

DUTCHTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH CHILD PROTECTION POLICY Administered by Child Guard Systems

I. INTRODUCTION

This *Child Protection Policy* (CPP) for Dutchtown Baptist Church (DBC) is to ensure the protection of the children and youth under its care. This CPP is designed to protect children and youth from verbal, physical and sexual abuse and misconduct, and to protect our workers from false accusations.

This CPP provides policies and procedures for:

1. Selection and approval of employees and volunteers to work with children and youth.
2. Accountability of employees and volunteers who work with children and youth.
3. Reporting observed abuse.
4. Responding to observed abuse.

The CPP shall apply effective January 1, 2009, to all current and future employees and volunteers who have responsibility with the activities of children and youth in our care. The following definitions shall apply:

- **Child Guard Systems:** Child Guard Systems is a risk management company with offices located in Richardson, Texas, and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
- **A Child or Youth:** A child or youth is any individual younger than eighteen years of age or having the mental capacity of someone younger than the age of eighteen.
- **A Worker:** A worker is any volunteer or employee at least 18 years of age working with children or youth.
- **Approved Worker:** An approved worker is any worker that has been certified by Child Guard Systems to have passed all criminal/background checks and thereby approved to work within Dutchtown Baptist Church's children's ministry.
- **Ministry Leadership:** Ministry Leadership includes the Ministry staff, and anyone in supervisory roles in the children's ministry.
- **Church: Dutchtown Baptist Church** is a Louisiana Not for Profit Corporation chartered August 22, 1963.
- **Church Leadership:** Leadership includes the Pastoral Staff.
- **Teen Volunteer:** Volunteer workers not yet 18 years of age. (see IV, A)

- **Child Abuse:** According to Louisiana Criminal Code §14:403, Article 603 & 609 of the Children's Code abuse means any one of the following acts which seriously endanger the physical, mental, or emotional health and safety of the child:
 1. The infliction, attempted infliction, or, as a result of inadequate supervision, the allowance of the infliction or attempted infliction of physical or mental injury upon the child by a parent or other person.
 2. The exploitation or overwork of a child by a parent or any other person.
 3. The involvement of the child in any sexual act with a parent or any other person, or the aiding or toleration by the parent or the caretaker of the child's sexual involvement with any other person or of the child's involvement in pornographic displays, or any other involvement of a child in sexual activity constituting a crime under the laws of this state.
 4. Crime against the child shall include the commission of or the attempted commission of any of the following crimes against the child as provided by federal or state statutes:
 - Homicide.
 - Battery.
 - Assault.
 - Rape.
 - Sexual battery.
 - Kidnapping.
 - Criminal neglect.
 - Criminal abandonment.
 - Incest.
 - Carnal Knowledge of a juvenile.
 - Indecent behavior with juveniles.
 - Pornography involving juveniles.
 - Molestation of a juvenile.
 - Crime against nature.
 - Cruelty to juveniles.
 - Contributing to the delinquency or dependency of children.
 - Sale of minor children.

II. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the Ministry Leadership's responsibility to care for and protect the welfare of children and young people entrusted to their care within the roles and responsibilities outlined herein. The following groups within Dutchtown Baptist Church have these specific responsibilities:

A. ***MINISTRY LEADERSHIP***

The Ministry Leadership is responsible for the administration and oversight of this CPP, including the following:

- Ensuring that supervision compliant with this CPP is in place for all activities where children or young people have been entrusted to Dutchtown Baptist Church's care.
- Maintaining and updating the CPP.
- Ensuring that the appropriate parental consent forms are distributed, signed and held on deposit with DBC.
- Training employees and volunteers in the application of this CPP.
- Ensuring the consistent application of the CPP.

B. ***EMPLOYEE AND VOLUNTEER WORKERS***

All employees and volunteer workers involved in the children and youth ministries are responsible to:

- Ensure that supervision compliant with this CPP is in place where children or young people have been entrusted to their care.
- Promptly report (**not investigate**) suspicions of abuse.
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy.
- Behave in a manner that reduces the likelihood of someone misinterpreting his/her actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- Make a reasonable effort to prevent any conduct harmful to a child.

III. CHURCH WORKER SELECTION AND APPROVAL

Every employee or volunteer who will potentially be working with children or youth at DBC will first go through a screening process. Screening will be done annually by Child Guard Systems, and information will be held in strictest confidence. Only the signed Acknowledgement will be kept by Dutchtown Baptist Church.

