

Denman Avenue Baptist Church

Child Protection Policy

General Purpose Statement

Denman Avenue Baptist Church (“DABC”) seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for the children who participate in our programs and activities. By implementing the below practices, our goal is to protect the children of DABC from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff and volunteers/workers from false accusations.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the terms “child” or “children” include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years. The term “worker” includes both paid and volunteer persons who work with children.

Selection of Workers

All persons who desire to work with the children participating in our programs and activities will be screened. This screening includes the following:

a) Four Month Rule

No applicant will be considered for any position involving contact with minors until he/she has been involved with DABC for a minimum of four (4) months. This time of interaction between our leadership and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant for working with children

a) Written Application

All persons seeking to work with children must complete and sign a written application in a form to be supplied by us. The application will request basic information from the applicant and will inquire into previous experience with children, previous church affiliation, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal convictions. The application form will be maintained in confidence on file at DABC.

b) Personal Interview

Upon completion of the application, a face-to-face interview may be scheduled with the applicant to discuss his/her suitability for the position.

c) Reference Checks

Before an applicant is permitted to work with children, at least two of the applicants’ references will be checked. These references should be from organizations where the applicant has worked with children in the past. Documentation of the reference checks will be maintained in confidence on file at DABC.

d) Criminal Background Check

A national criminal background check is required for all employees (regardless of position) and for the following categories of volunteers.

- Those who will be involved in our school/preschool/daycare center;
- Those who will be involved in overnight activities with children;
- Those counseling children;

- Those involved in one-on-one mentorship of children; and
- Those having occasional one-on-one contact with children (such as, DABC sponsored athletic teams, coaches and vehicle drivers).

Before a background check is run, prospective workers will be asked to sign an authorization form allowing DABC to run the check. If an individual declines to sign the authorization form, (s)he will be unable to work with children.

What constitutes a disqualifying offense that will keep an individual from working with children will be determined by the Minister of Education/Administration on a case-by-case basis in light of all the surrounding circumstances. Generally, convictions for an offense involving children and/or for offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude someone from being permitted to work with children. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on the application form will also be a disqualifying event.

The background check authorization form and results will be maintained in confidence on file at DABC.

TWO ADULT RULE

It is our goal that a minimum of two adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during our programs and activities. Some youth classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during the class session; in these instances, doors to the classroom should remain open and there should be no fewer than three (3) students with the adult teacher.

Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse

For the purpose of this policy, “child abuse” is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a child’s physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:

- **Physical Abuse** – any physical injury to a child that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.
- **Emotional Abuse** – emotional injury when the child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and persistent teasing.
- **Sexual Abuse** – any sexual activity between a child and an adult or between a child and another child at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
- **Neglect** – depriving a child of his or her essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.

Childcare workers may have the opportunity to become aware of abuse or neglect of the children under our care. In the event an individual involved in the care of children at DABC becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a child under his/her care, this should be reported immediately to the Pastor or Minister of Education/Administration for further action, including reporting to authorities as (may be) mandated by state law.

In the event that an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred at DABC or during sponsored programs or activities, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. The parent or guardian of the child will be notified.
2. The worker alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave from working with children pending an investigation and instructed to remain away from the premises during the investigation.
3. Civil authorities will be notified and DABC will comply with the state's requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists. DABC will fully cooperate with the investigation of the incident by civil authorities.
4. Our insurance company will be notified and we will complete an incident report. Any document received relating to the incident and/or allegations will immediately be forwarded to the insurance company.
5. The Pastor or his designee will be our spokesperson to the media concerning incidents of abuse or neglect, unless he or she is alleged to be involved. We will seek the advice of legal counsel before responding to media inquiries or releasing information to the congregation. All other representatives of the church should refrain from speaking to the media.
6. A pastoral visit will be arranged for those who desire it.
7. Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position working with children or youth.

Open Door Policy

Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or a side window beside it. Doors should never be locked while persons are inside the room.

