ with His saints to rule the earth will be personal, pre-millennial, and visible. This motivates us to holy living, heartfelt worship, committed service, diligent study of God’s Word, regular fellowship, participation in adult baptism by immersion and Holy Communion.
- We seek to teach the Word of God in such a way that its message can be applied to the individual’s life, leading that person to a greater maturity in Christ.
- We do not believe in “positive confession” (the faith movement belief that God can be commanded to heal or work miracles according to man’s will); human prophecy that supersedes the Scriptures, the incorporation of humanistic and secular psychology into Biblical teaching; the over-emphasis of spiritual gifts and experiential signs and wonders to the exclusion of Biblical teaching; or that true Christians can be demon-possessed.
- We are neither Five-Point Calvinists nor are we Armenians. We adhere firmly to the Biblical teaching of God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility. We avoid any theological systems of belief that go beyond the written Word and thereby divide the body of Christ.
- In our services, we focus on a personal relationship with God through worship, prayer, and the teaching of the Word of God. We teach both expository and topically. We do not allow speaking in tongues loudly during services or prophecy while a Bible study is in progress because we do not believe that the Holy Spirit would interrupt Himself. We have specific “after-glow services” and believer’s meetings.
OUR PHILOSOPHY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY

The goal of Children and Youth Ministry at Harvest Chapel is to encourage all children and youth to be fully devoted followers of Christ. We invite them to know Christ in a way that transforms their daily lives and the lives of those around them. With that goal in mind, we anticipate the Holy Spirit’s guidance and base our ministry to children and youth on these guiding principles.

TRUTH-BASED
We believe that God’s Word as found in the Bible is foundational truth. It is our heart to train every child and youth to use God’s Word with the illumination of the Holy Spirit as their guide and authority in everything.

RELATIONAL
We believe that life-change happens best in the context of relationships. Gifted, Godly, passionate adults who exhibit Christ to children, their families, and each other will show kids how to do the same. This modeling will impact God’s Kingdom for generations to come.

ADVENTUROUS
We believe that serving God is EXCITING and church should be FUN. We do not seek to simply entertain, but to give children and youth positive memorable experiences that reflect the joy of serving Jesus while learning the truth of God’s Word. Therefore, it is our commitment to challenge children and youth beyond the walls of the church toward a vibrant growing relationship with Christ.

INNOVATIVE
We believe in inspiring children and youth to greatness in the Lord by pursuing excellence in our programs and activities. While we will attempt to be innovative, we will also closely examine everything we do in order to remain biblical, relevant, and effective.

NURTURING
We believe in giving our children a sanitary, emotionally safe, and physically secure environment while growing spiritually at Harvest Chapel. We are committed to exceptional standards in these areas.
QUALITIES FOR WORKING IN CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRY

It is important to like children and youth, enjoy their company, and want to be with them. But at Harvest Chapel that’s not enough! Here is a list of questions you should ask yourself when considering candidacy for ministering to our children and youth. NO ONE embodies all of these, but this is what each of our teachers, leaders, and helpers desire to attain:

Do you believe you are justified by God's grace through Jesus Christ and not by your own actions? Is your faith and assurance for eternal life centered in the cross of Christ, his death and resurrection? Are you able to speak of this to our children and youth?

Do you take the Holy Scriptures seriously as the foundation for your faith? Do you read the Bible regularly and use it in your ministry with children and youth to teach them of God’s love and faithfulness?

Do you participate in corporate worship regularly to hear the Word of God, be nurtured in the faith, and grow in unity with the body of Christ?

Do you have an understanding of Harvest Chapel's mission (To know Christ and make Him known) to children and youth? Do you desire and do all you can to accomplish this mission while working with our young people?

Do you understand the policies and procedures of our church as defined in this handbook, and are you willing to uphold them in your ministry?

Do you model behavior into which we hope our young people will grow, including the use of appropriate attire and language? Do you participate in worship service(s) and a small group? Do you have an active prayer life? Do you find ways of living your faith every day at home and work?

Do you understand the nature of our ministry to children and youth – that the development and nurturing of Christ-centered relationships, and not the proliferation of fun activities – is the key to reaching our goals?
VOLUNTEER SCREENING PROCESS

We have established a screening procedure that assures us that volunteers who regularly work with children and youth have no previous record of criminal child abuse and will abide by the procedures and policies of this handbook. This procedure includes the following steps:

1. **Application**
   Each person who applies to work with youth and children must have been actively attending Harvest Chapel for at least one year. (Actively attending means: attends worship services regularly, has begun actively attending a small group Bible Study, and has expressed desire for long-term commitment to Harvest Chapel)

   All children and youth ministry volunteers must complete the Screening Form, Volunteer Application, and Consent to Background Checks, as well as providing references. The required forms are included in the Appendix of this manual.

   Each potential volunteer is given this "Children and Youth Worker Ministry Handbook" to read. Upon completion the volunteer must verify that he/she has read the handbook by signing the Volunteer Acknowledgement form; including signing the Statement of Faith Agreement.

2. **Interview**
   Each potential volunteer has an interview with a Pastoral Staff or with a Coordinator of the Children’s Ministry at Harvest Chapel to discuss these forms and the kind of children and youth ministry in which they would like to participate. They will also use this time to ask questions regarding character and biblical viewpoints. The name of the potential volunteer along with the desired volunteer position, are then submitted for approval.

3. **Criminal History Check**
   A member of the Harvest Chapel Ministry Staff or Children’s Ministry Coordinator may call all listed references, request a criminal background check, and check with the Department of Children and Family Services in any state where the potential volunteer has lived.

   Currently, Harvest Chapel uses Safe Hiring Solutions to search nationally for any information that would disqualify an adult from working with our children.

   **Persons who have been previously named as a perpetrator in an indicated case with DCFS or law enforcement agencies for physical or sexual child abuse will not be allowed to work with children and youth at Harvest Chapel. We also reserve the right to disqualify candidates based on any information that may be found on the background check that could call into question the safety of our children. There are however, many other volunteer opportunities at Harvest Chapel for which they may be eligible.**

   If a person checks "was abused as a minor," a member of the Harvest Chapel ministry staff will discuss this with the potential volunteer and help arrange for counseling and support if the person has not already received it. **Adults or teens who have been victims of abuse are not automatically excluded**
from volunteering in our children and youth programming; if the professional staff feels they have received (or are receiving) the appropriate counseling and care and have worked through the issues involved, then there is no reason why they should not volunteer.

**Note:** Forms I and II will be kept in strictest confidentiality by the staff and coordinators at Harvest Chapel. At no time will these completed forms be available for anyone outside the staff and coordinators without the written permission of the individual.

4. **Revocation**
   Harvest Chapel reserves the right to revoke any volunteer’s ability to serve in Children or Youth Ministry with or without notice at any time for any or no reason at all.
TEENS SERVING IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY

Regarding the selection and screening of TEENS who wish to serve in Children and Youth Ministry:

At Harvest Chapel we encourage our teens to get involved in service to others by volunteering in our children’s ministry and other ministries. To safeguard our teens as they fulfill these important roles, we follow these procedures:

• A teen will be paired with an adult partner. **Two teenagers will not be allowed to serve together in dual supervision.** Two adults must be with minors at all times. This is called our “Two Adult Rule”. It is important to pair a teen with an adult so the teen can be trained in the teen's leadership role and fully supported and protected from being in risky situations, as well as share the responsibility of child care and learning.

• A teen in middle school or high school may assist adults in any area of Children and Youth Ministry. It is recommended that teens be at least two years older than the children whom they are serving.
RULES TO KNOW AND ENFORCE

Inclusivity
Harvest Chapel will not discriminate against any person based on their age, ability, race, color, or gender. Harvest Chapel will welcome, include, and provide programming for children and youth who are carriers of blood-borne pathogens.

