

SDMI Protection Policy for Children, Youth, and People with Special Needs



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The SDMI Child and Youth Protection Policy was adapted from the original version contained in the Nazarene Compassionate Ministries International Children's Development Centers Manual. We appreciate their generosity in sharing this valuable resource.





NAZARENE SUNDAY SCHOOL AND DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all boys, girls, and adolescents (BGA), as well as those with special needs, in our care and to safeguard them from all forms of harm, both intentional and unintentional. It will also protect our workers from allegations that can arise from careless and unwise behaviors. These guidelines and procedures will direct the interactions of Nazarene Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries (SDMI) staff, workers, partners, sponsors, and other visitors with BGA attending SDMI-supported programs. For the sake of efficiency, the term “worker” will be used throughout the policy to describe all ministry workers with children and youth.

The abuse of children is an abuse of their rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children have the right to a happy, healthy and secure childhood. All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse.

Understanding Sexual Misconduct

While all abuse is harmful, the impact of sexual misconduct involving minors is particularly devastating, far-reaching, and long-lasting. You may be thinking, “Sexual abuse could never happen in our church.” When it comes to sexual abuse, what we don’t know can hurt us. Worse yet, our stereotypes and misconceptions can be tragically harmful. The problem cuts across all lines: economic, cultural, racial, denominational, and gender. According to child protective service agencies:

- 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 5 boys will be sexually abused by the age of 18.
- Over 80 percent of sexual abuse of minors is perpetrated by a known and trusted person.
- Approximately 20 percent of reported sexual abuse cases involve a female perpetrator.

Although no standard “sexual abuser profile” exists, abusers are usually perceived as genuinely “nice” people that most would never suspect of sexual misconduct. A recent survey of registered sex offenders reveals the average sexual abuser to be well-educated and active in church.

The problem is real, and we clearly need to do something. But what?

The terms “sexual abuse,” “sexual misconduct,” “inappropriate sexual behavior,” and “inappropriate sexual conduct” are often used interchangeably. The terms themselves do not make a distinction between prohibited sexual activity between adults and prohibited activity between adults and minors.

Since our focus here is on bringing greater clarity to the issue of protecting minors from sexual exploitation, the phrase “**sexual misconduct**” is used here as an umbrella term for all sexual misconduct involving minors, defined as follows:

Sexual misconduct shall be understood to mean any sexual activity between an adult and a minor or between minors with significant developmental or chronological differences. Sexual misconduct can be physical, verbal, or visual and need not involve penetration, sexual intercourse, or actual physical contact. However, sexual misconduct does not include acts intended for a valid medical purpose or age-appropriate caregiver interactions without a sexual purpose or sexual component.

Consult local laws for a comprehensive list of prohibited acts, and be certain to include those definitions in your church’s documents.

The 7 main elements to our policy are:

1. Theological and Moral Responsibility
2. Establishing and Ensuring a Safe Environment
3. Worker Recruitment
4. Education and Training
5. Code of Conduct
6. Reporting Cases, or Suspected Cases, of Abuse.
7. Information and Evaluation

SDMI Declaration of Commitment

SDMI is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all BGA (boys, girls, and adolescents), and those with special needs. It fully recognizes its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice for and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation, including abuse from other children.

All workers who work with BGA will be required to receive a copy of this policy and agree to abide by its procedures. Failure to do so will disqualify the worker from any form of work with BGA and those with special needs.

SDMI will:

- 1) Ensure the safety and protection of all BGA and persons with special needs through adherence to this Child Protection Policy adopted by SDMI.
- 2) Ensure that all workers and volunteers understand their legal and moral obligations to protect BGA from harm, abuse and exploitation;
- 3) Ensure that all BGA understand what peer to peer abuse is and the consequences of bullying and other forms of abuse to other children;
- 4) Conduct an intentional screening process in the recruitment of all workers, as outlined by the Child Protection Policy;
- 5) Follow the standards and procedures detailed in the Code of Conduct.
- 6) Ensure that all workers understand their obligations to report care or protection concerns about a BGA.
- 7) Ensure that supervisors understand their responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the appropriate authorities and/or child protection agencies (i.e. Police, National Child Protection Authority and/or Department of Probation and Child Care).
- 8) Provide opportunities for all workers to develop their skills and knowledge in relation to the care and protection of BGA and people with special needs.
- 9) Keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the care and protection of BGA and people with special needs.
- 10) Implement a conscious prevention culture through training and education for children, parents and staff.
- 11) Listen to and believe BGA and people with special needs.

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

We recognize the importance of boys, girls, adolescents, and those with special needs as individuals who have value and dignity because they are each created in God's image and loved by him. Following the model of Christ in the gospels, we have a moral responsibility to love and protect the BGA and people with special needs in our care. He instructed, "Do not neglect these little ones" (**Matt. 18: 10**).

We, as the body of Christ, have a moral responsibility to model the love of Christ to the BGA and those with special needs in our care. The Church represents Jesus Christ and must demonstrate and model His love, concern and holiness to everyone. If we love BGA and those with special needs, and work for them, then we welcome Christ. "And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name, welcomes me." (**Matt. 18:5**)

We should follow the footsteps of Jesus, His example of love towards children, and His advice and instructions for loving children, and behave accordingly.

ZERO TOLERANCE OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT WITH MINORS

The Church of the Nazarene has adopted a zero tolerance policy for sexual misconduct and inappropriate behavior with minors. All workers, leaders, and pastoral staff are to be above reproach in their conduct and to act in the best interest of others. This requires not only that they themselves refrain from engaging in any abusive or suspicious behavior involving minors; they will also be required to report without delay to the proper authorities anyone seen engaging in such behavior.

We do this through the following actions:

- Requiring that all ministry workers, board members, volunteers, vendors, church officials and anyone involved with BGA and people with special needs, to adhere to the Child Protection Policy.
- Recognizing that all BGA and people with special needs have the right to be free from abuse.
- Ensuring that all workers and volunteers are carefully selected and that they accept responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of BGA and people with special needs in their care.
- Responding quickly and appropriately to any suspicion or allegation of abuse, providing parents / caregivers / guardians and BGA and those with special needs with the opportunity to express any concerns they have.
- Expressing any concerns regarding abuse to your ministry leader or Pastor.
- Ensuring that access to confidential information is restricted to the person responsible for the BGA/person with special needs.
- Ensuring that parents / caregivers / guardians understand the Child Protection Policy and the Rights of the Child.