Teenage Workers

We recognize that there may be times when it is necessary or desirable for child-care workers (paid or volunteer), who themselves are under age 18, to assist in caring for children during programs or activities. The following guidelines apply to teenage workers:

- Must be at least age 12 and in the 7th grade
- Must be screened as specified above
- Must be under the supervision of an adult and must never be left alone with children.

Check-in/Check-out Procedure

For children below first grade a security check-in/check-out procedure will be followed. The child will be signed in by a parent or guardian, who will receive a "security card" for the child. The parent or guardian must present the "security card" in order to sign out the child from care. In the event that a parent or guardian is unable to present the "security card", the Minister of Education/Administration will be contacted. The Minister of Education/Administration will be responsible for releasing the child to the care of a parent or guardian after discussing the surrounding circumstances with the parent or guardian.

Sick Child Policy

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all of the children at DABC. Parents are encouraged to be considerate of other children when deciding whether to place a child under the care of DABC. *In general, children with the following symptoms should NOT be dropped off:*

- Fever, diarrhea, or vomiting within the last 48 hours
- Green or yellow runny nose
- Eye or skin infections

- Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease

Children who are observed by our workers to be ill will be separated from other children and the parent or guardian will be contacted to request that the child be picked up for the day.

Medications Policy

It is the policy of DABC not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children under the care of DABC. Medications should be administered by a parent at home. Parents are reminded of our sick child policy.

Exceptions to the medications policy may be granted to parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions). Parents of such children should address their situation with the adult leadership to develop a plan of action

Discipline Policy

It is the policy of DABC not to administer corporal punishment, even if parents have suggested or given permission for it. There should be no spanking, grabbing, hitting, or other physical discipline of children. Workers should consult with department directors if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues.

Restroom Guidelines

Children five years of age and younger should use a classroom bathroom if one is available. If a classroom bathroom is not available, workers should escort a group of children to the hallway bathroom. They should always seek to go in a group. Children over the age of 5 (five) should be properly supervised at times restroom facilities are needed. Restroom facilities should be utilized that are in closest proximity to classrooms.

Accidental Injuries to Children

In the event that a child or youth is injured while under the care of DABC, the following steps should be followed:

1. For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent or guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care.
2. For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First Aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the worker's supervisor. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
3. Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed in case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional.

Training

DABC will provide annual training on this child protection policy to all new childcare workers and will strive to provide opportunities for additional training classes or events on an annual basis. All workers are strongly encouraged to attend these training events.

Responding to an Allegation of Child Sexual Abuse

Should a misconduct claim or allegation take place, the following steps will guide us in responding in an appropriate way that will not only respect the victim and accused, but DABC as well.

- The parent or guardian of the child will be notified by the Pastor (or his designee) of DABC
- The worker alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave pending an investigation and instructed to remain away from the premises during the investigation.
- At an appropriate time, civil authorities will be notified, and DABC will comply with the requirements of the State of Texas regarding mandatory reporting of abuse. DABC will fully cooperate with the investigation of the incident by civil authorities.
- The Pastor of DABC, or his designee, will be the spokesperson to the media concerning incidents of abuse or neglect. The advice of legal counsel will be sought before responding to media inquiries or releasing information to the congregation. All other representatives of DABC should refrain from speaking to the media.
- Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position working with children or youth.

Denman Avenue Baptist Church

Background Investigation Consent

I, _____ (complete name), hereby authorize Denman Avenue Baptist Church and/or its agents to make an independent investigation of my background, references, character, past employment, education, criminal, or police records, including those maintained by both public and private organizations and all public records for the purpose of confirming the information contained on my Application and/or obtaining other information, which may be material to my qualifications as a volunteer or for employment now, and if applicable, during the tenure of my volunteering or employment with Denman Avenue Baptist Church.

I release Denman Avenue Baptist Church and/or its agents and any person or entity, which provides information pursuant to this authorization, from any and all liabilities, claims, or lawsuits in regards to the information obtained from any and all of the above referenced sources used.