Supervision
A dual supervision rule will apply. This is called our “Two Adult Rule”. Two leaders (two adults or an adult and a teen) must be present at all times in activities, classes, child care situations, small groups, etc. At no time should there ever be one adult or teen alone with one youth or child. Except when an adult is present, older youth are not permitted to supervise younger children or youth.

Any person who is not a parent or guardian of a child involved in a Harvest Chapel class will be allowed to visit that class only with the permission of a Coordinator or staff member. Permission for such a visit is verified by a personal escort of the grantor or by a verbal confirmation between the grantor and the teacher of the class. Teachers are required to refuse admittance to anyone who does not have this permission.

Drugs, Tobacco, and Alcohol
The use of any illicit drug, tobacco, or alcohol is prohibited at all church events whether on site or off. This rule applies to youth and adult chaperons and all participating in the events. (Exceptions: Medications listed on parental permission slips).

Transportation
Transporting children and youth for any Harvest Chapel event is the responsibility of pre-approved drivers who have completed the Harvest Chapel driver requirements. All driving laws (including speed limits and use of safety belts) are to be observed at all times. Minors are not to be transported unless a written permission slip and medical form is on file with Harvest Chapel.

Young people driving their own or their parents' cars to an event may drive themselves anywhere they choose, but they may not take passengers unless written permission of the parents of the passenger. All children will ride home from an event in the same vehicle they rode to the event unless prior arrangements have been made with the supervising adult for that event.

Movies
We do not show "R" rated movies. Nor do we show "PG-13" or "R" rated movies to middle school or younger children unless the movie is judged to be relevant and appropriate by a member of the pastoral staff and publicized as part of an event. Permission slips will be provided giving the rating, reason for the rating, and our rationale for showing it.

Firearms, Fireworks, Dangerous Materials
Fireworks, firecrackers, firearms or guns, mace, weapons of any kind, and any kind of explosive device shall not be brought, bought or used on any Harvest Chapel children or youth activity.
MEDICAL CONCERNS

Parents should not send their children and youth to events or classes when the child or young person is contagious or exhibiting contagious symptoms. If a child or youth begins to exhibit symptoms of any contagious disease during any activity, parents will be promptly notified and asked to take their child or youth home.

Children and youth with open wounds or lesions are required to keep wounds covered.

Disposable diapers will be used for diaper changes when diapers are needed.

Universal precautions shall be used in any situation where exposure to body fluids is possible. For blood & bodily fluid spills please use the appropriate Blood & Bodily Fluid Clean-up Kits located in the Medical First Aid kits. Follow the instructions included in the kits.

Harvest Chapel staff and volunteers are not allowed to give a minor medication of any kind unless the parent is present and gives approval. This includes Tylenol or other forms of pain reliever. During events off and on site parental permission Medical Action forms will be available so the parent can given written consent to give medications when they are not present.

Harvest Chapel will maintain confidentiality in regard to any health or medical information about a child or youth that they or their parents have shared with us. Only staff and volunteers will be informed who are directly involved with a child or youth and need to know this information to assure the health and safety of the child and his classmates.

FIRST AID

Every classroom contains a Minor First Aid Kit with supplies for minor injuries. In addition, there is a Major First Aid Kit located at the First Response Station. Each first aid kit also has a list of trained Harvest Chapel first aid personnel.

There is also an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) located in the hallway that leads to the kitchen on the wall just outside the financial office. (APPLICABLE WHEN IN WHITE HORSE CHRISTIAN CENTER)

EMERGENCY RESPONSE WHILE AT WHITE HORSE CHRISTIAN CENTER

In the Case that first aid needs to be administered to a minor (under age 18) please use the following plan of action:

• Ask an usher to locate the minor’s parent or guardian
• Provide needed assistance
  o If a basic injury such as a minor scrape, anyone can treat as needed.
  o If something more complex, or you are unsure what to do please locate one of the trained WHCC or Harvest Chapel first aid personnel as listed in the first aid box to assess and provide care.
• If life threatening condition—call 911 for medical assistance
• NO medication may be administered without prior parental consent & signature – just knowing the family or child is not enough!!
• Fill out First Aid Assistance Form (please sign when finished and ask parent/guardian to sign as well)
  o If they have a minor scrape and just need a quick Band-Aid and antibiotic – skip the form
  o If you need to apply ice, check temperature, notice a growing rash, or something more complex...Please use the form
• Turn in the completed First Aid Assistance Form to Children’s Ministry Coordinator
DISCIPLINE

Harvest Chapel tries to keep children and youth fully interested and involved in activities, and therefore does not face frequent discipline problems. Occasionally, however, reoccurring negative behavior does appear. To aid our children and youth workers in maintaining good discipline, we have developed a set of rules and consequences, and a Discipline Report form. Listed below are the rules and consequences we encourage our children and youth leaders to use.

Under no circumstances should a Children’s Ministry volunteer discipline a child by physically striking the child. Instead, the children should be reminded of the importance of good behavior regularly and then expected to follow the teacher(s) instructions and classroom rules. If a child is not following the teacher(s) instructions, rules, or showing disrespect, then the following disciplinary actions should be taken:

- Give the child a warning and explain to the child how to improve his or her behavior.
- If the child’s actions do not change, the teacher will give a consequence that appropriately addresses the behavior. After the consequence is given, please remind the child of the desired behavior and pray with them that the Lord will give them the strength to make right choices. (Instruction: be sure to pick your battles wisely. If you choose to make a stance on a specific issue, then be sure to follow through on it. Consistency is crucial.)
  - The consequence could vary from a timeout, (1 minute for every year old they are) taking away of a privilege, missing snack, being moved to sit by the teacher, etc.
- If the child is again having behavior problems, the teacher will give a second consequence that appropriately addresses the behavior. Remind the child again of the behavior you desire and encourage them to make the right choice.
- Finally, if the child is continuing to misbehave, then the parent(s) need to be notified immediately either by the main teacher or the Children’s Ministry Leadership. When speaking, the person should speak to the parent(s) about the child’s behavior in love, grace, and concern for the child’s improvement. However, parent notification should be the last resort because we are here to minister to both the children and the parents.
- For the protection of our Children’s Ministry, parents are not allowed to stay in the room with their child if they are paged to pick up their child.
- The leader will fill out the discipline report and parents should read it and sign it before the child returns for the next event (See Appendix, Form IV).

Note: Physical punishment of any kind is never appropriate or permissible.
MISCELLANEOUS PROCEDURES FOR CHILDREN’S MINISTRY SERVANTS

Distractions
Some children are more distractible than others and anything that distracts us from God’s Word is not effective in fulfilling God’s mission at Harvest Chapel.

- No outside items may be brought into the Children’s Ministry
- Any outside items that are brought in, will be collected until the dismissal of the child at the end of the Children’s Ministry time
  - These items include, but are not limited to:
    - Electronics of any kind
    - Food or drinks
    - Personal security items for children four and older
  - We are not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items

Special Needs
If your child is in our special needs program all policies may need modified due to the specific nature of your child’s needs. These modifications will be assessed and determined by the Special Needs Coordinator and the parent(s). Individual policies will be in written form with signed approval from the parent before enactment of these policies or procedures.

Love
We at Harvest Chapel Children’s Ministry will love, encourage, teach, and disciple your child! We are here to assist in the development of Godly character in your child and the introduction to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We appreciate the opportunity and trust that you place in us to teach your child every week. We look forward to a beautiful partnership with you and your child.