ESTABLISHING AND ENSURING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

General Environmental Safety

- Parents/caregivers/guardians/workers will be given detailed information about the SDMI ministry including start and finish times. Workers will cooperate with the parents/caregivers/guardians to ensure the boys, girls, adolescents (BGA) and those with special needs are picked up or taken home safely.
- While under the care of SDMI, BGA and those with special needs will not be allowed to play on roadways, or any other areas that may pose a risk to the children or workers, and will be supervised in any public place.
- Teaching will be done openly, where parents/caregivers/guardians and other teachers have free access. Visitors, however, will not be allowed free access to BGA and those with special needs without the supervision of an approved worker.
- Workers will follow the “Two-Adult Policy” when working with BGA and those with special needs. There should always be two adults supervising the BGA and those with special needs. Whenever possible, one adult should be responsible for no more than 8 children at a given time. (Some countries may have their own existing standards for proper adult to children ratio). At no point should an individual child be left with one adult.
- Counseling and prayer for BGA and those with special needs will be done within view of another person.
- If mixed teams are taken away for the day or night, they will always be accompanied by a male and female worker. If this is not possible, the trip should be rescheduled for a time when both a male and female worker is available. Precautions will be taken to make sure that an adult is never alone with one child and to prevent potential same gender abuse.
- Children and workers will abide by a dress code, set by SDMI leadership, which is culturally appropriate and modest.
- The workers will promote a healthy environment, to protect and serve children with disabilities, vulnerable children or with any other special need.

Comments and Discussions with Children

Workers must avoid comments or discussion to, about, or with BGA and those with special needs which could be taken as having sexual overtones. Educational discussions about sex will require more than one adult and careful judgement in responding to questions raised by BGA and those with special needs. Specific guidance may be needed to assist new workers.

Workers may, from time to time, need to respond to a BGA and those with special needs in distress or engage in conversations with them covering sensitive matters. Workers must use their professional judgement to ensure that they only offer advice they are qualified to give. If the worker feels they are not qualified to help the child, they must refer them to a colleague or agency better suited to meet the child’s needs.

Communication with children outside of ministry activities, whether in person, through calling or text messaging or forms of social media should be limited to only that which is appropriate to the goals of the church and the safety and well-being of the child. The use of hurtful, sarcastic, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children may be regarded as a form of abuse and must be avoided.

Teaching materials

The use of books, videos and films of an explicit or sensitive nature, particularly in relation to language or sexual behavior will be given careful consideration to ensure they are age and culturally appropriate and that there is a clear link with the targets of the teacher's program.

Proper Discipline²

Workers should remember this motto: "The point of discipline is to teach children right from wrong, not to make them live in fear." Any form of physical punishment is prohibited and potentially actionable by law. Local laws regarding harm to children should be reviewed and known by all workers.

Correction vs. Punishment

Correct BGA and those with special needs by offering choices that help them own their problems. It is *correction* rather than *punishment* that is required. *Punishment* is an unhealthy approach to children that gives the message that they should "pay a price" for misbehavior or misconduct, and this **does not** build character or self-esteem in a child. *Correction*, on the other hand, teaches BGA and those with special needs to take responsibility for her own actions, face real-life consequences for wrong choices, and learn to solve problems. Our aim is to build the character and self-esteem of children, and using punishing actions will not accomplish this.

Prevention of Peer Abuse

Peer abuse (bullying) happens when BGA abuse others. It should not be tolerated or excused and should have disciplinary consequences. Diligence should be taken to ensure the environment protects BGA and those with special needs from peer abuse, including:

- Communicating what peer to peer abuse is to the children and workers.
- Creating a culture that makes it safe for children to report offenses and does not tolerate bullying.
- Never leaving BGA and those with special needs unsupervised.
- Being vigilant about watching for bullying.

Prevention of Self-Harm³

Self-harm is when a BGA and those with special needs hurts himself/herself on purpose. It is usually accompanied by low self-esteem or anger. A child may cut, hit or scold himself/herself verbally and mentally, engage in destructive sexual acts, abuse drugs or alcohol, or attempt suicide. When any sign of self-harm is noticed by a worker, it should be reported to the supervisor and steps should be taken to protect the child from himself/herself and to help the child psychologically and socially. In such cases, parents/guardians should be made aware of any signs of self-harm and consulted in the process of safeguarding the BGA and those with special needs from continued self-harm.

Health Safety Guidelines

Keeping things clean ⁴

Many diseases from which children suffer can be prevented by keeping drinking water clean, keeping toilet areas clean, washing hands after using the toilet and before handling a child, food, or cooking utensils, and by keeping cooking and eating utensils clean. These are steps that everyone can take toward making the ministry location a healthier place.

Well Child Policy

A BGA and person with special needs who is ill and could therefore expose other children and workers to illness should be asked to stay home to avoid affecting other children. Where this is not possible or in the best interest of the child, special arrangements should be made by SDMI leadership to best care for the child. A health criteria policy should be posted.

Medications

Workers are not to give or apply any medications. If a BGA or person with special needs needs medication, the parents/caregivers/guardians must give it. No medication should be left in the room with a volunteer worker or with the child.

In extreme cases (allergies, asthma, etc.), arrangements for the administration of medication should be made with written instructions and permission from the parent. Medications should be in their original prescription bottle/package, which should have administration instructions and the name of the BGA or person with special needs clearly indicated. Workers should be sure to notify parents/caregivers/guardians when they pick up their child that medication has been administered.