Full Name (print please): _____

Maiden Name or other names used: _____

Address: _____ How long? _____

City/State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Former Street Address: _____ How long? _____

City/State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Social Security #: _____

Driver's License #: _____ State of license: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Denman Avenue Baptist Church

Child/Youth Worker Application

It is the goal of DABC to create a safe and secure environment for all children and workers who are involved in our activities. To facilitate this emphasis, it is necessary to gather pertinent information from those who desire employment or offer volunteer services to our children and youth ministries. This information will be used for the sole purpose of helping the church provide a safe and secure environment for children and workers.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Social Security #: _____

Have you ever used name(s) other than the one above? If yes, please list:

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Please respond to all questions below that apply to the position for which you are applying/volunteering.

Position applying/volunteering for: _____

When are you available to work: _____

Do you have a valid driver's license? _____ Commercial license? _____

License # _____ State issued: _____

Current Employer: _____ How long? _____

Name of Supervisor: _____ Phone #: _____

Previous Employers (within the last five years):

Employer: _____ Dates: _____

Employer: _____ Dates: _____

Employer: _____ Dates: _____

Is there any reason you should NOT work with or around children or youth? _____

If yes, please explain: _____

Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a criminal offense? _____

If yes, please explain: _____

Educational Background

High School: _____

College: _____

Other: _____

Church Information

What, if any, church affiliation do you have? _____

How long have you attended that church? _____

List other churches with which you have been affiliated?

Have you ever worked with youth or children? _____ List where: _____

Please list two references (must be of a business or organizational nature):

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Years known each other: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Years known each other: _____

I hereby give permission to make a thorough investigation of my past employment, education, and background, and release from liability all persons, companies, or corporations supplying such information. I also release Denman Avenue Baptist Church from any liability that might result from making such an investigation. I understand that any false statements or implications made by me on this application or other required documentation shall be considered sufficient cause for denial of employment or discharge.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Denman Avenue Baptist Church

Documentation of Reference Check Youth/Child Worker or Volunteer

Applicant Name: _____

Reference Name: _____

Date of Contact: _____

Method of Contact and Contact Information:

_____ Telephone: _____

_____ E-mail: _____

_____ Other: _____

Reference Check Type (check one):

_____ Former Employer

_____ Former Volunteer

_____ Personal

_____ Other organization (specify):

How long have you known the applicant? Under what circumstances?

What is your knowledge of this person's work with children/youth?

How would you describe this person's manner of interacting with children/youth?

Based on your observation, is this person reliable and dependable?

Would you feel comfortable with this person being alone with a small group of children/youth?
Why or why not?

Do you recommend this person to work with children/youth? Why or why not?

Is this person eligible to work with your organization's children again in the future? Why or why not?

Additional notes or comments:

Signed (person checking reference): _____ Date: _____

Denman Avenue Baptist Church

Incident Report

Instructions

Complete this report under any of the following situations:

- A. A child becomes ill or receives an injury that requires First Aid or medical treatment.
- B. A child receives a bump or blow to the head or other visible injury regardless of treatment.
- C. A child is transported by ambulance.
- D. An unusual or unexpected incident occurs that jeopardizes the safety of a child, such as a child left unattended, there is a vehicle accident (with or without injuries), or a child is exposed to a threatening person or situation.
- E. There is an allegation or reasonable suspicion of abuse of a child. **IMPORTANT:** Consult the State of Texas' mandatory reporting requirements for further information on abuse reporting:
OR
- F. As otherwise required by any state licensing authority or other authority such as childcare or daycare licensing.

Date of incident:	Time of incident:
Name and approximate age of child involved (one report per child)	
Contact information for child involved:	
Parent/Guardian: _____	
Address: _____	
Telephone: _____	E-mail: _____
Nature of injury/incident::	
Location of incident:	
Description of incident:	

Was the above information: _____ Reported to you by someone else? If so, whom? _____ OR
