

The gospel of Mark records that when people brought little children to Jesus, He took them in His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them. As a church, it is our desire to bring children to Jesus, too.

In the church, we recognize that we are a reflection of God's love to those in our care and we take our responsibility to them seriously. In our ministry to children we must follow carefully what the scriptures teach:

1. Avoid every kind of evil. (1 Thess. 5:22)
2. But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. (Eph. 5:3)
3. But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. (Matt. 18:6)
4. If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan. (Matt 18:15-17)

Purpose

Big Rock Baptist Church (BRBC) has a mandate to minister to individuals, families, adults, youth, and children. In that context, Big Rock Baptist Church stresses the sanctity of human life and inherent worth of all children in the eyes of our Creator.

Child (Children) means a person under the age of 18 years and includes a youth unless specifically stated otherwise.

It is our commitment to provide reasonable protective care to all preschoolers, children and youth attending any programs sponsored by Big Rock Baptist Church. We feel compelled to establish guidelines for the prevention of child abuse.

We believe that childhood innocence is a gift given by God. children are naturally trusting. Children readily place their faith in adults who care for them. It is our responsibility as a church to safeguard that trust. Childhood innocence is a gift that we must **Plan to Protect** within our church.

I. Child Protection Procedures

These safeguards are not only to protect our children, but also our workers.

1. We will screen all paid employees, including ministerial staff, and volunteers who work with preschoolers, children or youth.
2. We will check any references given to us by those who have been members or adherents for less than six months, and we will do police information checks for all our workers, for any position involving work with preschoolers, children or youth. Anyone with abuse violations will not be allowed to work with children or youth. **Police Information Checks will be renewed every three years.**
3. We will train all of our staff who work with preschoolers, children or youth, both paid and volunteer, to understand the nature of child sexual abuse, how to carry out our policies to prevent sexual abuse, including our clearly defined reporting procedures for suspected incidents.

4. We take seriously, our policies to prevent sexual abuse and will see that they are enforced.
5. We have adopted a basic "Two-Adult" rule. Such a rule says that whenever possible two adults should be present during any children's activity. This rule reduces the risk of child molestation, and also reduces the risk of false accusations of molestation by individuals seeking a quick legal settlement.
6. We will follow the "Six Month" rule. Volunteers will be permitted to work with preschoolers, children or youth only after they have been members of Big Rock Baptist Church for a period of six months. Such a policy gives the church an additional opportunity to evaluate applicants and volunteers and will help to repel persons seeking immediate access to children. (This provision may be waived where the person is transferring in from another church and has a confirmed letter of recommendation signed by a pastor or elder of that church and has references that will be checked.)

II. Recruitment of Paid Staff and Volunteers

1. Ministry Volunteer Application Form and/or Employee Application Form

The Ministry Volunteer Application Form and/or Employee Application Form must be completed for all positions involving ministry with children and youth. To protect the church from legal liability and for the protection of all workers, every prospective ministry leader including established members of Big Rock Baptist Church, must complete the application form found in the Appendix of this document.

2. Mission Teams

Mission Teams working with minors must have updated background checks, no older than one year prior to anticipated volunteer service with the church. The BRBC leader(s) will be responsible for ensuring background checks have been completed in cooperation with mission team leaders.

3. Paid Staff Reference Check

At least two references will be contacted in affirming the appointment of paid staff position. The person making the contacts, the date, and a summary of the reference's comments will all be recorded; this will become part of the Personnel File.

4. Police Information Check (PIC)

A Police Information Check will be made for any approved volunteers who accept a ministry position. All paid staff will also submit to a Police Information Check for their own protection and for the protection of the church. All records will be placed in the Personnel File set up for that purpose in the Administration Office and will be considered confidential, accessible only by the pastoral staff. Any individual who will not submit to this procedure will be ineligible to be involved with children on behalf of the church. Minors under 18 years of age are exempt from the PIC.