Emergencies

- Procedures for emergency situations (fire, earthquake, etc.) should be reviewed regularly, as determined by SDMI workers (Ex: disaster training seminars, annual review of policy). Those procedures as well as a planned route of escape to safety are to be posted in a visible place in each classroom.
- A first aid kit must be kept at each ministry site for handling cuts, bloody noses, vomiting etc. All workers should be trained in the proper use of the kit's contents. Suggested first aid kit supplies: 2-3 pairs of disposable vinyl gloves, thermometer (non-mercury), tissues, soap, hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol, bleach, face masks, foil packets, two or three 4"x 4" gauze pads for absorption, multiple adhesive bandages, and plastic bags for discarding contaminated items. For more suggestions: <http://www.redcross.org/prepare/location/home-family/get-kit/anatomy>
- The infectious disease kit and first aid kit should both be checked regularly to stay fully supplied.
- When an injury, accident, or medical emergency occurs, the parent(s)/caregiver(s) of the BGA or person with special needs involved should be contacted immediately.
- Any accident resulting in injury should be reported to the supervisor. A complete accident report should be submitted to the supervisor immediately.

Child Protection in Areas of Conflict/Natural Disaster

During conflicts and natural disasters, the safety of boys, girls, adolescents (BGA) and those with special needs is a top priority. Children who are orphaned or become separated from their families and legal guardians are at a higher risk of abuse, violence, neglect, and exploitation. Without the protection of parents/caregivers/guardians, children are more vulnerable to illegal adoption, child marriage and trafficking. During conflicts and natural disasters, conditions can make it difficult to determine the identity of a BGA and those with special needs and their lawful guardians, as birth certificates, and other means of identification may be destroyed, lost or dislocated. The priority is to keep BGA and those with special needs with their families as much as possible to limit abuse or exploitation during these periods. (9)

We encourage churches to seek resources in protection or civil defense of their country, to know how to respond to a disaster or contingency.

SDMI will help with child safety in the following ways:

Create a plan regarding the evacuation of the church/ministry area so that if an emergency happens while BGA or persons with special needs are in SDMI's care, the workers know what to do and where to take the children. This information should be shared with parents/caregivers/guardians to ensure that they are always aware of their children's location and the safety measures being used to protect them. (10)

Keep detailed records of BGA and those with special needs and their parents/legal guardians, including contact information, so that separated children are returned to the correct parent or legal guardian following the emergency. This is to mitigate potential abuse, illegal adoption of the children or trafficking.

Optional measures that SDMI workers can take in times of emergency:

- Collect information on where shelters are located in the surrounding area and develop safe evacuation routes from the church/ministry area to these shelters. Map out these routes and shelters and distribute the maps to the BGA and those with special needs and their families (especially for parents/caregivers/guardians to keep at home).
- If there are not established areas that act as shelters in times of conflict or natural disasters, SDMI/Church of the Nazarene can work with the community to establish such sites.
- Identify and work with local agencies so that separated or orphaned BGA or those with special needs will be placed in the protection of the correct authorities.
- Work with partner ministries and other government agencies to provide emotional and physiological support and trauma counseling for families and children.
- Develop mechanisms to allow BGA and those with special needs and parents/caregivers/guardians to grieve for the loss of family members.
- Work together with parents/caregivers/guardians and the community to identify the relief, distribution and health centers providing support for the neediest families.
- Make sure that distribution centers do not use relief support to exploit or sexually abuse BGA or those with special needs. (11)

Out of School and After-School Activities

Workers should take particular care when supervising BGA or those with special needs in a residential setting or at an after-school activity. It is important to emphasize that the standards of professional conduct and behavior expected of workers within the ministry site are the same outside the ministry site. Workers should take particular care with older, more mature children in these circumstances, so as not to develop inappropriately close relationships.

Handling Infatuations and “Crushes”

Unfortunately, infatuations and “crushes” do develop and can involve BGA and those with special needs and workers of both sexes. They need to be handled sensitively. Careless and insensitive reactions have been known to provoke false accusations. It is therefore in the interest of all parties to avoid encouraging the infatuation or making jokes about the situation. In such situations, the supervisor must be informed and advice sought.

Workers are also responsible for alerting other colleagues to the possibility of an infatuation so that appropriate steps can be taken to minimize hurt and distress of the BGA or person with special needs and lower the risk to the colleague. While the risk of infatuation is not limited to new or younger workers, they must be aware of their particular vulnerability to adolescent infatuation and take precautions.

Camp Precautions

Children at church - run camps will be properly supervised with a minimum of two adult workers and no less than one leader for every eight children. Rules for leaders and campers include:

- Leaders will supervise boys, girls, adolescents, and those with special needs of the same sex, and there will be two leaders per dormitory.
- BGA and those with special needs will not be allowed to share a bed with another camper or with a leader.
- BGA or those with special needs of the opposite sex will not share a bedroom.
- Access to bathroom, toilets or bunkrooms of the opposite sex is not allowed by leaders or campers.
- If a worker observes inappropriate or suspicious behavior by another worker, he / she must report it to the supervisor, and / or confront the worker in question, with respect to the Code of Ethics.

Confidentiality and Communications about BGA and those with special needs

- SDMI and project partners will protect and safe guard all records and documents of BGA and those with special needs and maintain their confidentiality.
- Workers will ensure that all communication about BGA and those with special needs (pictures, written or verbal communications) is decent, dignified and respectful.
- All information about any incident is to be kept totally confidential by all parties involved.

Confidentiality with BGA and those with special needs ⁵

Confidentiality upholds the dignity and respect of an individual or BGA and those with special needs by ensuring that whatever is shared remains within safe boundaries/limits. Children should know that they can share any concerns with any worker without fear of punishment or fear of their secrets being openly known by others. They should never have to worry that they will be laughed at, criticized, or punished for their opinions and thoughts.

Limits of confidentiality

- Child workers should never promise that they will always keep the information a BGA and those with special needs share with them a secret. Workers should always inform the BGA and person with special needs that they will keep the information shared confidential as long as it does not present a danger to the child or to someone else. In the case of any safety risks for the child or others, the child must be informed that what has been shared will have to be properly disclosed for protection reasons.
- It is important for workers to know that they should only share information from BGA and those with special needs or others if they are in a dangerous situation, if the child or someone else is hurt, or if further support is needed.
- Because immediate reporting of incidents within the leadership structure is required, as well as proper reporting to the appropriate law enforcement officials, there are limits to confidentiality.