Room and Building Care (APPLIES WHILE MEETING AT WHITE HORSE CHRISTIAN CENTER)
WHCC is a busy place and our facilities are almost always in use. Everyone needs to work together to keep our facilities ship-shape. Please keep in mind the following items each time you use our facilities:

- Do not tape or nail anything to the walls. Please use plasti-tack when displaying pictures on the walls.
- When you are finished in a room: clean off tables, pick up things off the floors, put away supplies, and turn off air/heat/lights.
- If you are the last person to leave the room, make sure the doors are locked. When a room is unoccupied it should be locked!
- Leave a note with your Ministry Coordinator if anything is broken, stained or in need of attention in your room.
- Vacuums and manual sweepers are available in the teacher resource room for those occasions when the room must be cleaned from a particularly messy or crumbly activity.
- If for some reason you remove or move an item in the area you are using for your event, please return the room to the state you found it in, making sure to pick up trash, straighten chairs and equipment.

Health/Cleaning
Diaper Changing
- The changing table should be disinfected after every diaper changing as to not spread infection
- Diarrhea is considered a contagious condition so the child may not stay in the class. If you discover a child with diarrhea, they will not be able to stay in the classroom and must be returned to their parent (disinfect thoroughly after returning the child to their parent)
**Worship Room**

Classroom Teacher’s/Helper’s Responsibilities:

When in the Worship Room, we ask that Classroom Teachers/Helpers come alongside the Worship Leader in a supportive role. The Worship Leader will have authority in the worship room and the teachers/helpers should support through:

- Reporting to the Worship Room prior to children being dropped off by the parents
- Be with your class group at all times during the Worship Time
- Worshiping with the children as an example of a true heart of worship toward the Lord
- Helping to keep order and peace within your class group and all children as needed
- Supporting the Worship Leader as needed or called upon
- Modeling respect and carrying out expectations the Worship Leader sets for the Worship Room
- Encourage children to participate in the worship

Teachers are asked enforce these policies and procedures during the Worship Time while the students are asked to conform to the following:

- No running
- No outside items allowed into the Worship Room, excluding Bibles
- Show respect to the church building and items within the Children’s Ministry
- Show respect to all people, including:
  - Keep your body to yourself
  - Talk respectfully with your words
  - Look respectful with your body posture and facial expressions

**Attendance**

Harvest Chapel takes seriously the obligations to its children and youth. Attendance is one of the important obligations, and volunteers must abide by these guidelines:

1. **Arrival**
   
   Volunteers must arrive early for the event for which they are serving. The event leader or department head will designate the time of arrival for volunteers.

2. **Departure**
   
   Volunteers must remain at the children’s ministry event until the last child has been picked up by parents, or until dismissed by the event leader or department head.

3. **Notification**
   
   Volunteers must call their coordinator to inform them of their absence and confirm that a substitute has been found.

4. **Substitute Requirements**
   
   If unable to teach, please contact your partner teacher to teach in your place. If that is not possible, please notify the designated Coordinator to have a replacement teacher assigned at least 24 hours in advance or as soon as possible. Volunteers must make every attempt to find a substitute from the workers within their department. If he or she is unable to find a substitute, the volunteer must contact the appropriate Coordinator.
CHILD AND VOLUNTEER PROTECTION
Guidelines for Adults Who Work with Children and Youth

Proverbs 27:23 – Be diligent to know the state of your flocks, and attend to your herds.
1 Thessalonians 5:22 – Abstain from all appearances of evil.

The following policies and procedures are designed to keep all those involved in Children’s Ministry, including both children and volunteers, protected and safe at all times. It is imperative that all Children’s Ministry volunteers remain above reproach and avoid any appearance of evil. In recent years, claims of child abuse of all types have increased within the United States; therefore, as a responsible Children’s Ministry, we must protect the children in our fellowship and ourselves from any opportunities for child abuse or false claims being filed and the opportunity for child abuse to occur at our church.

The following policies must be followed by all volunteers working with children or youth in order to avoid any false accusations and to always keep the children safe in the ministry.

**Safety in Numbers**: No volunteers should ever be completely alone with a child at any time and in any location, including the restrooms, classrooms, church facilities, and/or properties.

- The National Association for the Education of Young Children, states “There should never be fewer than two adults with any group of children.”
- Therefore, as a Children’s Ministry, we will strive to limit a one to one environment between adults and child. To accomplish this aim, we will attempt to have two adults with every group of children. If a second adult is not available, then the group of children will be in a visible, open environment with a window to see into the classroom and/or with the classroom door open.

**Restrooms**: No male volunteers should take a child to the restroom at any time. Please make sure that your child utilizes the restroom prior to class, thus decreasing trips to the bathroom.

- **Infant & Toddlers** – No male volunteers should change a child’s diaper in the Children’s Ministry. Only female volunteers should change diapers. The diaper changing table should be in a clear visible space. The volunteer changing the diaper should prepare their needed materials before placing the child on the changing table. When the child is on the table they will keep their eyes and hands on the child at all times.
- **2-4 Years Old** – Young children ages two through four should be taken to the restroom by a female in small groups according to their age groups. No male volunteers should take a child into the restroom at any time.
- **Kindergarten – 6th** - Older children ages five through twelve should be escorted to the restroom. Volunteers should allow the children to go to the restroom individually or in small groups while a volunteer stands outside the restrooms in the hallway waiting for the children to come out. A volunteer may prop the door open to be able to see what is happening in the restroom (Instruction: the children in this age group should be given a time limit in the restroom to discourage any horseplay or wasting time inside the restroom.)
- **Special Needs Ministry** – Children in the Special Needs Ministry should be escorted to the restroom with one of the following:
  - Two adult teachers in the Children’s Ministry- These adults can be one female/one male or two females. The door must be propped open if someone is required to go into the restroom for assistance.
• Page the parent/guardian to take their child to the restroom – the parent’s number may be paged to take their child to the restroom and then bring them back to participate in class

• A parent selected restroom assistant – a parent may request a particular person to aid their child in the restroom. The parent must sign a release form in order to use this option.

• Alternative – Due to the nature of the Special Needs Ministry, the teacher reserves the right to alter Policies and Procedures of all kinds to meet the specific needs of the child. The Teach will obtain written consent from the parent when altering from the Harvest Chapel written Policies and Procedures.

Child Protection: Harvest Chapel strives to provide the safest and most conducive environment possible for the learning of God’s Word.

  o In extreme conditions, if a child becomes physically violent, causing us to fear the safety of the child, staff, or other children we may need to remove that child from the classroom and, if needed, physically restrain them in a loving, safe manner. We will page the parent when the safety of all the children is established. In many cases the child will calm down and be able to take part in the rest of the class.

  o Only adults who are currently serving in the Harvest Chapel Children’s Ministry or have passed through the application process may be in the classrooms during Children’s Ministry hours. The parent may come into the room to meet the teacher and drop their child off, but for the safety of all our child, parent’s are not allowed to stay with their child during the class.

  o No volunteer(s) should ever touch any area of a child’s body that is normally covered by a bathing suit, including the genital area, buttocks, breasts, inner thigh, or even the child’s clothing covering the immediate areas of those body parts. The only exception to this policy will be the changing of diapers by a female volunteer in the toddler rooms.
CHILD FOOD AND SNACK MANUAL

The Children's Ministry Food and Snack Policies are designed to safeguard and protect the children and volunteers of Harvest Chapel from discomfort, harm, endangerment, and life threatening situations. Food allergies in America are presenting increased concerns for ministries and schools nationwide. Because of the life-threatening nature of some of these allergies and the increasing prevalence of them, ministries and volunteers should be informed and prepared to care for children with food allergies. Please read and show understanding through signing and dating the end of this document.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT
In the Harvest Chapel Consent and Waiver Form, parents are asked to sign the Permission/Consent/Release of Liability clause which states “... I agree to hold harmless Harvest Chapel or any of their agents in the event of accident, illness, injury or death.”
Though we may be released from liability, we understand that we are to protect and serve the children in our care. This means we desire to hold ourselves to a high standard and response to needs. When it comes to food and snacks in our ministries, we shall endeavor to educate volunteers about food allergies and their seriousness, and have an action plan provided by the child’s doctor and parents/guardians.