5. Approved Volunteers

Approved volunteers will have been approved by the Ministry Leader(s) and completed a screening process which includes:

- a) completion of a Ministry Volunteer Application Form
- b) member of Big Rock Baptist Church for at least six months
- c) regular attendance at this church
- d) Satisfactory Police Information Check
- e) Satisfactory Reference Check

6. Records Retention

Records for employees must be kept for at least 33 years or current legal requirements after last day of service (including applications, references, Police Information Checks, and a record of abuse training). Non-employee forms will be kept for a period of at least 10 years or based on legal requirements after the last day of service.

7. Plan to Protect Training

All Ministry Leaders of ministries involving children, as well as all paid staff, will be equipped with training regarding child safety and child abuse prevention. A record indicating that they have been trained must be kept in the Volunteer Placement File.

III. Guidelines

A. Two Leaders

As a general rule, it is recommended that there be a minimum of two leaders in any room with children, except in the event of an emergency situation. Smaller classes could use high school students on a rotational basis. In some cases where volunteers and parents are known to each other, volunteers between the ages of 12 and 18 may supervise a group of children. A temporary alternative to the two-adult guideline is the open door policy.

- Never be alone with a child in an unsupervised area and never go into a room with a child and shut the door.

B. Programs

Programs that involve children and youth must always include adequate supervisory personnel. Supervision should also be maintained before and after the event until all children are in the custody of their parents or legal guardians.

C. Obtain Parental Permission

What about situations where an adult has a legitimate reason to be alone with a child? Church staff or volunteer workers must obtain the consent of the child's parent or guardian before going out alone with that child or spending time with the child in an unsupervised situation. Workers must also notify an appropriate church leader of such meetings in advance. Children must also have parental permission for involvement in church-sponsored field trips or overnight events.

D. Washroom Guidelines

Parents are to be encouraged to take their children to visit the washroom prior to each class or service. This recommendation is to be communicated to parents at the beginning of each new school year, and throughout the year to newcomers.

If a child requires assistance from an adult to use the washroom, the volunteers must notify the parent and have them come to help their child.

When taking a child who doesn't require assistance to the washroom, the volunteer will instruct the child to wait at the door while the volunteer enters the washroom and ensures it is unoccupied. The volunteer will exit the washroom, instruct the child to enter, and then wait outside the washroom and prop the outside door open. The volunteer will remain outside the washroom door and wait for the child to exit before escorting him or her back to the classroom. It is the volunteer's responsibility to ensure no other person enters the washroom while the child is using it.

In the unlikely event that a child calls for assistance while using the washroom and the parent is not available, an adult female volunteer will be called to assist the child.

For the protection of both children and volunteers, male volunteers will not be permitted to assist children inside a washroom.

E. Open Doors

When it is necessary that only one adult leader be in a closed room with children (e.g. leader leaves room to take children to the washroom; a small class where there is one teacher for a classroom of 3 children), the door of that room should remain open. We have recommended that the classrooms have windows or window doors that will allow ministry supervisors to look in occasionally without interrupting the teaching process.

F. Preschool

All preschool rooms are to be staffed with at least one female adult worker to better facilitate observance of the washroom guidelines.

G. Special Events

Workers are encouraged to plan and involve the children in field trips, social activities and service projects.

The following precautions need to be taken with these activities: 1. Field Trips and Social activities.

- a. These activities must be pre-approved by the church leadership and parents should be notified at least one week prior to the event,
- b. Proper written consent and medical release forms are required for each child participating in field trips and special events. c) all trips and outings will be supervised by a minimum of two adult workers.
- c. When the transporting of children is involved in an activity, all drivers must have a valid driver's license and current automobile insurance. The number of persons per car must not exceed the number of seat belts.

H. Health and Safety Guidelines

a. Sick Children

A child who is ill and could therefore expose other children and workers to illness should not be received into the nursery or classroom.

b. Emergencies

Workers and volunteers are not to give or apply any medication. If a child needs medicating, the parent must give it. No medication will be left in the classroom or with a worker or child. In extreme cases (i.e. peanut allergies, ventilators, etc.) arrangements should be made with written instructions and the permission of the child's parent.

c. Procedures for Dealing with Cuts or Injuries Involving Blood

- Separate the injured child from the other children. Isolate the area where any blood may have dropped on carpet, toys, etc. Apply first aid measures and send someone to locate the parents.
- If other children have had contact with any of the blood from the cut or injury, their parents should be informed.
 1. Put on latex gloves (available in the first-aid kit) and bandage the injury, avoiding contact with mouth, ears and eyes.
- Carefully wipe up all blood and bloody bandages and remove to a secure, inaccessible waste removal receptacle.

