

# CHILD PROTECTION CODE OF CONDUCT

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

*The Youth Leaders, Teachers, and Workers of Northwest Baptist Church are committed to providing an environment which promotes the welfare of all children and that protects them from harm. We seek to share the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ with the children, but we also desire to see them develop socially as well as spiritually.*

*We wish to ensure that all children participate in the various youth activities and classes in an enjoyable and safe environment which encourages them to have fun, feel valued and learn from the Word of God.*

*The Youth Leaders, Teachers, and Workers of Northwest Baptist Church fully recognise and accept their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues, which cause children harm, and they seek to maintain a safe environment for them. We are committed to reviewing our Child Protection Policy, our procedures and practice at regular intervals to ensure a safe environment for all children is maintained.*

*We endeavour to safeguard children by:*

- Following carefully the procedures in the Child Protection Policy for recruitment and selection of the Youth Leaders, Teachers, and Workers.*
- Providing Youth Leaders, Teachers, and Workers with information, supervision, support, and training concerning child protection and good practice with children, parents and fellow leaders, teachers, and workers.*
- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for leaders, teachers, workers, and children in our care.*
- Sharing information about concerns with the relevant agencies that need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.*
- Ensuring that the Northwest Baptist Church Child Protection Policy is adhered to by all Youth Leaders, Teachers, Workers, and Church members who have access to children.*

## CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR YOUTH LEADERS, TEACHERS, & WORKERS

**The following guidelines concerning contact with children will reduce likely situations for the abuse of children, but will also protect Youth Leaders from false accusations.**

### PRIVATE CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

1. Youth Leaders, Teachers, and Workers should never be in a private room with an individual child unless in unavoidable circumstances. No photographs or video recordings should ever be taken of an individual child. Group photographs are permitted with the consent of the Designated Officer or in their absence the Deputy Designated Officer, unless parents or guardians object to this.
2. If there is an activity e.g. crafts in a private room, then other children should be present, and if it is possible then at least one other leader should be present.
3. The private room should have visual access, and if this is not possible then the door should be open at all times.
4. Youth Leaders, Teachers, and Workers should never take children in a car, however short, unless consent has been given by the child's parents/guardians AND the Designated Officer. This means that if a Youth Leader has been given consent by a parent/guardian to transport their child, the Youth Leader still must ensure that the Designated Officer or in their absence the Deputy Designated Officer is aware of the transport arrangements and he/she has consented to it.
5. Youth Leaders, Teachers, and Workers should never take children to their home unless in unavoidable circumstances e.g. child's parents had to go to hospital, and only with the consent of the parents/guardians AND the Designated Officer.

# CHILD PROTECTION CODE OF CONDUCT

## PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

1. Make NO unnecessary physical contact with children at any time. This includes playing with children, and children sitting on a leader's knee.
2. There are occasions when a child will touch a leader or jump on a leader's knee when they are unaware. In these circumstances the Youth Leader, Teacher, or Worker can physically contact the child to ensure the child is not touching them anymore.
3. In emergency or distressing situations e.g. fire, bomb, do not feel inhibited in providing physical comfort to a child if consent is given.
4. Never touch a child if they have indicated that they would feel uncomfortable with such contact.
5. Never punish a child physically for misbehaviour, unless a child needs physically restrained in an extraordinary circumstance e.g. uncontrollable behaviour.
6. Administer first aid in the presence of other leaders and children; however do not hesitate to provide first aid in an emergency if another person is not present. Contact parents/guardians prior to administering first aid, unless in an emergency. First aid should be administered by a qualified person, if at all possible.
7. Following any incident where a leader feels that their actions may be misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted to the Designated Officer and/or the Pastor.