FOOD ALLERGY PREVALENCE
• Food allergy prevalence has increased 55% in the last five years.*
• Food allergies affect 8% of children under age three, 6%-8% of school-age children, and 2.5% of adults.*
• 40%-50% of those persons with a diagnosed food allergy are judged to have a high risk of anaphylaxis* (a life-threatening allergic reaction). Every food allergy reaction has the possibility of developing into a life-threatening and potentially fatal anaphylactic reaction. This can occur within minutes of exposure to the allergen.
• Children may be allergic to more than one food.*
*(Sampson, HA, “Food Allergy”, from Biology Toward Therapy, Hospital Practice, 2000: May.)

CHARACTERISTICS OF FOOD ALLERGY REACTION IN CHILDREN
• Allergic reactions to foods vary among children and can range from mild to severe life-threatening anaphylactic reactions. Some students, who are very sensitive, may react to just touching or inhaling the allergen. For other children, consumption of as little as one five-thousandth of a teaspoon of an allergenic food can cause death. *
• Eight foods (peanut, tree nut, milk, egg, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish) account for 90% of total food allergies, although any food has the potential to cause an allergic reaction. *
• Most, but not all childhood allergies to milk, egg, soy and wheat are outgrown by age 5. *
• Peanut and tree nuts account for 92% of severe and fatal reactions, and along with fish and shellfish, are often considered to be lifelong allergies and life threatening allergens. *
  * (Driscoll, David P. “Managing Life Threatening Food Allergies in School,” from The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Massachusetts Department of Education, 2002: Fall)

ANAPHYLAXIS
• Anaphylaxis is a potentially life-threatening medical condition occurring in allergic individuals after exposure to their specific allergens. Anaphylaxis refers to a collection of symptoms affecting multiple systems in the body.
• The most dangerous symptoms include breathing difficulties and a drop in blood pressure or shock, which are potentially fatal.
• 150-200 deaths per year are attributed to food anaphylaxis, mostly from peanut and tree nut allergies. (The Food Allergy Network, “Information About Anaphylaxis” website at foodallergy.org.).
• Anaphylaxis can occur immediately or up to twenty four hours following allergen exposure.
• Note: When in doubt, it is better to contact the parents and then give the Epipen® (epinephrine). Fatalities occur when epinephrine is withheld.

PREVENTION AND PROCEDURES
As a responsible Children’s Ministry, we desire to serve and minister to the children of our fellowship and community through establishing and implementing policies to safeguard the children with allergies. To accomplish this aim, the following policies and procedures should be followed by all volunteers and staff:

- **Sunday School/Children’s Ministry:**
  - Children’s Ministry volunteers are NOT permitted to serve, feed, or have within the area of the children any food that is not provided by the Children’s Ministry.
  - Harvest Chapel Children’s Ministry has chosen to serve two snacks only:
    - Cookies – free of gluten, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish, and soy.
    - Gluten Free Pretzels – free of gluten, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish but contains traces of soy.
  - Before providing a snack to the children it is important that children and volunteers wash their hands thoroughly or use hand sanitizer. Volunteers must supervise the use of hand sanitizer, and make sure the children do not eat or swallow the hand sanitizer.
  - A child who has allergies or a special diet may bring their own snack to class if our snacks contain offending allergens or dietary restrictions. However, the child’s snack must NOT contain any peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish or other offending allergens.
  - Any exception to this rule must be approved by the Children’s Director.
  - Exceptions are Large Children’s Ministry Events

- **Vacation Bible School (VBS):**
  - During VBS, no food should be served to or consumed by children at any time, except that which is served by snack volunteers assigned by the Children’s Director.
  - Snack volunteers should be aware of children in attendance with food allergies.
  - Children should be served snacks approved by the snack coordinator, especially those children with food allergies.

- **All Volunteers and Ministries:**
  - Get to know the children in your care group who have food allergies. Remember, you are their servant and teacher. Educate yourself on allergy/allergies from the information in the appendix of this procedure located in the resource room.
  - Volunteers should look out for and support other volunteers as well. Assist each other. If an incident occurs, take action by watching the remaining children of the affected volunteer. You can also help that volunteer by providing a clear mind and support.
  - Parents will be asked to complete and sign the Food Allergy Action Plan form for children who have food allergies.
  - Parents will be asked to provide or have on hand the correct allergy-specific Epipen® or antihistamine prescribed by the child’s physician. The child’s first aide medicine should be clearly marked with his or her name and attached with their action plan form at their Check-In/Check-Out Desk.

- **Allergy First-Response Location:**
  - Centralized location (unlocked allergy first aide cabinet) at the Check-in/Check-out Desk.

**KEYPOINTS**
- Educate, Educate, Educate. This is an ongoing process that changes with children’s needs and as the staff changes.
- Today, processed foods contain trace amounts of food items that are not always identified on the food label. The best plan is to educate about children with life threatening allergies.
- The greatest risk for a life threatening allergic reaction exists when the normal routine is broken.
- Be Prepared. Always have the Medical Action Plan (MAP) available and think ahead to prevent possible exposures to a food allergen.
- Be safe, not sorry! Take all complaints from children with food allergies very seriously. Contact the Children’s Director and parents as soon as possible if a child is having a mild to severe reaction of any kind.
• Symptoms vary greatly. Contact the parents as soon as possible if a child is having a mild to severe reaction of any kind. If Children's Director or Children's Ministry leadership cannot get a hold of the parents, then use emergency medication (ie. Epinephrine or Inhaler) if needed and follow the MAP. Then if parents are not accessible call 911 when uncontrolled anaphylactic symptoms occur or if ingestion is strongly suspected.
• When in doubt, use the child's Epipen©; it will not harm the child.
CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Purpose
To help Harvest Chapel provide a caring, safe, and secure environment for children and youth in all phases of ministry life.

To help Harvest Chapel reduce its legal risk and liability exposure.

Biblical Foundation
Harvest Chapel seeks to express God’s love of children and provide for their personal wholeness. This caring community seeks to prevent child abuse of any form to our children and youth and to minister to victims of abuse and their families. The Bible is foundational to our understanding upon which all policies, procedures, and ministries must stand.

“And they brought young children to Him, that He should touch them; and His disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them.” – Mark 10:13-16

“And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offenses! For it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh!” - Matthew 18:5-7

Our goal in response to these Biblical mandates is to maintain a safe, secure, and loving place where children may grow; a place where caregivers, teachers, and leaders (both paid and volunteer) minister appropriately to their needs.

Child Abuse Prevention Policy
Harvest Chapel desires to be a safe place for all children, youth and adults who attend any activity. Individuals they know and trust sometimes victimize children. The ministry is not immune to such abuse, either by its members or by those in leadership positions. Incidents of child abuse or neglect cut across racial, social, economic and religious boundaries. Although no organization or individual can assure complete protection, this Child Abuse Prevention Policies and Procedures Manual reflects Harvest Chapel’s commitment to help protect children from harm. This manual applies to all volunteer and compensated workers of Harvest Chapel.

Harvest Chapel will not tolerate child abuse or neglect. Your cooperation in this commitment not only reflects your concern about children’s safety in this society, but also your willingness to take steps toward halting child abuse and its detrimental effects.