- Any blood on the floor or toys must be washed away using a solution of one part disinfectant to ten parts water.
- Remove and properly dispose of latex gloves. Wash carefully with sterilizing soap (available in first-aid kit).

d. Proper Display of Affection

Touch is an essential responsibility in nurturing lives. Volunteers need to be aware of, and sensitive to, differences in sexual development, cultural differences, family backgrounds, individual personalities, and special needs. Physical contact with children should be age and developmentally appropriate. The following guidelines are recommended as pure, genuine and positive displays of God's love:

Appropriate Touch

- Bending down to the child's eye level and speaking kindly; listening to him or her carefully
- Taking a child's hand and leading him or her to an activity
- Putting an arm around the shoulder of a child who needs quieting or comforting
- Taking both of the child's hands as you say, "You did such a good job!"
- (or "I'm so glad to see you. We've missed you!" etc.)
- Patting a child on the head, hand, shoulder or back to affirm him or her
- Holding a child by the shoulders or hand to keep his or her attention while you redirect the child's behavior

Inappropriate Touch

You must avoid

- Kissing a child, coaxing a child to kiss you, hugging and tickling
- Touching a child in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit
- Carrying children or having them sit on your lap
- Being alone with a child
- Prolonged physical contact
- Seductiveness or suggestive contact of care providers
- Any touching used to express power or control over a child

I. Photographs / Audio Visual

- Any photographs or audio visuals of children to be used by Big Rock Baptist Church for social media, promotion of services, publications, bulletin boards, or likewise must have consents signed by parent/guardian (see attached Photo/Audio Visual Release Agreement)
- Any photographs or audio visuals of children as part of Field Trips, Camp or other activities must have consents signed by parent/guardian as part of the WAIVER & MEDICAL RELEASE FORM Field Trips and Special Events

IV. Steps to Report Abuse

Any behaviour which seems abusive or inappropriate must be reported to the Pastor and Eldership. The Abuse Report Form will be completed by the pastor and a second elder. If a second elder is unavailable, a man with a membership in the congregation will be selected by the pastor to assist in this role. The Pastor and Elder will immediately complete a report and contact the Alberta Abuse Hotline,

1-800-387-5437: [Child Intervention: Reporting a concern \(alberta.ca\)](http://Child Intervention: Reporting a concern (alberta.ca))

1. It is not the role of the BRBC staff, elders, or volunteers to interview the minor, that is the role of the child protection agency.

If a child comes forward with an allegation of abuse, a cursory/overview statement will be taken; no exploratory or follow up statements will be taken by BRBC staff, elders, or volunteers. The role of interviewing the child must be done by trained professionals from the child protection agency.

If an allegation of abuse is made by an adult witness, a statement and interview of the adult will be taken by the pastor and eldership. No interview of the child is to be done by BRBC staff elders, or volunteers. The role of interviewing the child must be done by trained professionals from the child protection agency.

2. If a situation involves imminent or immediate danger, the police should be called immediately. Current provincial law is stated as follows:
 - Legal Obligation to Report:
 - The Child, Youth, and Family Enhancement Act (CYFEA) defines child abuse. Anyone can contact
 - Child Intervention when they are worried about the safety or well-being a child or youth.
 - Any person who has reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a child is in need of protective services must report the matter.
 - Personnel are not required to prove that the minor is in need of protective services. They are only required to report observations or disclosures of suspected abuse.
 - Child Abuse Hotline, 24/7 all year, toll free 1-800-387-5437
 - It is important to know that the duty to report is a positive duty on the individual. A failure to report is an offence under the Act. If a person is a member of a profession, a CYS director must report the failure to report to the person's professional body. Fortunately, there is no liability for a person who makes a report in good faith.
 - What constitutes "reasonable and probable grounds" of a child in need depends on the circumstances; however, the belief that a child is in need must have some factual basis.