Child and Parental Consent

If workers photograph children or want to publish their stories, the children and the caregivers need to know and give consent. Children should also be informed of concerns or official proceedings that involve them. This protects their rights and lets them know that the NCM workers care about their well-being and their opinions. Consent forms should be filled out and signed by parents/caregivers/guardians as a part of registration, where possible.

Educating the Community to stop abuse of boys, girls, adolescents, and those with special needs ⁶

Workers will also try to help protect BGA and those with special needs, and prevent child abuse in the community by raising awareness through educating the community. This needs to be done in a way that is sensitive to the culture. One of the most important things to do is to form relationships with families and BGA and those with special needs, and to be willing to listen and ask questions while observing sensitivity. It is difficult to bring about change if people feel threatened, but through listening, asking questions, and providing helpful suggestions, people will be more willing to accept changes and safety measures for the welfare of children.

We encourage churches to seek and / or request governmental actions for the protection of minors in countries where they do not exist.

WORKER RECRUITMENT

All workers must have the approval of the Supervisor, and must undergo the proper screening process. All workers should receive a formal interview and screening, during which:

- Adequate background verification from references and other sources will be obtained by ministry leadership. This could include a character reference from a pastor or trusted source, and a competency reference from a previous employer. (Volunteers only need a character reference.)
- Qualifications should be substantiated.
- A criminal background check will be conducted when possible.
- The job requirements and responsibilities will be explained.
- Child protection procedures and related training needs will be explained.
- Workers must read, understand and commit to following the Child Protection Policy.
- Workers will sign the commitment form to follow the SDMI Child Protection Policy and the Code of Conduct.
- Workers will be asked if they have ever committed or been accused of any acts of molestation or abuse against boys, girls, adolescents, or someone with special needs. If the answer is yes, then full discussion will be sought regarding the matter. The Supervisor will be party to these discussions and make the final hiring decision.

Regular refresher courses, as determined by regional or local leadership, on the Child Protection Policy will also be mandatory. SDMI will conduct the training for all workers and provide a copy of the “Child Protection Policy” for self-learning.

Red Flags to Look for When Interviewing an Applicant: ¹

- Overly smooth presentation or desire to please
- Poor listening skills, poor communication skills
- Inappropriate questions/comments about BGA and those with special needs
- Expresses an interest in spending time alone with BGA and those with special needs
- Requests to work with a particular age group or gender
- Excessive interest in child photography
- Past travels to child sex tourism destinations
- Will not look you in the eye when answering questions
- Unusually nervous or apologetic
- Any other suspicious or disturbing behavior or speech
- Unwilling to offer critical information
- Uncomfortable or nervous when asked specific questions
- Reluctant to give references or have interviewer follow up with references provided
- Does not agree to background check
- Unwilling to have fingerprints taken

The presence of some of these cues does not necessarily indicate guilt, but the need for further inquiry. There may also be many other cues that are not listed here, and the interviewer must be alert to any suspicious cues a candidate might display during the interviewing process.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All workers must agree to abide by the Code of Conduct.

Workers will:

- Know and study the Code of Conduct.
- Properly disclose any confidential information in the case of risk to a boy, girl, adolescent (BGA) or someone with special needs and others.
- Avoid situations that place themselves or any BGA or someone with special needs at risk.
- Plan and organize the work and the workplace to minimize risks to workers and BGA and those with special needs.
- Always work in open settings, avoiding private or unobserved situations.
- Maintain open communication and accountability with other workers, so that any issues or concerns may be freely raised and discussed.
- Talk to BGA and those with special needs about their contact with workers or others, encouraging them to raise any concerns.
- Educate BGA and those with special needs about their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem.
- Treat all people with respect and dignity.
- Always put the needs and welfare of the children first.
- Practice discretion, always behaving in an inappropriate manner with each other.
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust, honesty, and openness.
- Strive to be excellent role models to each other, BGA and those with special needs, and the community.
- Behave appropriately, culturally and socially, towards other workers and children, in all situations either in the church setting or at external trainings or other functions.

Workers will not:

- Intentionally shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade BGA or those with special needs, or otherwise perpetuate any form of emotional or intellectual abuse.
- Discriminate against or show favor to particular BGA or those with special needs at the exclusion of others.
- Take BGA or those with special needs alone to a solitary or dark place.
- Take BGA or those with special needs to the child's home without at least one other person in the van or car.
- Visit a BGA or those with special needs while the child is alone at home.
- Spend the night with any BGA or those with special needs in their house, relative's house, the church, or any other place.
- Take BGA or those with special needs to the worker's home when no one else will be there.

- Use any foul or inappropriate language with any BGA or those with special needs or worker.
- Show a dominating attitude toward BGA or those with special needs or other workers.
- Condone or participate in behavior with a BGA or those with special needs that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Touch a BGA or those with special needs inappropriately or attempt to have any sexual relationship with any child.
- Behave in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative.
- Develop relationships with BGA or those with special needs that could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive.
- Hit or physically assault BGA or those with special needs or do anything that may place a child at risk of abuse.
- Physically torture or threaten to torture any BGA or those with special needs for any reason.
- Encourage BGA or those with special needs under the age of 18 years toward marriage or anything that might be detrimental to a child in any way.

Acceptable forms of physical contact

Acceptable forms of physical contact with children include:

Action to prevent harm or injury to the boys, girls, adolescents (BGA), or those with special needs or to others

If it is necessary, in order to prevent a BGA or those with special needs from causing injury to him/her or to others, the use of minimum force and contact to prevent harm or injury is acceptable and defensible. Such incidents must always be reported to the supervisor and must be documented.

Comforting a BGA or someone with special needs in distress

Workers will need to use their professional judgement and discretion regarding what kinds of comforting are acceptable since much will depend on the circumstances, the age of the BGA or someone with special needs, the extent and cause of the distress and alternative means of providing comfort. Workers should consider how others might perceive the action, even if no-one else is present, and ensure that it does not develop into inappropriate contact. Even when comforting a child in distress, a worker should never be alone with a child. A recommendation may be to be in a corner of a room where you can talk privately but another adult can be present without being able to hear what's being said. This will protect the child and the worker. Particular care must be taken in instances which involve the same child over a period of time.