For the safety and protection of our children and workers, all people who participate in ministry-sponsored activities with children and youth are required to comply with the guidelines provided in this manual.
Definitions
In this manual the following definitions apply:

- **Adult** – Any person age 18 or older

- **Child or Youth** – Any person under the age of 18

- **Child Abuse** – An act committed by a parent, caregiver or person in a position of trust (even though he/she may not care for the child on a daily basis) which is not accidental and which harms or threatens to harm a child’s physical or mental health or welfare. The following definitions and explanations apply in determining whether abuse of a child has occurred:
  
  - **Physical Abuse** – a physical injury, threat of injury or creation of a real and significant danger of substantial risk of death, disfigurement or impairment of bodily functions. Such injury or threat of injury, regardless of intent, is inflicted or allowed to be inflicted by non-accidental means. Examples: asphyxiation, bone fracture, brain damage, skull fracture, subdural hematoma, burns, scalding, cuts, bruises, welts, abrasions, internal injuries, poisoning, sprains, dislocations, gunshot, and stabbing wounds;
  
  - **Physical Neglect** – The failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, or supervision for a child if the child’s health or safety is endangered. Physical neglect may include multiple occurrences or a one-time critical or severe event that results in a threat to health or safety, such as a toddler left alone. Other types of neglect include abandonment, inadequate supervision, inadequate clothing, inadequate shelter, inadequate personal hygiene, inadequate food, and malnutrition;
  
  - **Sexual Abuse** – Abuse that consists of sexual contact or interactions with a child, including physical contact (fondling, sexual intercourse) and nonphysical contact (exhibitionism, child prostitution, pornography, voyeurism);
  
  - **Medical Neglect** – Refusal or failure by caretaker to obtain and/or follow through with a complete regimen of medical; mental; or dental care for a condition, which if untreated, could result in illness or developmental delays;
  
  - **Failure to Thrive** – A syndrome of infancy or early childhood that is characterized by growth failure, signs of severe malnutrition, and variable degrees of developmental retardation. Children are considered to be in this category only when the syndrome is diagnosed by a physician and is caused by non-organic factors;
  
  - **Mental Abuse/Neglect** – A pattern of acts or omissions by the caretaker that result in harms to a child’s psychological or emotional health or development;
  
  - **Educational Neglect** – The child’s caretaker is directly responsible for the failure of the child to attend school or an approved alternative program of study; and
  
  - **Bizarre Discipline** – Any actions in which the caretaker uses eccentric, irrational, or grossly inappropriate procedures or devices to modify the child’s behavior.
• Compensated Worker – Hourly, salaried, part-time or full-time employee who works with children at any ministry-sponsored activity;

• Volunteer Worker – Any non-compensated individual who works with children at any ministry-sponsored activity;

• Caregiver – Any compensated or volunteer worker, sixth grade or older;

• Mandate Reporter – Any persons with the responsibility for the care of children is a mandated reporter. Indiana State law provides that if a caregiver has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or may be subjected to abuse or neglect or observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, that person shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Senior Pastor or their Department Head; and

• Corporal Punishment – Any punishment applied to the body including, but not limited to slapping, spanking, pinching, pulling, or squeezing.

Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse
In an effort to create the safest possible environment within Harvest Chapel, several abuse prevention measures will be used. These measures include: screening of paid and volunteer workers for past child abuse convictions or expungements, provision for regular training on child abuse issues to paid and volunteer staff members, use of the “two adult rule”, standards for appropriate classroom discipline and open classrooms.

When a diaper must be changed in the nurseries, do so at the diaper changing station. All volunteers must always wear rubber gloves when applying lotion or powder and always keep a cloth or wipe between their hand and the child, AND another adult volunteer or teen volunteer must watch the diaper changing until the clothing is back on the child. Males are not allowed to change diapers or take children or youth to the restroom at any time.

When possible, children will be encouraged to take care of their own bathroom needs. Should assistance be required, the outer bathroom door must remain ajar while the teacher assists the child. There should always be two adults in the restroom with the children at all times. This requires the entire class to use the restroom at the same time, or if there are enough adult volunteers, two can stay in the room with some and two can take the others to the restroom.

If children are taken out of the classroom to go outside and play or do an activity in another room in the building, teachers must take a count of the children to insure all are present with the group.

The pastor, or one delegated to do so by him, must approve any children and youth activities that are held off-site. Parental permission will be secured for all off-site activities and there will be a minimum of two adults present at all times during the activity. All activities involving taking children and youth off the church premises must be scheduled on the official church calendar.

Organized events on or off the church premises will be staffed with a minimum of one adult per ten students for Kindergarten through 12th grade, and one adult per six toddlers through age 4, and one adult per four infants.
One Year Rule
Volunteer workers must be regular attendees of Harvest Chapel for at least one year prior to the time they begin serving with children in ministry-sponsored activities.

There is an exception to the one year guideline. If a volunteer worker:

1) Has served in ministry with children for at least six months in the ministry he or she attended prior to coming to Harvest Chapel; and

2) Can provide a copy of his or her volunteer application form on file at the former ministry; and

3) Can provide a reference from the staff person with whom they worked at that ministry, they may be considered for service prior to the six months of regular attendance at Harvest Chapel; and

4) Receives pastoral and Coordinator approval.

Staff Screening
The following procedures reflect Harvest Chapel commitment to provide protective care for all children and workers who participate in ministry sponsored activities.

All volunteer and compensated workers must complete the following procedures before participating in any ministry-sponsored children or youth activities:

1) Complete an application form. References will be checked.
2) Be interviewed by the staff person responsible for the area of ministry.
3) Attend orientation/training activities appropriate to the level of the volunteer or compensated worker’s involvement.
4) Applicants must sign written acknowledgement stating they have received and reviewed a copy of the Child Abuse Prevention Policies and Procedures Manual of Harvest Chapel.

No adult individual, whether serving as a volunteer or a compensated worker, who has been convicted of a crime against a child or a violent crime against another adult, will provide services in any ministry-sponsored activity or program for children or youth at Harvest Chapel.

All volunteer and compensated workers are subject to background checks for the purpose of obtaining information regarding criminal history or child abuse findings.

Applications and the results of any screening will be kept confidential by authorized ministry staff.

Two Adult Rule
Teachers will be assigned in teams of two or more adults per nursery, classroom, or church sponsored activity where children and youth are present. Concerted effort will be made to recruit sufficient numbers of volunteer teachers to permit such team teaching. Other ministry-sponsored groups of children or youth, whether they meet at the ministry or elsewhere, must have two or more adult sponsors present.

When a ministry-sponsored children’s event or youth event has both male and female participants, both male and female adult sponsors must also be present.
At times when individual ministry is necessary for any child or youth the Two Adult Rule must also be followed. Meetings should never take place behind closed doors, but should be in open areas in the building, such as the foyer, the sanctuary-where all parties can be viewed from the windows at the doors, a pastor’s office with the doors open. These meetings should be scheduled during regular office hours or service times when others are in the building.

A minimum of two adult female volunteers must be present in each nursery regardless of how few children are in attendance.

A minimum of two adult volunteers must be present in each children and youth class regardless of how few children are in attendance.

Only assigned workers are allowed to stay in the nursery or classrooms or youth rooms without a visitor form filled out. The exception to this rule is the parent or guardian of the child. They may attend class anytime their child is in the classroom, but may not be counted as one of the responsible adult volunteers unless they have been approved by pastoral staff.

**Check-In/Check-Out Procedure**

All children in nurseries and K-5 classrooms must be signed in by their parent or guardian, or a parentally assigned adult, upon arrival to class each time. The same adult must pick the child up from class that dropped the child off, unless prior written permission and arrangements have been made with the nursery or classroom adult volunteer in charge of the classroom or nursery at that time.

