

**THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE EXCERPTED FROM CBC'S SEXUAL ABUSE POLICY MANUAL. THIS MANUAL IS REQUIRED READING FOR ALL PERSONNEL WORKING IN PROXIMITY TO MINORS AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS. ALL PERSONNEL MUST SIGN AN AGREEMENT TO UNDERSTAND, UPHOLD, AND ABIDE BY OUR SEXUAL ABUSE POLICIES. A FULL MANUAL IS AVAILABLE. PLEASE SEE A STAFF MEMBER TO ACQUIRE OUR COMPLETE MANUAL.**

## **Overview of the Calvary Baptist Church Safety System**

Because we love children and families, and desire to protect them, Calvary Baptist Church requires all staff members and volunteers working with children or students (and other vulnerable populations) to complete **4 SAFETY STEPS** before ministry work or volunteer placements begin.

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

Calvary Baptist Church (CBC) policies and procedures require that staff members and volunteers avoid abusive or suspicious behavior of any kind. Staff members and volunteers are required to report any policy violations to a supervisor, Ministerial Staff member, or a member of the Calvary Baptist Church Safety Committee. Staff members and volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in 'grooming' a child for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or "gatekeeper"), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.

To equip Calvary Baptist Church staff members and volunteers with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, **Calvary Baptist Church requires all staff members and volunteers to complete MinistrySafe sexual abuse awareness training** (live or online at [www.MinistrySafe.com](http://www.MinistrySafe.com)). This training will be renewed every year.

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

Staff members and volunteers are required to complete the CBC Screening Process, which requires a staff member or volunteer to:

- complete an Employment Application (employees only)
  - complete the Safety Application (employees and volunteers)
  - complete a face-to-face interview (employees and volunteers)
  - provide references to be checked (employees and volunteers)
- \*a volunteer must attend CBC for six months before being eligible to serve in positions providing access to children, students or vulnerable populations.

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

Staff members and volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page indicating that he or she has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

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

CBC requires that all staff members and volunteers working or volunteering in children's or student activities or in proximity to children or student ministries undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required. Background checks are performed as needed, usually every three years, but may be performed more frequently.

# **Child and Student Safety Policy**

## **ABUSE TOLERANCE**

Calvary Baptist Church has a **zero tolerance for abuse** in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff and volunteer at CBC to act in the best interest of all children and youth in every program.

In the event that staff or 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 report** their observations to their Ministry Director, the Children's Minister, Student Minister, or the Senior Pastor.

Any abuse, physical or sexual, that is immediately witnessed by volunteer or paid personnel **MUST** be reported to legal authorities. The Children's or Student Minister as well as the Senior Pastor **MUST** be informed of this report. If the volunteer or paid personnel is afraid or unwilling to report the abuse, the Children's Minister, Student Minister, or Senior Pastor **will** report the abuse. We will not be derelict in our duty to protect children and to bring abuse to light to the proper authorities. We cover the issue of reporting in detail in the sections below.

## **REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS**

Calvary Baptist Church is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, 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 CBC Safety Committee and the Police Department, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency.

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 the CBC Safety Committee. Because sexual abusers "groom" children for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to groom a child for sexual abuse. We must also realize that "grooming" occurs at the adult level as well, as abusers attempt to win the trust of authorities and gatekeepers within the Church. Staff members and volunteers involved in reporting are asked to be prepared to report grooming behavior, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to a supervisor or a member of the CBC Safety Committee following reports to proper authorities and senior staff members. This is to ensure our church's governing bodies and personnel will review each case and use information to educate us in future situations.

## **ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES**

Calvary Baptist Church staff members and volunteers who supervise other staff members or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all CBC policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from Children's Ministry, Student Ministry, and Adult Ministry positions for both volunteers and staff members. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the Senior Pastor, Ministerial Staff or Ministry Directors, Personnel Committee, Deacons, or any other governing body of Calvary Baptist Church. We will stand united as church leaders and Christ followers in taking action against sex abuse in our congregation.

# **Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse**

## **REPORTING VIOLATION OF POLICY**

In order to maintain a safe environment for our children, Calvary Baptist Church staff members and 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 Children's Minister, Student Minister, or the Senior Pastor.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF 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 a ministry leadership or volunteer role, specifically Children's Ministries, Student Ministries or any ministry or event in which children, students or vulnerable populations might be involved. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective agencies.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act should be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves children, students or vulnerable populations at Calvary Baptist Church. If the person is a staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from Calvary Baptist Church.

**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 or employee.** Volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any activities involving children, students or vulnerable populations at Calvary Baptist Church.

## **REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

Staff members and volunteers at Calvary Baptist Church are required to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect, or any inappropriate behavior of a colleague or co-worker, to the immediate supervisor of the area, the Children's Minister, Student Minister or the Senior Pastor.

Texas law requires that any person 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. State laws vary concerning mandatory reporters and mandatory reporting requirements. Teachers, nurses and day care employees, for example, are usually listed as mandatory reporters. Further, state laws are changing reporting requirements – usually expanding the list of mandatory reporters and shortening the 'reasonable' time periods for a report. In 2013, the state of Texas modified Chapter 261.101(b) of the Texas Family Code (reporting statute) such that 'professionals' (teachers, nurses, doctors, day care employees, more) must personally make a report to the appropriate authorities ... "a professional may not delegate to or rely on another person to make the report."

**An employee or volunteer will immediately notify an immediate supervisor, Ministry Director, Children's Minister, Student Minister or Senior Pastor. Together with the immediate supervisor, Ministry Director, Children's Minister, Student Minister or Senior Pastor, the employee or volunteer will make a report to the appropriate Texas state authorities. In no way does any provision in this policy discourage any employee or volunteer from reporting a suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate Texas authorities on their own.**

Staff members and volunteers are **required** to verbally report an incident to supervisory staff as soon as possible after the incident. After receiving a report from a staff member or volunteer in Children's or Student Ministries, the Children's Minister, Student Minister or Senior Pastor will speak with the person or volunteer to whom the child spoke in order to get detailed information about the entire conversation. The Senior Pastor will be notified as soon as reasonably possible.

If appropriate, the Children's Minister, Student Minister or the Senior Pastor will inform the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (1-800-252-5400), or Child Protective Services (817-321-8680). A report may also be made online at <https://www.txabusehotline.org>.

This may be made by the primary reporter or the supervising minister/staff person. Response time for Texas DFPS is 24 hours.

## **RESPONSE TO REPORT OF ABUSE**

When a report of abuse is made, swift and appropriate action on behalf of the church occurs and will involve most of the following governing entities within the CBC church body: The Senior Pastor, Children's Minister, Student Minister, Ministry Director, Deacons, Personnel Committee, or the Calvary Baptist Church Safety Committee.