Unavoidable contact

In activities such as play and in some forms of skills coaching, all workers must be alert to the possibilities of a BGA or someone with special needs misinterpreting physical contact. It may be more appropriate to demonstrate alternative techniques than to modify the child's technique by using physical contact. Generally, it is not acceptable for physical contact to take place between adolescent children and workers. Workers should be open to concerns that colleagues may have about physical contact, and in cases of doubt or uncertainty, workers should seek advice from their supervisor.

Private meetings

Workers must avoid remote areas of the ministry site when planning private meetings with BGA or those with special needs, and must ensure that doors are left open or visual contact with others is maintained. Under no circumstances should meetings with individual BGA or those with special needs be arranged off the ministry site premises. This includes the transporting of individual children in private vehicles. Where it is not possible to meet in the circumstances referred to above, another worker should be informed of the meeting beforehand and be present to minimize risk during the meeting.

Restroom Assistance for Boys, Girls, Adolescents (BGA) or those with special needs

- We strongly recommend that parents/caregivers/guardians take their BGA or those with special needs to visit the restroom prior to class or activities. This procedure should be communicated to parents/caregivers/guardians on a regular basis throughout the year.
- Where possible, two adults must escort a group of children to the restroom. If two adults may not be available for this duty, a safety monitor (preferably female) must be appointed to assist with restroom duties.
- Class/groups should take scheduled restroom breaks.
- If just one small child must go to the restroom, a female worker should escort the child. Workers should remain outside the door and wait for the child before escorting him or her back to the classroom.
- No workers should ever be alone with a BGA or those with special needs in an unsupervised restroom, and should never go into a cubicle with a BGA or those with special needs and shut the door.
- If a BGA or those with special needs needs assistance, an adult may enter the restroom/cubicle only under the following guidelines:
 - 1) A second adult must be within visual contact. If this is not possible, inform another adult of the situation when a volunteer is leaving with a child and when returning.
 - 2) Only women should assist girls or boys in the restroom. In light of the fact that most abusers are male and most false accusations are against males, it would be wise for men to avoid assisting children in using the restroom.

First Aid

The existence of any life-threatening or serious condition may make physical contact necessary. Workers who must administer first aid should ensure that other BGA or another adult is present to lower the risk of physical contact being misconstrued.

We encourage churches to train their staff in First Aid for Children.

Definitions, Signs and Myths of Abuse ⁷

Four Main Types of Abuse

Physical abuse – when a person causes physical harm to a boy, girl, adolescent (BGA) or someone with special needs

Sexual abuse – when a person uses a BGA or someone with special needs for sexual gratification, which can include sexual comments made to a child

Emotional abuse – when a person behaves with or speaks to a BGA or someone with special needs in a way that causes emotional or psychological trauma

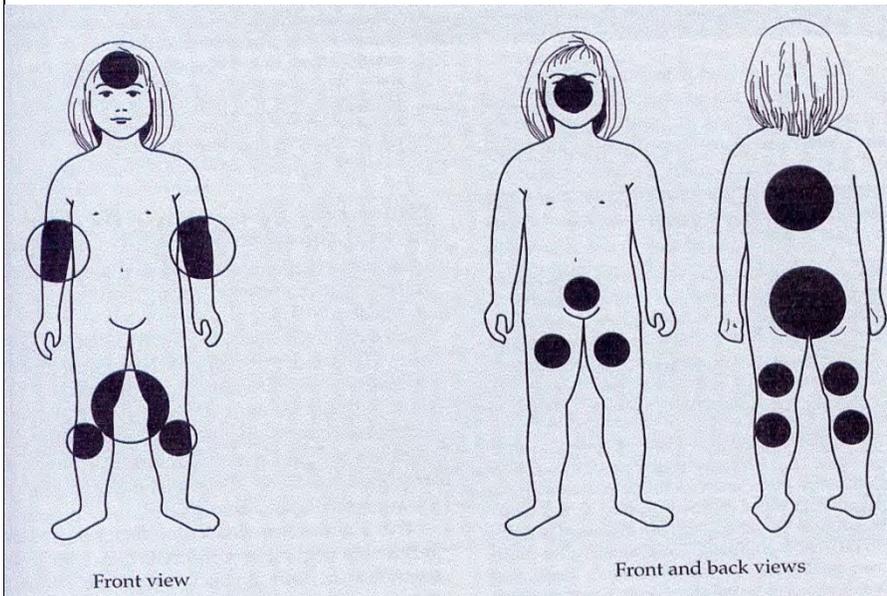
Neglect – when a caregiver does not provide for a BGA or someone with special needs even though the caregiver has proper resources

Physical and behavioral signs of child abuse:

Types of abuse	Physical signs	Behavioral signs
Physical abuse	Bruises or welts in various stages of healing or other visible injuries that appear on a child recurrently and cannot be explained by developmentally expected behavior.	Explanation for a physical injury that is inconsistent with the injury or the child's developmental age.
	Unexplained or multiple broken bones, especially broken ribs, severe skull fractures or other major head injuries.	Persistent or repetitive physical complaints of unclear cause, such as headache or belly pain.
	Unexplained or repetitive dental injuries. Failure to see expected growth in a child who seems hungry and eager to eat when offered food.	The parent or caregiver reports a significant injury to the child was self-inflicted or the child reports being injured by a parent or caregiver.
	Burns or injuries in the shape of an object used to cause the injury, like bite marks, hand marks, cigar or cigarette burns, belt buckle markings, burns from immersion in scalding water or other hot liquids.	The parent or caregiver has delayed seeking appropriate medical care for the child.
Sexual abuse	Pain, itching, bruises or bleeding around the genitalia. Stained or bloody underclothing.	Bizarre, overly-sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior for the child's age, including asking others to do sex acts, putting mouth on sex parts, trying to have intercourse.
	Venereal disease.	Child reports sexual abuse by a parent or adult.
	Difficulty walking or sitting.	
	Discharge from the vagina or urine openings.	