**Classroom Discipline**

All teachers and workers will use the discipline measures spelled out in the Children and Youth Ministry Worker’s Handbook. **No corporal discipline or verbal abuse, ie. ridicule, are to be used at any time.**

**Open Classrooms**

Classrooms or childcare rooms will be visited without prior notice by ministry staff, parents, or other volunteer ministry workers. The Children’s Ministry Leadership or Pastoral Staff will conduct brief observations of childcare rooms and classrooms of children or youth during class times and other meeting times.

**Vehicle Driving Policies**

The designated leader of the event must know each person designated to provide automobile or van transportation to or from the ministry. The driver must:

1) Be at least 21 years old; and
2) Have a valid state driver’s license, qualified for the vehicle being operated; and
3) Have no record of convictions for the past five years for drunken driving, driving under the influence, driving with a suspended or revoked license or reckless endangerment; and
4) Have proof of insurance; and
5) Complete a Harvest Chapel driver information form and receive authorization to drive; and
6) Never be alone in a vehicle with a child not his own.
7) All passengers must wear seat belts at all times. Children 8 and under must be in an approved car seat or booster seat, whichever is appropriate for their age.
Gifts
No staff, either compensated or volunteer, are to give gifts to individual children or youth without the prior knowledge of the parent(s) or responsible leadership. Because gift giving can be a form of buying loyalty or silence, gift giving should be done on a group basis, or for special occasions only. Gifts may not be elaborate, but should be modest and appropriate to the occasion.

Overnight Trips
Situations where staff members are taking children or youth out of the area for long periods of time, or for overnight outings, are to be carefully planned. Only known, proven staff will be permitted to sponsor/chaperone the trips. New staff or volunteers may be used as additional sponsors, but shall not be left alone with the children or youth in a situation where there are no other staff members to observe. In no circumstance will one adult be allowed to take children or youth on an overnight outing.

Overnight events that are attended by students of both genders must also be chaperoned by adults of both genders. Two adults must be present in each sleeping area; males only in male sleeping areas and females only in female sleeping areas. Each gender must have separate sleeping areas.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO ABUSE

If Harvest Chapel receives an allegation of child abuse it will respond with the utmost concern to the victim, parent, or other party making such an allegation. The accused will be treated with dignity and support. Without clear and convincing evidence to the contrary, Harvest Chapel’s personnel will assume that such complaints are made in good faith. Persons making such complaints should have no doubt that Harvest Chapel takes them seriously and will take appropriate action.

When it becomes necessary to report suspected child abuse or neglect, the protection of the child or youth must be the most important concern. It is the legal responsibility of any person with responsibility for the care of children/youth to report all cases of child abuse they observe, and further, to report visible signs of alleged abuse. Failure to report could lead to liability on the part of the ministry, the observer, or both. Harvest Chapel has determined that it is the responsibility of the volunteer servants to report all cases of suspected child abuse to the proper legal authorities. While the confidentiality of the pastor/parishioner relationship is very important, reporting reasonable suspicion of child abuse has the potential for helping individuals receive help for a previous problem and may prevent further harm to a child, that person or others.

What is Reasonable Suspicion?
Reasonable suspicion means that there is credible evidence or a discrepant or inconsistent history in explaining a child’s suspected abuse.

A report based on reasonable suspicion does not require proof that abuse or neglect has actually occurred or that the reporter witnessed the incident in question. Reporting is not a determination that child abuse or neglect has actually occurred; rather, it is a request for an assessment of the condition of a child.

Guidelines for Reporting Child Abuse
Because we believe children and youth are our most important concern, Harvest Chapel has adopted the following guidelines for reporting:

1) Treat each allegation of child abuse seriously.
2) Do not confront the accused until the safety of the child or youth is secured.
3) Attempt to assure the safety and protection of persons who have been harmed.
4) Pray for the ministry and all persons affected by the allegation.
5) Immediately begin documenting all procedures observed in handling the allegation.
6) Immediately notify the Senior Pastor, who will initiate an internal investigation of the allegations within 24 hours of notice, and immediately notify the appropriate state office of the allegation, and the parents of the child or youth, if it is not known that they have previous knowledge of the allegations. They will also notify the ministry’s insurance company. If the abuse allegation does not implicate a ministry staff member or ministry volunteer, this step may be omitted.

7) Treat the accused with dignity and support. If the accused has assigned duties, volunteer or compensated within the church, that person must be temporarily relieved of their duties until the investigation is concluded.

8) The Senior Pastor should extend whatever care and resources necessary. In providing care to the alleged victim and the accused and their families, the Senior Pastor should under no circumstances be drawn into a discussion of the truth or falsity or the allegation which could contaminate an official investigation. Do not assign blame or take any steps that involve establishing or negating the allegation.

9) It is appropriate to show care and comfort for the alleged victim. This should be the pastoral objective from the moment the allegation is received or otherwise made known.

10) Observe confidentiality for both the alleged victim and the accused until advised to the contrary by the Senior Pastor.

11) Do not prejudge the situation, but take the allegations seriously and reach out to the alleged victim and his or her family. Showing care and support help to prevent further hurt. Extend whatever pastoral resources are needed. Remember that the care and safety of the alleged victim is the first priority. In some situations, ministries have responded in a negative or non-supportive manner to the alleged victim. This can increase the anger and pain of the alleged victim and his or her family. Further reconciliation can then be more difficult and the possibility of damaging litigation increases.

12) If the media or other parties contact a ministry official about a pending allegation of child abuse, DO NOT MAKE ANY COMMENTS, they should be referred to the Senior Pastor. Only the Senior Pastor or their designee should make comments about the allegations. The Senior Pastor will use the text of a prepared public statement to answer the press and to convey news to the congregation. The prepared statement shall be made only after consultation with the ministry’s attorney and will include the steps the ministry has taken to protect children, such as the development and implementation of this manual, and the care and concern the ministry has for all parties involved. The privacy and confidentiality of all involved shall continue to be of primary concern.

13) First contact the Senior Pastor should you have reasonable suspicion of child abuse. After doing so, you may be referred to the following important phone number:

   National Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-4-A-CHILD
All children and youth workers at WHCC should be aware of the symptoms of child sexual abuse and teen depression and suicide.
SYMPTOMS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

If you suspect a child or youth to be the victim of sexual abuse, please notify one of the department heads or pastors as soon as possible. We will assist you in filing the appropriate reports to investigate the child’s situation.

Be familiar with signs and symptoms of sexual abuse, but use caution when identifying them. Other trauma in a child’s life may cause similar symptoms. Not any one indicator would confirm sexual abuse, but identification of several should cause concern. Allow each indicator to raise a "red flag" in your mind.

Child sexual abuse is: any sexual activity with a child (anyone under the age of 18), whether in the home, a day care situation, or any other setting. The abuser may be an adult, an adolescent or another child, known or unknown to the victim.

Child sexual abuse can be violent or nonviolent. All child sexual abuse is an exploitation of a child's vulnerability and powerlessness in which the abuser is fully responsible for the actions.

Child sexual abuse is CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR that involves children in sexual behaviors for which they are not personally, socially and developmentally ready.

Child sexual abuse includes behaviors that include touching and non-touching aspects:

**Nontouching**
- verbal comments
- exhibitionism
- obscene phone calls
- allowing children to witness sexual acts
- allowing children to witness or view pornographic material

**Touching**
- fondling
- oral, genital and anal penetration
- intercourse
- forcible rape

Physical signs may include lacerations and bruises.

