

# WESTSIDE CHURCH



## **CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY**

The following policies reflect Westside Church's commitment to provide protective care for all children, youth and volunteers who participate in church sponsored activities:

1. Westside Church has a zero tolerance policy toward child abuse in any form.
2. All Westside Kids and Youth workers will be properly screened by completing an application and being interviewed. Criminal background checks will be done. No adult who has been convicted of child abuse will work with children or youth at Westside Church.
3. At least two volunteers will be present at all times to supervise activities in which children or youth are involved. At least one of these will be an adult 18 years of age or older.
4. There will be no one-on-one Westside Kids volunteer with children at any time during Westside Kids classes or activities.
5. No male volunteer will change a child's diapers. Diapers will be changed in plain sight of other volunteers.
6. When taking Pre-School children to the restroom the volunteer will give children as much privacy as possible. The bathroom stall will only be entered by the volunteer when absolutely necessary to assist the child and the door will be kept open.
7. Physical contact with children will be appropriate and only in the presence of other adults or volunteers.  
Appropriate touching:
  - For babies could include cuddling and holding
  - For Pre-School could include holding on lap and brief hugs
  - For Elementary age and older physical contact should be limited to brief hugs, a brief touch on the shoulder or top of head, "high fives," handshakes and the like
8. Children will not be left unsupervised. When nursery through 5th grade classes are over volunteers will stay with the children until they are safely turned over to the parents or parent's pre-authorized representative, presenting the child's matching label. Jr. High age and above will be released on their own after service and are instructed to immediately check in with their parents.
9. Safe check in and out procedures will be followed to ensure the child is turned over to the parent or parent's pre-authorized representative.
10. Volunteers observing any suspicious or inappropriate behavior that may be abusive by an adult toward a child must report the incident or suspicion immediately to a Westside Kids Admin Team member or Matthew Frost.
11. All volunteers working with youth or children are required to have attended Westside church regularly for at least six months, receive a personal recommendation from a Deacon or Elder, read and agree to abide by Westside Kids Policies & Procedures, fill out Westside Kids application, and successfully "pass" an interview and criminal background check.
12. All volunteers must attend mandatory educational training meetings when scheduled.