A. ***EMPLOYEES OR POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES WILL BE REQUIRED TO:***

- Complete and sign the Application for Volunteer or Compensated Worker including the Background Check Waiver. (*Appendix A*).
- Complete and sign the Background Screening Forms. (*Appendix B*).
- Provide personal references and agree to personal reference checks.
- Sign Code of Ethics. (*Appendix D*)

B. POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO:

- Complete and sign the Application for Volunteer or Compensated Worker including the Background Check Waiver. (*Appendix A*).
- Complete and sign the Volunteer Background Screening Form including an Authorization for Criminal Records Check. (*Appendix B*)
- Have been members of DBC for six months.
- Sign Code of Ethics. (*Appendix D*)

C. GENERAL GUIDELINES:

- Any person whose criminal record reveals prior convictions of Child Abuse cannot work with children or youth at Dutchtown Baptist Church.
- Any person who admits to having committed Child Abuse cannot work with children or youth at Dutchtown Baptist Church.
- Adult survivors of child abuse must receive approval from Church Leadership before working with children or youth at Dutchtown Baptist Church. (*Appendix B - Volunteer Background Screening Form*).
- Anyone who fails to sign the Code of Ethics (*Appendix D*) for any reason, will not be allowed to work in any area involving children or youth.

IV. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH SUPERVISION:

A. TWO-ADULT RULE

Two APPROVED adult workers must be present during any Dutchtown Baptist Church children's activity. Teen workers may be helpers but only with two adults present.

B. ACCOUNTABILITY RULE

Workers must be accountable to one another. Each worker is responsible to provide proper protection to the children and to other workers by being watchful for questionable behavior.

C. PARENTAL PERMISSION

Parents shall provide DBC with written permission in advance for their child or children to be involved in Dutchtown Baptist Church sponsored programs, activities and trips off Dutchtown Baptist Church campus.

D. THE VISIBILITY OF CLASSROOMS

Doors to classrooms or others areas while being occupied by children/youth must have windows or be left open. Sunday school superintendents or other ministry leaders will make random visits to all classrooms and frequently visit or inspect areas of Dutchtown Baptist Church buildings that are isolated from view.

E. TIMING OF SUPERVISION

Supervision will be maintained until all children are in the custody of their parents or legal guardians.

F. RATIO OF SUPERVISION

If the specific age of the children/young people in the group is...	Then the maximum group size and number of children two or more adult employees and/or volunteers may supervise is
0-11 months	2 workers for first 10 children/youth; 1 worker per 5 children after that.
12-17 months	2 workers for first 13 children; 1 worker per 6 children after that.
18-23 months	2 workers for first 23 children; 1 worker per 10 children after that.
2 years (24 months)	2 workers for first 22 children; 1 worker per 10 children after that.
3 years	2 workers for first 26 children; 1 worker per 13 children after that.
4 years	2 workers for first 30 children; 1 worker per 15 children after that.
5 years	2 workers for first 35 children; 1 worker per 17 children after that.
6-8 years	2 workers for first 35 children; 1 worker per 17 children after that.
9-<18 years	2 workers for first 35 children; 1 worker per 17 children after that.

G. OVERNIGHT RULE

All workers, chaperons and supervisors must be cleared in advance with the Ministry Leadership prior to overnight activities

V. GUIDELINES:

A. NURSERIES.

1. Only approved workers will be allowed to stay in the Nursery.
2. When a child is left with the Nursery/Preschool Department, the parent(s) or person(s) responsible for the child will be issued an Identification Badge. These will identify this person with the child.
3. Only parents or person responsible for the child and in possession of the Identification Badge will be allowed to pick up children.

B. TRANSPORTATION

On various occasions it may be necessary for the children to go from Dutchtown Baptist Church to another location. Such events will always be scheduled in advance and a signed parental permission slip will be required for your child to leave Dutchtown Baptist Church. Two approved workers are required per vehicle.

1. CHAPERONES

The first priority in transporting the children will be safety. In all events the children will be transported by approved workers in a vehicle that will meet or exceed state requirements for transportation.

The use of personal or private vehicles must be approved in advance by Dutchtown Baptist Church and the parents of all children riding in the vehicles.

2. CHURCH

All drivers of vehicles owned by Dutchtown Baptist will be required to have a current and valid Driver's License and be registered on Dutchtown Baptist Church insurance policy. Dutchtown Baptist Church will maintain sufficient insurance, to include uninsured motorist, to cover financial responsibility in the event of an accident.

All accidents involving a vehicle transporting children/youth in connection with a Dutchtown Baptist Church function must be immediately reported to the local police department and to Ministry Leadership or Church Leadership. Dutchtown Baptist Church may immediately require the driver of the vehicle to be tested for drugs and/or alcohol.

VI. TRAINING

A. FAMILIARIZING WORKERS WITH THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

A mandatory meeting (in groups or one-on-one) will be set with all current and future workers to make sure they fully understand all policies and procedures governed by the CPP. At that time all workers will sign the Code of Ethics (*Appendix D*) as an affirmation to the behavior characteristics expected by the CPP. In addition to having an initial training session, Ministry Leadership will conduct periodic training of workers and staff regarding the CPP procedures.