Older children may react in these ways:
- depression
- poor self-image
- chemical abuse
- suicide attempts
- limited social life
- truancy
- recurrent infections, cramping or abdominal pains, muscle aches, dizziness, gagging, headaches
- eating disorders such as anorexia, obesity, sudden weight gain and sudden weight loss
- change in school performance
- running away or aversion toward going home
- self-mutilations such as cutting, burning, tattooing
- overtly seductive behavior/promiscuity/prostitution
- attention-getting or delinquent behavior

Young children may exhibit these signs:
- bed-wetting
- fecal soiling
- excessive masturbation
- clinging/whining
- regression to more infantile behavior
- withdrawal
- explicit sexual knowledge, behavior or language unusual for the child’s age
- frequent genital infections
- unexplained gagging
- agitation, hyperactivity, irritability
- aggressiveness
- loss of appetite
- nightmares and other sleeping disturbances

Verbal signs may include statements similar to these:
- I don’t like [a particular person]
- I don’t like to be alone with [a particular person]
- [A particular person] fooled around with me
- [A particular person] does things to me when we are alone
SYMPTOMS OF TEEN DEPRESSION

What happens prior to the tragedy of a teenager who puts a gun to his head or a razor blade to his wrist? Usually, this child has been enveloped by feelings of despair -- a sense of being helpless and hopeless, a belief that no way out exists other than death.

For some this attitude develops gradually over an extended period of time. For others, especially those with an impulsive personality or those involved in alcohol and/or drug abuse, the decision can be made more rapidly.

By being alert to the warning signals exhibited by distressed adolescents, parents, teachers, and friends can act quickly and knowledgeably to avert the suicidal action. Be familiar with signs and symptoms of teen depression, but use caution when identifying them. Other trauma in a child's life may cause similar symptoms. Not any one indicator would confirm teen depression or suicidal behavior, but identification of several should cause concern. Allow each indicator to raise a "red flag" in your mind.

The warning signals are disguised cries for help made by confused and desperate teens.

If someone is considering suicide, you may be able to identify several of the following behaviors:

- Is the person suffering a severe depression that seems to be continuing and that may have been caused by a serious loss of some sort (loss of a parents or friend, breakup of a romance, academic or social failure, etc.)?
- Is the person suddenly backing off from people and formerly enjoyable activities -- becoming increasingly isolated and unwilling to participate or talk things over?
- Is the person giving away prized possessions?
- Is the person suddenly doing poorly in school?
- Is the person writing or making statements that suggest a wish to die, or to escape, or that suggest a final departure ("I wish I were dead" . . . "Who needs this world" . . . "Soon it'll be all over" . . . "I can't take any more of this" . . . "You won't have to worry about me much longer").
- Does the person seem unusually hostile and aggressive, getting into physical fights and uncharacteristically defying those in authority?
- Has the person threatened to commit suicide?
- Has the person attempted suicide in the past?
- Is the person acting in a strange manner, behaving illogically and seemingly out of touch with reality?
- Is the person suddenly very happy after a prolonged episode of depression and despair? (Sometimes the reason the depression has lifted is the person has decided to go ahead with the suicide attempt.)
- Is there deterioration in the person's personal appearance and grooming?
- Are there changes in eating and sleeping habits?
- Are there abrupt mood swings or problems with concentration?
- Is there substance abuse (alcohol and/or drug)?
- Does the person exhibit hopelessness or impulsiveness, or have an obsession with death -- wishing death, or drawing up a will?
FORM I

SCREENING FORM FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH WORKERS
Harvest Chapel

Note: Background checks required on all applicants 18 years old and older.

This form is to be completed by all applicants for any position (volunteer or compensated) involving the supervision or custody of minors. It is being used to help Harvest Chapel provide a safe and secure environment for the children and youth who participate in our programs and use our facilities. All of the pastors on staff at Harvest Chapel and designated department heads hold strict confidentiality; however, they hold the option to confer with the Senior or Assistant Pastor if any question over fitness of service arises. If therefore, a pastor or director needs to discuss this application and disclaimer with a pastor other than the Senior or Assistant Pastor, he will ask your permission before doing so. The Senior or Assistant Pastor will also opt to discuss such issues with another pastor if necessary. This application will be reviewed and references may be called.

The disturbing and traumatic rise of physical and sexual abuse of children has claimed the attention of our nation and our society. The following policies reflect Harvest Chapel’s commitment to providing care of all children, youth, volunteers, and staff who participate in church sponsored activities.

A. Persons who have been convicted of either child sexual or physical abuse should not serve in any church sponsored activity or program for children or youth.

B. Survivors of childhood sexual or physical abuse need the love and acceptance of this church family. Individuals who have such a history should discuss this with a pastor before engaging in any youth or children's ministry.

C. Volunteers working with children or youth must have been actively involved at Harvest Chapel for a minimum of one year.

D. Persons who work with children or youth should observe our “Two Adult Rule” (pages 9 & 10 of this handbook) Leaders should not be alone with children or youth without another adult present.

E. Anyone witnessing or suspecting any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate should promptly report it to a children’s ministry coordinator or a church pastor.

Please answer each question below. Your responses will be kept confidential.

1. Do you agree to observe all church policies and procedures (as outlined above and in the "Children and Youth Ministry Worker’s Handbook" and the “Child Abuse Prevention and Procedures Manual”) regarding working with children or youth?
   ______ YES  ______ NO

2. Have you ever been accused, convicted of, or pleaded guilty to a crime of abuse?
   ______ YES  ______ NO

3. Have you ever been accused, convicted of, or pleaded guilty to any sexually related crimes?
   ______ YES  ______ NO

4. Are there any circumstances involving your lifestyle or your background that would call into question your ability to work with children or youth?
   ______ YES  ______ NO

5. Were you a victim of abuse or molestation while a minor?
   ______ YES  ______ NO
If you prefer, you may refuse to answer questions #4 and #5, or you may discuss your answer in confidence with a member of Harvest Chapel’s pastoral staff rather than answering it on the form. Answering yes, or leaving questions #4 and #5 unanswered, will not disqualify you for ministry to children or youth at Harvest Chapel.

I have read the above policy and agree to observe the safeguards listed.

________________________________________________________________________
(Signature)

________________________________________________________________________
(Printed name) (Date)

________________________________________________________________________
(Address) (Phone)
FORM II

APPLICATION – EMPLOYED AND VOLUNTEER WORKERS
Harvest Chapel

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any position (volunteer or compensated) involving the supervision or custody of minors. This is not an employment application form. Persons seeking a position in the church as a paid employee will be required to complete an employment application in addition to this screening form. It is being used to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our ministry programs and use our facilities. If you prefer not to answer any of the questions in this application, please leave it blank and the Coordinator of the ministry you are applying in will discuss these questions with you.

1. Name______________________________________
   First       Middle       Last
   Address ______________________________________
   Telephone (___) ______________________________
   Work Phone (___) ______________________________
   May we call you at work?__________________________
   Best time to call:______________________________
   Occupation_______________________________
   Time at current address ____yrs. ____mos.
   Employer_____________________________________
   Are you 18 years of age or older? ___________________________ Age:_____________
   Marital Status___________________________
   Spouse’s name__________________________
   Is your spouse supportive and encouraging to you in your desire to be involved with children?
   Yes______ No______
   If you are not married, are you committed to sexually purity in all your relationships? Yes_______ No________
   Children _________________________________________________________________________
   Names and ages
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   Please indicate the type of youth or children’s ministry you desire to help in:
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

What date would you be available to begin? ____/____/____

Children’s Ministry volunteers are asked to commit to serving within the children’s ministry until the Lord leads them to serve in a different ministry. We ask that you commit to a year initially, and reevaluate the commitment yearly, or as the Lord leads. We would love to have you serve in the Children’s Ministry as long as you feel the Lord is calling you here.