APPENDIX FORMS



Ministry Volunteer Application for Working with Children

CONFIDENTIAL

This application is to be completed by all volunteers who are involved in the supervision and/or custody of children through programming opportunities at Big Rock Baptist Church. The purpose of this form is to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for all people who chose to participate in Big Rock Baptist Church programming. This application is confidential and will be held in a file by the Big Rock Baptist Church Administration.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Date: ____/____/____ Big Rock Baptist Church Member: ☐ Yes ☐ No

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Driver's License # _____
If transporting children as a volunteer

VOLUNTEER AREA(S): _____

APPLICANT'S STATEMENT:

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I have read through the Child Protection Policy for the Big Rock Baptist Church. I have been an active church member for at least six (6) months (or have appropriate references that have been checked) and I agree to the open door and 2-person policy outlined in the policy. I have had a Police Information Check completed and filed with the Big Rock Baptist Church Administration.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

WAIVER & MEDICAL RELEASE FORM Field Trips and Special Events

Activity: _____ Date: _____

Chaperones: _____

Name of Child: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____ Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____

Does your child have any severe allergies? (bee stings, food, penicillin, other drugs) YES ____ NO ____

If yes, please explain: _____

Does your child have any life-threatening allergies? YES ____ NO ____

If yes, please explain: _____

Is your child bringing any medication with him or her? (Antibiotics, ventilator, Ritalin) YES ____ NO ____

If yes, please explain: _____

Does your child have any physical, emotional, mental or behavioral concerns or limitations that our staff should be aware of?
YES ____ NO ____

If yes, please explain: _____

Precautions are taken for the safety and health of your child, but in the event of accident or sickness, The Big Rock Baptist Church, its staff, and its volunteers are hereby released from any liability. In the event that your child requires special medication, x-rays or treatment, the parents/guardians will be notified immediately. In case of surgical emergency, I hereby give permissions to the attending physician to hospitalize, secure proper treatment for, and to order injection, anesthesia or surgery for my child as named above. Your child must be covered by Provincial Health Insurance or equivalent medical insurance.

Provincial Health Insurance Number: _____

Name of Family Physician: _____ Physician's Phone Number: _____

Photograph/Audio Visual Consent

I HEREBY ☐ GRANT ☐ DO NOT GRANT Photograph/Audio Visual of above individual as well disclosure of individual's identity as part of *Field Trip and Special Event* involvement for sharing within group.

Parent/Guardian's

Signature: Date:

Photo/Audio Visual Release Agreement Form

This form must be filled out for anyone who has their picture taken or likeness recorded for the purpose of Big Rock Baptist Church use including but not limited to church website, social media, promotion of services, publications, bulletin boards, or likewise.

First Name:	Last Name:
Address:	
Phone #:	Email:

Consent to Photography/Audio Visual Release

I HEREBY ☐ GRANT above Photograph/Audio Visual of above individual as well disclose identity of individual, as listed above, ☐ MAY ☐ MAY NOT be included in Big Rock Baptist Church material resources listed above as developed and published in print, electronic, or digital format. Use of this material shall be at the sole discretion of Big Rock Baptist Church in perpetuity, or you withdraw your consent. Consent takes effect when this agreement is signed.

Signature of Individual (If over age 18)

Date

Signature of Guardian
(If Individual is under 18 years of age)

Date

Abuse Report Form

If a child comes forward with an allegation of abuse, a cursory/overview statement will be taken; no exploratory or follow up statements will be taken by BRBC staff, elders, or volunteers. The role of interviewing the child must be done by trained professionals from the Alberta Child Protection Agency or Police.

Completed By (Pastor/Elder):	
Date Report Taken:	
Time Reported Taken:	
Reported To Pastor:	
Reported To Elder:	
Overview of what happened	
<i>Including names of those involved (child, volunteer, etc), names of witnesses, name of who the lead or partner volunteer</i>	
Parent/Guardian Contacted:	
Report To <input type="checkbox"/> Alberta Abuse Hotline <input type="checkbox"/> Police	Alberta Abuse Hotline 1-800-387-5437 OR Police 911
Date Reported	
Time Reported	
Representative & Phone #	

Signature of Pastor (Name: _____)

Date

Signature of Elder (Name: _____)

Date