



JENISON BIBLE CHURCH
6360 14th Avenue
Hudsonville, MI 49426



Abuse Prevention Policy

Statement

The Lord has gifted Jenison Bible Church with an abundance of children and youth. It is through the commitment and efforts of you and others like yourself that J.B.C. continues to introduce children and youth to Christ and nurture them in their faith.

Foundational to an effective ministry to children and youth is the need to provide a safe environment in which learning and spiritual growth can take place. A child needs to know that they can participate in

church activities without fear of physical or emotional harm at the hands of the teachers, leaders and aides they have been entrusted to. Additionally, parents are able to participate freely in ministries that address their needs when they know that their children and youth are being well cared for.

We thank you for your commitment to nurture others in Christ and for your willingness to take the first step to ensure a safe environment by reading this pamphlet.

Procedures

A single incident of child molestation can potentially devastate a church and divide the congregation. The good news is that we at Jenison Bible Church can take relatively simple, yet effective steps which significantly reduce the likelihood of child sexual abuse in our midst. Our main objective must be to provide a safe and secure environment for the children who are entrusted to our care. Therefore, J.B.C. requires that all who are involved or wish

to be involved in the oversight of children must go through our screening procedures, which involve the following:

1. Submit to a federal background check if 18 or over
2. Meet the qualifications as set forth under guidelines
3. Be approved by the C.E. Committee and the Elder Board

Guidelines

Consistent with Jenison Bible Church's mission to remain a good testimony for the Lord and to abide by Biblical principles, the following guidelines are established for the safety and protection of the children and members of Jenison Bible Church. J.B.C. acknowledges that these guidelines are not ironclad rules, but the guidelines should be adhered to as much as possible.

Because J.B.C. relies almost exclusively on volunteers to staff its ministries where child care is required, it is understood that some flexibility is required to meet child care needs in emergencies and unusual circumstances. Nonetheless, J.B.C. strongly urges its staff and volunteers to adhere to these guidelines and above all, even if variations from these guidelines take place, that the **two primary objectives of these guidelines be maintained:**

1. That the children be protected from harm
2. That children's workers be protected from false accusations

Our standards are high, because our children are valuable. You have been enlisted for a noble and important work that will impact eternity. We pray that you will always be aware of the fact that you are in the service of the King of kings.

J.B.C. is concerned about the issue of child protection. Because of the desire of J.B.C. to protect our children from harm and our children's workers from false accusations, we have established the following guidelines to help protect the children from abuse in the church and the volunteers from false allegations of abuse.

1. All workers or volunteers 18 and older serving in children's or youth ministries must submit to a federal background check. You may also be asked to fill out the *Children's and Youth Ministries Application*.
2. Age - Teachers/Leaders must be at least eighteen (18) years old and recognized by the adult immediately responsible for the ministry as mature and responsible. Individuals less than eighteen may serve as helpers under the direct supervision of a qualified adult worker. In no case shall a teen under eighteen serve alone or in a supervisory capacity.
3. All teachers must be active or associate members of Jenison Bible Church.
4. Serious Communicable Diseases - Individuals with a known serious communicable disease shall not serve in children's ministries under circumstances where others may contract the disease from them.
5. Child Abuse, Molestation, Neglect, etc. - Persons who have been involved as a

perpetrator in any incident of child abuse, child molestation, child neglect, assault of a child, homosexual acts or other deviant sexual behavior will not be allowed to serve in any children's or youth ministry. The pastors are available to counsel and provide direction to determine what areas of service would be appropriate. Persons known by the elders of J.B.C. to be the subject of a pending felony arrest or pending felony charge for an alleged incident of child abuse, molestation, neglect, assault of a child, homo-sexuality or other sexually deviant behavior shall not serve in a children's ministry.

6. Except in emergency situations, no children's ministry should be staffed at any time by less than one qualified adult and at least one qualified helper.
7. Parents are urged never to allow children under age 10 to leave a church service to go to the rest room or elsewhere in the church building without being accompanied by an adult or a responsible older child. If ushers observe a child leaving a church service without being accompanied by an adult or an older child they deem sufficiently responsible to escort the child, the child should be stopped and escorted back into the service to the adult or other person responsible for the child.
8. The deacon board shall be responsible to assign "roaming council member" (Elder or Deacon). His responsibilities will include periodic visits to any and all children's ministries and areas including nursery. Also - halls and bathrooms will be patrolled with special attention to vacated areas and classrooms and loitering teens and adults. Doors in unoccupied classrooms should always be left open.

Classroom Guidelines

1. From Nursery through 4th Grade at least two approved workers should be in the room at all times.
2. From 5th Grade to High School at least one approved worker should be in the room at all times, but never alone with a child.
3. Rooms that are subdivided into sections or easily visible to the department head are considered a single room.
4. All volunteers in one room should not be from the same family. This is for your own protection.
5. The supervisor in charge of the program must let the volunteers know where he/she can be found in the building.
6. Children's workers shall be present 15 minutes earlier than scheduled. A male children's worker should not begin receiving children into a room until a second qualified worker has arrived.
7. Only assigned workers or approved substitutes are to be allowed to work in children's ministries. The only exception is a parent or guardian with an upset child. If an Elder or Deacon discovers someone in the nursery-toddlers area other than the workers or approved substitutes on the attendance sheet, they should ask the person to leave.
8. Children shall be released from a children's ministry only to parents, grandparents, guardians, other responsible adults or siblings deemed responsible by the qualified adult in charge. Workers may at their discretion refuse to release a child in their care if the person picking up the child cannot properly identify themselves as having authority to pick up the child or if the worker has concerns about the person's authority or maturity to take the child.
9. Any volunteer who has concerns about the safety, welfare or health of children being cared for at J.B.C. should notify the department head, program supervisor or a member of the elder board.
10. To protect our teachers and children, parents are encouraged to take younger children to the bathroom before class begins.
11. Pre-school children must be kept in the room until their parents or caretaker come for them. Only directors may take them out during class time.
12. Corporal punishment, in any form, is strictly prohibited.
13. All classroom doors must either have uncovered windows or must be left open. This includes doors between classrooms as well.

Reporting Procedure

Any children's workers who have reason to believe that a child in their care has, during a church activity, been subjected to or notices the effects of previous child abuse, child molestation, fondling, or unlawful assaultive behavior, should immediately report the incident to the Senior Pastor, if available, if not, then to any of the Associate Pastors or to the vice-chairman of the Elder Board. Or, if none of the above are available, to any member of the Elder Board. Any

such reported incidents shall be promptly investigated by the Pastoral Staff and the elder board and may be reported to the church insurance company and, if required by law or deemed appropriate by the Elder Board or the Senior Pastor, to the proper legal authorities. Any church worker determined to be guilty of improper sexual or assaultive misconduct shall be disciplined pursuant to the church constitution.

Children's and Youth Ministries Agreement

We ask everyone who regularly engages in the supervision of children at Jenison Bible Church to read this policy. This agreement helps our church provide a safe environment for the children who participate in our programs. This information also helps in protecting the volunteers that work with children and youth. We thank you for your interest in ministering to the children and/or youth of J.B.C. and for taking the time to complete this form.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, and agree to uphold, the church's Abuse Prevention Policy. Should my application be accepted, regardless of my membership status, I agree to be bound by ALL of the bylaws and policies of Jenison Bible Church and to refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the church.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Updated 8/27/13