2. Can you make a one year commitment to the Children’s Ministry?
   Yes _____ No ______
FORM II  Page 2

3. Explanation of why applicant desires to work with children in the church?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

4. Because you are a role model, the following questions are important to consider:
   Based on the pace of your life and all its priorities, what are some of the possible conflicts you may need to
   consider because of the responsibility of serving in this ministry?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

5. Is your desire for godliness in your own life an example for children to follow? Yes______ No________

6. List dates of salvation and baptism experiences. Give a brief description of your relationship with the Lord.
   Salvation___________________Water Baptism______________________ Holy Spirit Baptism____________________

7. To be most effective in ministry, one needs a strong spiritual life. Describe your spiritual walk with the Lord
   (prayer life, Bible reading habits, church attendance, etc)

____________________________________________________________________________________________

8. How long have you been attending Harvest Chapel? Please list the services you regularly attend.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Attendance</th>
<th>Services Regularly Attended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

9. What ministries are you currently involved in at Harvest Chapel?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

10. List all previous church and non-church work involving children and/or youth in which you have participated.
    Experience | Organization | Dates | Supervisor
    |             |              |       |

11. Church leadership experience, prior church volunteer experience. Where, when, and what position?
    Position | Church Name | Dates | Supervisor
    |            |       |       |

12. List all churches attended in the past 10 years with reason for leaving.
    Church Name | City, State | Reason for leaving | Dates attended
    |             |              |                   |
13. Previous Pastor’s Name, Church Name, and Phone Number, if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pastor’s Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

14. Spiritual gifts, training, education or other factors that have prepared you to work with children or youth.

__________________________________________________________________________

15. Do you have medical training, first aid, or CPR training? Yes_______ No_______

Training and date received: ________________________________________________

16. Three personal references (not relatives or employers). Name, address and phone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address, City, and State</th>
<th>Phone with area code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>(____)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Do you use or have you ever been convicted for use or sale of illegal drugs? (Circle) YES or NO?

18. Have you ever been hospitalized or treated for alcohol or substance abuse?

(Circle) YES or NO? If yes, dates and substance: __________________________________

19. Do you have any physical, mental or emotional handicaps or limitations that would prevent you from performing certain types of activities? (Circle) YES or NO? If yes, please explain.

__________________________________________________________________________

20. Have you ever been arrested for a criminal offense excluding minor traffic violations?

(Circle) YES or NO? If yes, please explain including dates.

__________________________________________________________________________

21. Previous place of employment if less that 5 years on current job. Include name of employer, address, and phone number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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</table>
FORM II Page 4

APPLICANT’S STATEMENT
Harvest Chapel

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references, churches, employers or other organizations or individuals listed in this application to give you information and opinions they may have regarding my character and fitness for children/youth work and I release all such references from furnishing such evaluations to you. I waive any right that I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me in this application.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the Bylaws, Statement of Faith and practice and policies of this church and to refrain from any unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the church.

I understand that the church does not provide any insurance or legal representation to me in the event that I am personally accused of any sexual abuse or misconduct.

Please initial all that apply:

- I have received and read the “Children and Youth Ministry Worker’s Handbook”. ________

- I have received, read and understand this church’s sexual abuse prevention plan as defined in the pages entitled “Child Abuse Prevention and Procedures Manual” included in the “Children and Youth Ministry Worker’s Handbook”. ________

- As a volunteer worker in the children/youth program, I agree to observe and abide by the policies and safeguard measures of the church. ________

This statement should be signed and dated by the applicant.

__________________________
Printed Name of Applicant

__________________________
Applicant’s Signature

__________________________
Date

__________________________
Received by:

__________________________
Date
REQUEST FOR CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK AND AUTHORIZATION
Harvest Chapel

NOTICE TO VOLUNTEERS REGARDING BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION

I understand that a consumer report (background screening report) and/or an investigative consumer report (reference checks and/or interviews) that may include information from public or private sources regarding my character, driving records, criminal history, court records (both civil and criminal), qualifications and experience, work habits, and/or other information relevant to my volunteer service may be obtained in connection with my application as a volunteer with Harvest Chapel.

I understand that, if I am approved for volunteer service by Harvest Chapel, this background check authorization will be kept on file and may be used at any time during my service to procure further information when, in the judgment of Harvest Chapel, such may be necessary.

I hereby release and discharge to the extent permitted by law, Harvest Chapel, its employees, any individual or agency obtaining information for Harvest Chapel, and any personal or professional reference, from any and all claims, damages, losses, liabilities, costs, or other expenses arising from the retrieving, reporting and/or disclosure of information in connection with this background investigation.

I understand that I am volunteering my services and declare in no way shall I be considered an employee or subcontractor or independent contractor of Harvest Chapel.

By signing below, I, __________________________, have read, understand and consent to the above. I further authorize that a photographic copy or a telephonic facsimile of this document shall be valid for purposes present and future. My signature below certifies that all information I have provided in connection with this background check is true, accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

I understand that I have specific prescribed rights as a consumer under the Fair Credit Reporting Act and may have additional rights under relevant state laws. I hereby certify that I have read the Summary of Rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act located at http://www.safehiringsolutions.com/pdfs/FCRAsummary.pdf

AUTHORIZATION

Print Name (last, first, middle) ____________________________ Social Security Number ____________________________

Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY) ____________________________ Drivers License Number ____________________________

(For ID Purposes Only) Drivers License State ____________________________

Any other names I have been known by: ____________________________

Current Address: ____________________________

Previous Addresses (Last 10 Years) ____________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________
Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

As you know, to facilitate the growth of our young people into mature Christians, we use the Rules and Consequences listed in our “Children and Youth Ministry Handbook” in all of our activities here at church. If a young person has repeatedly broken a rule in one of our activities, this form is sent home to the parents so they are aware of their child’s behavior and know what actions we have taken to resolve the problem.

I have listed below the specific nature of the problem and the disciplinary action I have taken so far in this situation. Please sign and return this form to me or the church office so I know you are aware of your child’s behavior. Please feel free to call me if you have questions.

Your child may return to class the next class time after this form is signed and returned. However, if the problem continues after this course of action, there will be a need to discuss the extent of their involvement in classes and other activities with the department supervisor.

Sincerely yours,

___________________________________
Name

___________________________________
Phone

___________________________________
Date

Student’s Name __________________________________________________________

Nature of problem:

Disciplinary action taken to this point:

Parents’ comments:

___________________________________  _____________________________________
(Parent’s/guardian’s signature)  (Date)
FORM V

VISITOR’S REQUEST TO VISIT
A CHILDREN’S OR YOUTH MINISTRY CLASSROOM OR EVENT
Harvest Chapel

Date:

Class or Event:

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this form.

In an effort to keep our children and youth safe, we require that visits to classrooms and events be limited to the parents who have a child or youth in that particular class. Any visits by individuals not involved in the class or event other than a parent or guardian must be approved by the Supervisor of the Children or Youth Department prior to the visit. Teachers are required to refuse admittance to anyone who does not have this permission. Thank you for understanding and complying with our request to fill out this form.

Name

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Home Phone #            Cell Phone #

Reason for Visiting:

I understand that I will be observing the class or event in progress. I also understand that I am not to disrupt the class environment by my presence, and I agree to respect the person in charge of the class or event and comply with their requests while visiting.

____________________________________  __________________________________
Signature of Visitor                      Date

Return this completed form to the Children’s Ministry Coordinator. Upon approval you will be escorted to the classroom or event.
Medical Action Plan

Child’s Name:__________________________________________________________

Allergy/Allergies:_______________________________________________________

Medical Condition:______________________________________________________

Actions Parent/Doctor request we take if your child is experiencing medical difficulty with the condition stated above:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Parent/Doctor Signature:_________________________ Date: __________

Parent/Doctor Signature:_________________________ Date: __________