B. REPORTING STRATEGY FOR KNOWN CHILD ABUSE

1. ***CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT ARE AGAINST THE LAW IN LOUISIANA, AND SO IS THE FAILURE TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT.***

These procedures enable workers to know what constitutes an occasion for reporting, the proper reporting channels, and obligations to make a report.

Parent/guardian child abuse must be reported to the Office of Community Services at 1-225-644-4603.

Worker/stranger abuse must be reported to Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office at 1-225-621-8322.

Reporting known child abuse to your Pastor or Ministry Leadership will NOT satisfy your obligation under the law. Local church policy cannot conflict with or supersede the state law requiring you to report child abuse to a law enforcement agency. The penalty for failure to report or false reporting is a misdemeanor and is punishable with fines up to \$500 and/or 6 months in jail.

2. ***REPORTING PROCEDURE:***

- A. Dial 911.
- B. Approved worker reports to Ministry Leadership.
- C. Ministry Leadership reports discreetly to Church Leadership using the Reporting Child Abuse Form (*Appendix E*).
- D. Should you ever observe or become aware of a person in authority violating any part of this policy notify the appropriate government agency and the local law enforcement agency, if applicable. Also report the infraction to the most Senior Pastor or Ministry Leader not involved in the violation of the DBC Child Protection Policy.

C. DISCUSS SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR IMMEDIATELY

1. Any inappropriate conduct or relationships observed or that you become aware of between an employee or volunteer worker and a member of the youth group or a child must be reported immediately to the Ministry Leadership. The Ministry Leadership will record all interaction with such worker. Prompt warnings must be issued when appropriate, and the situation monitored very closely. The services of any worker suspected of child abuse will be suspended immediately.
2. Reporting Procedure:
 - A. Approved worker reports to Ministry Leadership.
 - B. Ministry Leadership reports discreetly to Church Leadership using the Reporting Child Abuse Form. (*Appendix E*)
 - C. If necessary Ministry Leadership will report to the appropriate authority.
 - D. Should you ever suspect a person in authority of violating any part of this policy notify the suspicion to the most Senior Pastor or Ministry Leader not involved in the violation of the DBC Child Protection Policy.

D. *YOUR LEGAL PROTECTION*

Your report of child abuse or neglect is confidential and immune from civil or criminal liability as long as the report is made in “good faith” and “without malice”.

“Good Faith” means that the person making the report took reasonable steps to learn facts that were readily available and at hand.

“Without Malice” means that the person making the report did not intend to injure or violate the rights of another person.

Provided these two conditions are met, you will also be immune from liability if you are asked to participate in any judicial proceedings that might result from your report.

E. *DUTCHTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH WILL MAINTAIN ADEQUATE RECORDS OF ALL ALLEGATIONS AND ACTIONS TAKEN.*

Appendix A – Application for Volunteer or Compensated Worker

DUTCHTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH
APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTEER OR COMPENSATED WORKERS
Confidential

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any position (volunteer or compensated) involving the supervision or custody of minors. This is not an employment application form. Persons seeking a position in Church as a paid employee will be required to complete an employment application in addition to this screening form. It is being used to help Church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our programs and use our facilities.

Personal

Date _____

Name _____
Last First Middle

Identity must be confirmed with a state driver's license or other photographic identification.

Present address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ SSN _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Have you ever been charged, convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime?

_____ Yes [If yes, please explain each of the above --- (attach a separate page, if necessary)]

_____ No

Do you have a current driver's license? ___ Yes/License # _____ (Copy and Attach)/ ___ No

Applicant's Statement

The information contained in this application is true and correct. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application by Church, I hereby release any individual, business, youth organizations, charity, employer, reference, or any other person or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family, on account of compliance or any attempts to comply, with this authorization, excepting only the communication of knowingly false information.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the Bylaws and policies of Church, and to refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of Church [I will notify Church in writing of any changes by my having been charged, convicted of or pleading guilty to a crime].

I further state that **I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF AND I SIGN THIS RELEASE AS MY OWN FREE ACT.** This is a legally binding agreement, which I have read and understand.

I acknowledge, recognize and authorize Church to conduct a background check of my character, including criminal or any other type of background check that Church deems appropriate in verifying the above representations made by me and will sign any authorizations necessary to do so.

Applicant's Printed Name: _____

Applicant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witnessed this _____ day of _____, 20 _____

By: Printed
Name _____

Signature: _____

Appendix B – Background Screening Forms

DUTCHTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH
VOLUNTEER BACKGROUND SCREENING FORM
Confidential

The following policies reflect our commitment to provide protective care of all children, youth, and volunteers who participate in Dutchtown Baptist Church sponsored activities.