Physical and sexual abuses often leave marks on the child's body. ¹³ Caregivers will sometimes try to excuse injuries, suggesting they are the result of normal childhood accidents. But there is a difference between injuries children get from rough play, and injuries that are a sign of physical and sexual abuse. We need to learn to recognize these differences.

The picture here is an illustration comparing the location (on the left) of typical playground injuries and the location of injuries as the result of physical abuse.



Emotional abuse	Delayed physical, emotional or intellectual development that is not otherwise explicable.	Depression and withdrawal, impaired sense of worth.
	Habits such as rocking back and forth or sucking on fingers in excess of expectation for developmental stage.	Extremes of behavior, such as overly aggressive or passive; apathetic; empty facial appearances; decreased social interaction with others; phobias; general fearfulness; fear of parent or caregiver.
Neglect	Constant hunger, begging for food or hoarding food. Fatigue or listlessness. Poor hygiene habits. Dirty hair, skin or clothes. Inappropriate dress.	Lack of supervision for long periods of time inappropriate to the child's age or developmental stage.
	Malnutrition or failure to thrive not explained by physical illness.	
	Delay in seeking professional attention for physical or dental problems.	
	Impairment of parent or caregiver due to substance abuse or physical or mental illness.	
Any type of abuse	Substance abuse. Unexplained absences from the childcare program.	Over- and under-compliance of the child. Lack of selectivity in friendly approach to adults. Developmental regression, such as previously toilet-trained child reverting to incontinence. Sleep and appetite disturbances. Depression. Self-destructive behavior. Excessive and/or inappropriate fears.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING CASES OR SUSPECTED CASES OF ABUSE

Organizational Responsibilities

All workers (paid/unpaid) have a responsibility to immediately report abuse or concerns of possible abuse to their appropriate supervisor. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately according to policy. In case of any allegations or reported incidents of child abuse, the organization will take necessary disciplinary action immediately, with sensibility, impartiality and realistic justification to solve the problem.

All workers must be aware of the action that must be taken when child abuse is suspected whether at the ministry site, at home or elsewhere, following any disclosure of alleged abuse. Any allegations or problems related to protection of children will be kept confidential. SDMI assures all workers that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports his/her concern that someone is, or may be, abusing a boy, girl, adolescent (BGA) or someone with special needs.

Should abuse of a BGA or someone with special needs be seen or suspected:

The incident or suspicions of abuse are to be directly reported to the supervisor unless the supervisor is the subject of the allegation. Parents/caregivers/guardians of involved child(ren) should also be notified immediately, unless a parent/caregiver/guardian is suspected of abuse.

If the supervisor is the subject of the allegation, or there is suspicion the supervisor may be a part of the problem or a hindrance to swift action, the church pastor must be informed. If there are any doubts/concerns that the issue is not being handled thoroughly or there are any additional concerns, the District Superintendent should be contacted.

As stated above, **SDMI assures that all workers will be fully supported and protected, who in good faith report his/her concern that someone is, or may be, abusing a child.**

Should a worker feel his/her actions may have been misinterpreted as abusive or inappropriate:

- 1) The incident should be reported and a written account of the incident given to the supervisor as soon as possible after the incident occurred.
- 2) The supervisor must then take appropriate action with the reporting worker to clarify any confusion with the boy, girl, adolescent (BGA) or those with special needs.
- 3) Directors who face similar situations are advised to contact the church pastor.

Workers will handle all allegations of child abuse according to following process.

1. The ministry leadership must immediately investigate the details of the incident or allegations to determine if there is a reasonable suspicion of child abuse. The accused must not be part of the leadership investigating.
2. Upon determination of reasonable suspicion of child abuse, there may be three types of investigation:
 - A criminal investigation involving local authorities
 - A child protection investigation
 - A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

3. An accused worker will immediately be prohibited from coming to the ministry site or being in contact with BGA or those with special needs until the investigation is completed. If the accused is a paid worker, they will be suspended with paid administrative leave.
4. A suspected parent/caregiver/guardian should be reported to the authorities where applicable. The ministry staff should then decide the best course of action to care for and protect the BGA or person with special needs within their cultural and situational context.
5. For a child suspected of self-harm, the child's parents/caregivers/guardians should be notified immediately. Then help should be sought out from a qualified professional. The child's parents should also be notified immediately.
6. It is the responsibility of leadership to immediately report suspicion of abuse to the proper authority or authorities where applicable.
7. Leadership will also immediately report the details of the incident or allegations to district SDMI leadership. District leadership must report to regional leadership.
8. Appropriate treatment of the abused or allegedly abused BGA or person with special needs will include the following:
 - The worker will offer reassurance and empathy toward the BGA or person with special needs but will not attempt to counsel in areas where he or she is not qualified.
 - Necessary immediate action must be taken to protect the abused BGA or person with special needs.
 - No worker will force a BGA or person with special needs to repeat a story or insist her or she tell more than they are willing to tell.
 - The BGA or person with special needs should be given appropriate psychological and social help or professional counseling when possible.
 - In the case of a non-worker perpetrator, precautions must be taken so this person may never have access to or contact with the BGA or those with special needs again.

Workers will handle all allegations of peer abuse according to following process.

- 1) The ministry leadership must immediately investigate the details of the incident or allegations to determine if there is a reasonable suspicion of peer abuse.
- 2) Upon determination of reasonable suspicion of peer abuse, the following investigations may take place:
 - A child protection investigation
 - Where necessary, an investigation involving local law enforcement authorities may be carried out
- 3) The child, adolescent, or person with special needs should be separated from the other children in order to discover the details of what took place, and parents/caregivers/guardians should be immediately informed. If the accused child is shown to be guilty of peer abuse, it is up to the ministry leadership to determine the best course of action for both children, as there could be varying degrees of severity of offense, as well as varying levels of cognitive understanding among the children. If the accused child's presence is determined to cause risk to the other BGA or those with special needs, that child should be prohibited from coming to the ministry program permanently.
- 4) It is the responsibility of leadership to immediately report abuse to the proper authority or authorities where applicable.
- 5) Leadership will also immediately report the details of the incident or allegations to district leadership. District leadership must report to regional leadership.
- 6) Appropriate treatment of the abused or allegedly abused BGA or person with special needs will include the following:
 - The worker will offer reassurance and empathy toward the BGA or person with special needs but will not attempt to counsel in areas where he or she is not qualified.
 - Necessary immediate action must be taken to protect the abused BGA or person with special needs.
 - No worker will force a BGA or person with special needs to repeat a story or insist a child tell more than he or she is willing to tell.
 - The child should be given appropriate psychological and social help or professional counseling when possible.