## PERSONAL CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

1. Always deal appropriately with children taking into consideration their age, sex, and maturity e.g. do not talk about adult issues with younger children.
2. Always ensure that the appropriate adult/child ratios are maintained. These are: 0-2 years – 1 Leader to 3 children, 2-3 years – 1 Leader to 4 children, 3-7 years – 1 Leader to 8 children, 8 and over – 2 Leaders (male and female) for every 20 children.
3. Never give one child consistently more attention than the other children, which would only give rise to comment or speculation, especially if the young person is a teenager.
4. Never do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves e.g. helping a child at the toilet. In some circumstances it may be necessary to do things of a personal nature for children who are very young or children with a disability such as assisting them if they are sick. If in an emergency situation which requires this type of help, parents should be informed, as soon as reasonably possible e.g. when a parent comes to pick up a child.
5. Be careful of body language and demeanour when dealing with children e.g. getting too close when conversing with children.
6. Youth Leaders must never let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded. If a child makes an allegation or complaint, this must be recorded on a "*Northwest Baptist Church Complaints Form.*"

**It would be impossible to have guidelines for every circumstance, so each leader should exercise their personal judgment and common sense in every situation.**

# CHILD PROTECTION CODE OF CONDUCT

## CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The members of Northwest Baptist Church particularly the Pastor and the Youth Leaders desire that all children in their care are protected, and that all children enjoy the activities organised by the Church in a safe and secure environment. Youth Leaders must respect and listen to children and ensure that they deal appropriately with each individual child with loving care and concern. The rules that apply to the children/young people also apply to the Youth Leaders e.g. do not damage the Church building or the Church equipment.

However, there are certain rules which children must keep to ensure that all children enjoy the activities organised by the Church, and to ensure the safety and security of all children in the care of the Church. The following rules highlight what is viewed as unacceptable behaviour in the various Youth Ministries of Northwest Baptist Church.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL & BIBLE CLASS RULES

1. Stay in the Church Building and your designated Sunday School class area.
2. Listen to, and respect the rules made by the Sunday School Teachers.
3. Participate to the best of your ability in the Sunday School lesson.
4. Do not swear or blaspheme (*take the Lord's name in vain*) at any time.
5. Do not wear inappropriate clothing.
6. Do not fight with fellow pupils or with Sunday School Teachers.
7. Do not touch other children or Sunday School Teachers inappropriately.
8. Do not abuse other children verbally e.g. racist remarks, name calling.
9. Do not damage the Church building or the Church equipment.

### YOUTH CLUB RULES

1. Stay in the Church building during the Youth Club unless participating in an outdoor activity organised by a Youth Leader. If so, stay in the designated outdoor activity area.
2. Listen to, and respect the rules made by the Youth Leaders.
3. Participate to the best of your ability in the Youth Club activities e.g. crafts, and organised games.
4. Only participate in activities and games which are organised and allowed by Youth Leaders.
5. Do not swear or blaspheme (*take the Lord's name in vain*) at any time.
6. Do not wear inappropriate clothing.
7. Do not fight with other children/young people or with the Youth Leaders.
8. Do not touch other children or Youth Leaders inappropriately.
9. Do not abuse other children verbally e.g. racist remarks, name calling.
10. Do not make sexually suggestive comments about or to other young people.
11. Do not engage in any sexually provocative games.
12. Do not damage the Church building or the Church equipment.
13. Should there be activities for the Youth Club outside of the Church e.g. a joint Youth Club in another Church, then the rules for day trips will apply e.g. do not damage transport organised by the Youth Leaders etc.

# CHILD PROTECTION CODE OF CONDUCT

## TRANSPORT RULES

The Northwest Baptist Church Code of Behaviour for Youth Leaders, Teachers, and Workers concerning transport is as follows:

Youth Leaders, Teachers, and Workers should never take children in a car, however short, unless consent has been given by the child's parents/guardians AND the Designated Officer. This means that if a Youth Leader has been given consent by a parent/guardian to transport their child, the Youth Leader still must ensure that the Designated Officer or in their absence the Deputy Designated Officer is aware of the transport arrangements and he/she has consented to it.

It is important to re-iterate the importance of having the consent of a child's parent/guardian, and the consent of the Designated Officer or in their absence the Deputy Designated Officer, before any Youth Leader, Teacher, or Worker transports a child in their car or in the Church transport.