1. Adults who have been convicted of either child sexual or physical abuse should not volunteer service in any Church sponsored activity or program for children or youth.
2. Adult survivors of childhood sexual or physical abuse need the love and acceptance of this Church family. Individuals who have such a history should discuss their desire to work with children or youth with one of the pastoral staff prior to engaging in any volunteer service.
3. All adult volunteers working with youth and children are required to be members of Dutchtown Baptist Church for a minimum of six months.
4. Adult volunteers should observe the “two adult” rule. This requires that adults are never alone with children or youth without an adult partner.
5. Adult volunteers should immediately report any behaviors which seem abusive or inappropriate to their supervisor.

Please Answer Each Question. Your Response Will Be Kept Fully Confidential.

1. As a Church volunteer, do you agree to observe all Church policies regarding working with youth or children?
 Yes
 No
2. Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime?
 Yes Explain

 No
3. Were you a victim of abuse or molestation while a minor?
 Yes
 No

If you prefer, you may refuse to answer this question, or you may discuss your answers in confidence with a senior minister rather than answering it on the form. Answering yes, or leaving the question unanswered, will not automatically disqualify an applicant for children or youth work. I have read the above policy and agree to observe the safeguards listed.

Signature

Date

Please print name

DUTCHTOWN CHURCH
EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND SCREENING FORM
Confidential

The following policies reflect our commitment to provide protective care of all children, youth, and employees who participate in Church sponsored activities.

1. Adults who have been convicted of either child sexual or physical abuse will not serve in any Church sponsored activity or program for children or youth.
2. Adult survivors of childhood sexual or physical abuse need the love and acceptance of this Church family. Individuals who have such a history should discuss their desire to work with children or youth with one of the pastoral staff prior to engaging in any service.
3. Adult employees should observe the “two adult” rule. This requires that adults are never alone with children or youth without an adult partner.
4. Adult employees should immediately report any behaviors which seem abusive or inappropriate to their supervisor.

Please Answer Each Question. Your Response Will Be Kept Fully Confidential.

1. As a Church employee, do you agree to observe all Church policies regarding working with youth or children?

- Yes
- No

2. Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime?

Yes Explain:

No

3. Were you a victim of abuse or molestation while a minor?

- Yes
- No

If you prefer, you may refuse to answer this question, or you may discuss your answers in confidence with a senior minister rather than answering it on the form. Answering yes, or leaving the question unanswered, will not automatically disqualify an applicant for children or youth work. I have read the above policy and agree to observe the safeguards listed.

Signature

Date

Please print name

Appendix C – Volunteer Acknowledgement

**DUTCHTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH
VOLUNTEER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

_____ I understand that I am to report as soon as possible any accidents or injuries to children, youth, or myself to the director of my assigned ministry.

_____ I understand that I am required by law to report known or suspected instances of child abuse as outlined in Section VI, Part B and Part C of the Child Protection Plan of Dutchtown Baptist Church.

_____ I acknowledge that I have received, read, and agree to abide by the Dutchtown Baptist Church Child Protection Plan.

_____ I understand that if I act in violation of any policy or procedure established by Dutchtown Baptist Church for the protection of its children and youth that I may be removed from my position of working in that ministry.

Signature

Date

Print Name

Appendix D – Code of Ethics

DUTCHTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH – CODE OF ETHICS

Statement of Purpose

The employee/volunteer (Worker) is expected to exemplify Godly living in accordance to the Word of God, obey the law and demonstrate personal integrity.

Enforceable Standards

A. Christian Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performance

1. Not knowingly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of Dutchtown Baptist Church.
2. Not knowingly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, property, or equipment of Dutchtown Baptist Church for personal gain or advantage.
3. Not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.
4. Neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. This does not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.
5. Not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.
6. Comply with Dutchtown Baptist Church regulations, state regulations, and other applicable state and federal laws.

B. Conduct Toward Colleagues

1. Adhere to written Dutchtown Baptist Church policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.
2. Not discriminate against or coerce a colleague upon the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability.

C. Conduct Toward Children

1. Not reveal confidential information concerning a child unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
2. Abide by Dutchtown Baptist Church Child Protection Policy and make every effort as outlined therein to prevent conduct harmful to a child.

D. Treatment of Dutchtown Baptist Church

1. Recognize the authority of the Word of God, the Pastor and of those placed in leadership positions.
2. A Worker in DBC is responsible to know all DBC policies and regulations. Any person found in violation of these policies and regulations will not be excused from the consequences of their behavior. Not “knowing” the policy is unacceptable.
3. **The Worker will attend all their designated DBC policy training sessions.**

Signature

Date

Appendix E – Reporting Child Abuse Form

Abuse / Harassment Report Form

Date of the incident _____

Location of the incident: _____

Parties involved in the incident:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Witnesses to the incident:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Description of the incident:

Name of complainant _____ Date _____

Signature of person receiving the complaint _____