Guidelines for interacting with a BGA or person with special needs who is reporting abuse ⁸

In situations of abuse, it is important to listen to and record all the details reported by a BGA or person with special needs so that the abuse can be reported to the proper authorities. When listening to a BGA or person with special needs, it is very important to do the following:

- Accept what the BGA or person with special needs is telling you – this shows that you believe in the child
- Stay calm
- Do not panic
- Look at and listen to the BGA or person with special needs the whole time they are talking to you
- Do not appear shocked
- Let them know that you will need to tell someone else
- Let them know that they are not to blame for the abuse
- Do not ask leading questions (Leading questions can often be answered by a “yes” or “no” and make assumptions about what happened, while not allowing the child to explain what happened in their own words. Ex: “Is someone sexually abusing you?”)
- Never push for information
- Make sure to distinguish between what the BGA or person with special needs actually said and what you are assuming, it is crucial to be accurate and take note of only what the BGA or person with special needs says.
- Do not let any doubts prevent you from reporting the alleged abuse
- Let the BGA or person with special needs know what you are going to do next and that you will keep them informed

When listening to a BGA or person with special needs report abuse, it is also important to know what to say and what not to say.

Things to say:

- “I believe you.”
- “I am going to try to help you.”
- “I am glad you told me.”
- “It is not your fault.”

Things not to say:

- “You should have told someone before.”
- “I am shocked!”
- “No, it could not be him/her!”
- “I won’t tell anyone else.”
- “Why? How? When? Where? Who?”

*After abuse has been reported and children have been restored to a safe environment, **it is important to provide continued care and support for abused children, including professional counseling when possible.** BGA and persons with special needs continue to feel the effects of their abuse long after the abuse has happened, and simply removing them from the situation does not always solve their problems.

Where an accusation/allegation is found to be true or most likely true:

- 1) Details of the abuse must be reported up the chain of command mentioned above.
- 2) The confirmed abusive worker will be dismissed and never again allowed to hold any position of leadership, trust, or ministry with the Church of the Nazarene, according to the Nazarene Manual 540.9.
- 3) If appropriate, treatment and repentance will be sought for the abusive worker. However, they will not be allowed to be hired to work with boys, girls, adolescents (BGA), or persons with special needs again.
- 4) SDMI and church leadership must investigate how this type of incident can be prevented in the future and adjust the child protection policy and training accordingly.
- 5) SDMI leadership must also know the standards for reporting abuse in the city and country of which the abuse took place and follow those standards accordingly.
- 6) The organization reserves the right to keep records of any allegations of abuse against BGA or persons with special needs, whether ultimately proven or not, as well as any disciplinary actions against any employees.



PERSONAL DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT

MIEDD will not tolerate the abuse of children, adolescents or people with disabilities by anyone. We will support those who want to protect them from situations that put them at risk, and are committed to creating and maintaining a safer environment for them. Thus:

- All children have the right to be free from abuse.
- All people involved with children and people with disabilities (officials, leaders, volunteers, supervisors), will assume this commitment and the Child Protection Policy.

Name of worker: _____

Position: _____

I declare that:

1. I will accept the leadership and guidance of my supervisor.
2. I will follow the procedures laid out in the SDMI Child Protection Policy.
3. I have not been involved in, accused of, or convicted of any offense involving physical or sexual abuse of boys, girls, adolescents or persons with special needs.
4. I understand that if a complaint be should be reported against me, I will be obligated to follow the child protection procedures laid out in the SDMI Child Protection Policy for suspected or reported abuse.

Date: _____

Name and signature of worker

Name and signature of the Pastor

Name and signature of supervisor

Official Seal

This Personal Declaration of Commitment must be signed by everyone working with children and people with disabilities, including volunteers and assistants. A copy must be given to the worker and the signed original will be kept on the ministry site.



CHILD'S CONTACT DETAILS

NOTE: Please Complete This Form Using A Computer Or Write Very Neatly!

Visitor _____ Update of a regular attender _____

Complete name of the Child: _____
First Name Second Name First Last Name Second Last Name

Sex of the Child: Male _____ Female _____

Child's Birthday: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Telephone number(s): _____

E-mail Address(es): _____

Child's School Grade: _____

Name of Child's School: _____

Child's Sports/ Interests: _____

Child's Family Responsibilities: _____

Child's Activities in the Church: _____

FAMILY INFORMATION

Father's Name: _____ Father's Occupation: _____

Mother's Name: _____ Mother's Occupation: _____

Names/ages of Child's Siblings:

Additional information about the family, school, church economic situation, etc.:

Persons authorized to collect the child: _____



HEALTH INFORMATION FOR CHILD, ADOLESCENT, PERSON WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Name _____

Age: _____ Birthdate: / / /

Has he/she had any health services? () No () Yes Which? _____

Medical Insurance Company and Number _____ Validity / / /

Additional Information _____

Contac in case of an emergency

Name _____ Phone(s) _____

Name _____ Phone(s) _____

HEALTH INFORMATION

Vaccination against tetnus? () No () Yes Date: ___ / ___ / ___

Physical impairment that requires special treatment () No () Yes

Details of the impairment: _____

Is he/she taking special treatments? () No () Yes What? _____

Is he/she taking any medications? If yes, which one(s)? _____

With what frequency? _____

Does he/she have any allergies? () No () Yes If so, what? _____

In case of alergies, what medicine(s) does he/she need? _____

Does he/she have any restrictions? _____

AUTORIZATION

In case of an emergency, I authorize the leaders of the children, adolescents, and/or persons with special needs to take the necessary steps for health treatments for the above referenced child/adolescent/person with special needs.