### NORTHWEST BAPTIST CHURCH TRANSPORT POLICY

1. The policy of Northwest Baptist Church is that a "*Northwest Baptist Church Parental Consent and Information Form*" should be completed by a parent/guardian of any child that receives regular transport for any Church activities with permission being given for transport. Regular transport would include once a week or even once a month.
2. The policy of Northwest Baptist Church is that verbal consent must be given by a parent/guardian of any child that receives irregular transport for any Church activities. Irregular transport would be a child who needs a one off lift to a Church activity in an unavoidable circumstance e.g. because a parent's car had broken down.
3. In the case of irregular day trips or residentials, because they are an organised Church activity then a "*Northwest Baptist Church Parental Consent and Information Form*" should be completed by a parent/guardian of any child that requires transport for such an event with permission being given for transport.
4. The policy of Northwest Baptist Church is that no child should be transported by a Youth Leader, Teacher, or Worker alone. All transport must be supervised taking into consideration the amount of children being transported. THE MINIMUM is that at least two leaders/supervisors should be present during all transportation (the driver can count as a leader/supervisor). If there are only two leaders/supervisors present it would be preferable although not vital if they were not a married couple.
5. Whatever transport for children is being used, the Pastor or the Designated Officer must ensure that the driver has a valid driver's licence, and that they have insurance coverage that is adequate and up to date. The road tax and the MOT of the vehicles used must also be up to date.
6. All drivers must be aware of their responsibilities towards their passengers, as well as the importance of not exceeding the speed limits.
7. All children must have an individual seat (no child should sit on another child's knee etc.), and all children must wear an individual seat belt (under no circumstances should one seat belt be used for more than one child).
8. Private cars can be used to transport children for Sunday School and other youth activities as long as there is no earthly reward for the driver e.g. money, and as long as all of the above procedures are adhered to.

**NOTE: In a private car, the driver is legally responsible to ensure that seat belts are worn.**

**It would be impossible to provide guidelines for every eventuality so Northwest Baptist Church advises all Youth Leaders, Teachers, and Workers to exercise common sense when dealing with transport arrangements. The Church policies are in place to protect both the children and the Youth Leaders, Teachers, and Workers.**

# CHILD PROTECTION CODE OF CONDUCT

## SANCTIONS

**When the policies of the Northwest Baptist Church Child Protection Policy are broken by Youth Leaders, Teachers, Workers or children then the Pastor and the Designated Officer of the Church must take disciplinary action (sanctions) against the individual (s) involved.**

### SANCTIONS AGAINST SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS/YOUTH LEADERS

1. For a minor oversight of the Northwest Baptist Church Child Protection Policy by a Youth Leader, Teacher, or Worker e.g. not informing the Designated Officer of a particular transport arrangement, the Sunday School Teacher or Youth Leader will be spoken to and reminded of the Child Protection Policy by either the Pastor or the Designated Officer.
2. For a major breach (e.g. making unnecessary physical contact with a child) or for continual minor breaches the Youth Leader, Teacher, or Worker will not be allowed to participate in any of the Youth ministries again. After this the sanctions against the individual will be in accordance to the disciplinary procedures of the Church Constitution, and any action will be taken by the Pastor and the leadership of the Church.

### SANCTIONS AGAINST CHILDREN

1. If a child/young person breaks one of the rules e.g. not keeping quiet during the epilogue, the Designated Officer or a Youth Leader will verbally warn them not to break the rules again.
2. If a child/young person breaks the rules for a second time e.g. continues to disrupt the epilogue, then the child/young person should be banned from a particular activity within the youth ministry e.g. no table tennis or crafts, or the child/young person could be asked to leave the particular youth ministry for that particular day.
3. If a child breaks the rules for a third time e.g. continues to disrupt the epilogue each time they attend, or if a child misbehaves in a way which is definitely unacceptable e.g. punches another child, then the child/young person should be banned from attending the particular youth ministry until such times as they have given assurances that their behaviour will change.

Obviously our desire is that children attend the various youth ministries and we desire to be patient and understanding with the children. However, there will be times when sanctions need to be taken to protect the other children, and so the particular youth ministry is not completely spoiled by one or two individuals. Again, we urge all Youth Leaders to exercise common sense (don't be too strict or too lenient). Always attempt to understand a child's personality and background, also take into consideration the motives they had when breaking the rule e.g. a child could interrupt during an epilogue because they genuinely want to say something, but a child could interrupt during an epilogue because they genuinely want to disrupt the message. These two situations require different responses and sanctions from the Sunday School Teachers and Youth Leaders.