I take personal responsibility for any violent attitudes or slander, freeing the church and its leaders, except in relation to the information given in this form.

Place _____ Date / / /

Name _____ Signature _____



CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORT

Date of Report: _____

Child's Name: _____

Address: _____

Birthday: _____ Names of Parents: _____

Time of Incident: _____ Date of Incident: _____

Describe what happened (time, place, people involved, people who intervened, etc), as well as any circumstance that may have precipitated the incident.

Result/Resolution of the event:

What actions have been taken to prevent a reoccurrence of this incident?

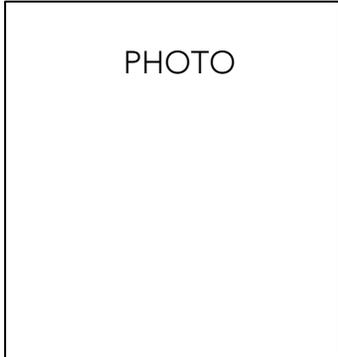
Prepared by (name and position): _____

Reported by (name and position): _____

References

Footnoted

- 1 www.Nazarenesafe.org
- 2 www.Tearfund.org
- 3 www.keepingchildrensafe.org
- 4 www.savethechildren.org
- 5 Compassion International. (2010). Child Protection Resource Curriculum: For Field Office and ICP Staff. Colorado Springs: Compassion International USA, 30-31.
- 6 Compassion International. (2010). Child Protection Resource Curriculum: For Field Office and ICP Staff. Colorado Springs: Compassion International USA, 18.
- 7 Compassion International. (2010). Child Protection Resource Curriculum: For Field Office and ICP Staff. Colorado Springs: Compassion International USA, 19.
- 8 Compassion International. (2010). Child Protection Resource Curriculum: For Field Office and ICP Staff. Colorado Springs: Compassion International USA, 99.
- 9 Compassion International. (2010). Child Protection Resource Curriculum: For Field Office and ICP Staff. Colorado Springs: Compassion International USA, 51-53.
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- 12 Compassion International. (2010). Child Protection Resource Curriculum: For Field Office and ICP Staff. Colorado Springs: Compassion International USA, 116-117.
- 13 UNICEF. (2006). Child Protection Information Sheets.
- 14 UNICEF and Interparliamentary Union (2004). Child Protection: A Handbook for parliamentarians, No. 7.
- 15 IASC Operation Guidelines on the Protection of Persons in Situations of Natural Disasters (2011). The Brooking – Bern Project on Internal Displacement



**APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTEERS,
MINISTRY LEADERS, TEACHERS**

MINISTRY: _____

GENERAL INFORMATION

Complete Name: _____

Identification type and number: _____

Birthdate: _____ Age: _____

Telephone: _____ Cell: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Department: _____

Country: _____

How long have you lived at this address? _____

FAMILY INFORMATION

Civil Status:

___ Married ___ Separated ___ Divorced ___ Living together ___ Single

Name of your spouse if married: _____

Names and ages of children:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Other people who live in your house: _____



WORK INFORMATION

Current job: _____

Occupation: _____

Immediate Supervisor: _____

Phone: _____

How long have you worked at this place? _____

EDUCATION

Last level of education completed: _____

Courses or training: _____

CHURCH

When did you start attending this church? _____

Ministries in which you have participated: _____

Have you been baptized: Yes () No () Are you a member of this church: Yes () No ()

Describe your relationship with God and your spiritual disciplines: _____



Which person has greatly influenced your life? Why/How? _____

What is your motivation for getting involved in this ministry? _____

Are you willing to respect, fulfill, and support the mission and vision of the ministry that you are asking to be involved with? _____

PERSONAL DECLARATION

I declare that:

1. I will accept the leadership and direction of my leader or person responsible for the ministry.
2. I will conduct myself according to the guidelines set out in the SDMI Child Protection Policy established for this church.
3. I have not been involved in, accused of, or found guilty of any offense involving physical or sexual abuse of children, adolescents, or persons with special needs.
4. I understand that if a complaint is filed against me, I will be forced to follow the procedures established in the Child Protection Policy established for this church.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Complete name: _____

Identification number: _____

****Attach to this form a photocopy of the identification document and proof of lack of criminal and police records.***

PERSONAL REFERENCES (NOT FROM FAMILY MEMBERS)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

RESOURCES

1. FIRST AID FOR CHILDREN

1. <http://www.osh.or.jp/Emergencymedical/english.pdf>
2. <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/First-Aid-Guide.aspx>

2. GUIDE FOR PARENTS ABOUT SOCIAL WEB SITES

1. https://www.toshiba.eu/mcafee_safesocialnetworks/socialnetworking_EN.pdf
2. <https://heimdalsecurity.com/blog/internet-safety-for-kids-10-actionable-tips/>
3. <https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/internetsafetyforkids/teaching-kids-about-internet-safety/1/>

3. SEX EDUCATION AND SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION TRAINING TO HELP ADULTS HELP CHILDREN

1. https://www.stopitnow.org/sites/default/files/documents/files/prevent_child_sexual_abuse.pdf
2. <https://preventchildabuse.org/resource/preventing-child-sexual-abuse/>
3. <https://www.rainn.org/articles/how-can-i-protect-my-child-sexual-assault>
4. <https://childmind.org/article/10-ways-to-teach-your-child-the-skills-to-prevent-sexual-abuse/>
5. <https://fightchildabuse.org/>
6. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0I2gVdBmA-s> (How to Talk with Kids About Sexual Abuse)

4. VIDEOS FOR TRAINING CHILDREN TO PREVENT SEXUAL ABUSE

1. Protect Yourself Rules - Grades K-3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8R2g5QrDAw>
2. Protect Yourself Rules - Grades 4-6 : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RteEiMNldYo>
3. Stop the secrets that hurt:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQnG1xV-EAO1-WheNJg9YdHDNrfGkffNQ>
4. My Body Belongs To Me: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-5mdt9YN6I>
5. Staying Safe: A guide for teaching kids about personal safety and sexual abuse:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r2YKghZ4A9I>