

# FAMILY MINISTRY

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## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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### **SAFETY MANUAL**







THE GLADE CHURCH

# FAMILY MINISTRY SAFETY POLICIES

**Policies & Procedures for safety with kids,  
students, and vulnerable adults for the  
prevention of abuse and incident reporting**

*Welcome Leaders!*

*At The Glade Church, we take our responsibility to care for children, students, and vulnerable adults very seriously.*

*The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for The Glade Church volunteer leaders and staff members. Our policies are intended to create a safe and sanctifying environment for all minors in our various age-levels in family ministry. The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced.*

*After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.*

*Sincerely,*

*The Glade Church Staff & Safety Review Team*

*Revision: April 2025*

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# OVERVIEW OF THE GLADE CHURCH SAFETY SYSTEM

Because we love children and desire to protect them, The Glade Church requires all staff members and volunteers working with kids, students, and vulnerable adults to complete FOUR SAFETY STEPS before ministry work or volunteer placements begin.

## STEP ONE: Screening Process

Staff members and volunteers are required to complete The Glade Church Screening Process, which requires a staff member or volunteer to:

- Application - complete an employment -or- volunteer application
- Interview - complete a face-to-face interview (employees and volunteers)
- References - provide 3 references to be checked (employees and volunteers)

## STEP TWO: Criminal Background Check

The Glade Church requires that all staff members and volunteers working or volunteering in ministry activities or programming with minors undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background checks may be required. Individuals who have committed sexually oriented or sex-related crimes may not serve in any area providing services to children or minors. In addition, certain other past criminal acts may preclude an applicant from serving minors. Background checks are renewed annually.

## STEP THREE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

To equip The Glade Church staff members and volunteers with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, The Glade Church requires all staff members and volunteers to complete the Sexual Abuse Awareness Training program. This training will be offered in-person and must be renewed every two years.

## STEP FOUR: Policies & Procedures (sign this document)

Staff members and volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page indicating that he or she has a copy, has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

## DEFINITIONS

The following are some common words and definitions we will utilize throughout this policy document and training.

- **Adult:** anyone 18 years old or above.
  - *In the instance of a high-schooler who has turned 18, but is still in the high school ministry, the guidelines will apply as if that individual is a student, despite their age.*
- **Child(ren):** anyone in kindergarten through 5th grade level
- **Family Ministry:** refers to all participants in the ministry areas from Preschool through High School, including Special Needs Ministry.
- **Kids:** refers to preschool and children's ministry at The Glade Church
- **Ministry Area Leader:** refers to the church staff member over a particular ministry area, ie: Preschool, Children, Middle School, or High School ministry.
- **Preschoolers:** anyone in a ministry area below kindergarten level
- **Students:** term referring to middle school or high school students.
  - *Occasionally there are policies or procedures referring specifically to middle schoolers or high schoolers.*
- **Volunteer Leader:** any person who serves with adults, kids, or students at The Glade Church who has gone through screening and training.

## QUALIFICATIONS TO SERVE

We seek staff and volunteer leaders based on the 4 C's of prioritizing people qualities for ministry.

### Character

Character trumps everything. A talented individual with little integrity damages the ministry. There is no amount of training, skill, or charisma that can sufficiently cover for a lack of integrity. Character must never be minimized. When Paul challenged Timothy to hand ministry over to other men, he challenged him to recruit "faithful men who will be able" not able men who will be faithful. 2 Timothy 2:2

### Competence

We are committed to identifying the critical competencies for each volunteer position we seek to fill and ensure that those competencies are realized in the person on the team. "He shepherded them with a pure heart and guided them with his skillful hands." Psalm 78:72

### Chemistry

Typically, the most fulfilled volunteers are people whose personal values are in close harmony with the values of the church. Romans 12:18; Ephesians 4:11-13

### Conviction

People who sense the Lord has called them to their respective roles offer much more than the minimal job requirements. They pour their souls into the ministry. Judges 2:8; 10

## Eligibility and Timing

A volunteer must be a member of The Glade Church for a minimum of six months before being eligible to serve in volunteer positions providing access to children, students or vulnerable populations.

Potential leaders who have begun the application process may be invited to shadow another leader in a classroom once they've completed an application and background check. They will wear a badge "volunteer in training" so parents, other leaders, and the Safety Team are aware of their situation.

Staff members and volunteers are required to report any policy violations to a supervisor or a member of the The Glade Church Safety Review Team. Staff members and volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in 'grooming' a child for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or 'gatekeeper'), manipulate the child into sexual activity and prevent the child from disclosing the abuse.

## Ineligibility

Refusal to complete the screening process or training materials will disqualify an individual from service, as will failure of background check or refusal to comply with these policies and procedures.

Circumstances that may prohibit a person from being eligible to serve with kids, students, or vulnerable adults include (but are not limited to):

- Individuals with active known addictions that could cause danger to others.
- Individuals with uncontrolled mental illness that could lead to endangering others.
- Individuals convicted of a felony.

Individuals whose felony conviction does not fall under the "zero tolerance" or "Red Flag" section below will be considered on an individual basis pending a background check. This applies to the "Yellow Flag" section below.

If a volunteer-applicant is deemed ineligible to serve as a volunteer, the steps of the screening process that were taken must be stored along with other volunteer files and stored with notes about the steps completed and reason for ineligibility.

## Red Flag Offenses

Individuals will not be employed by or allowed to volunteer in the church.

- Providing alcohol/tobacco/drugs/pornography to a minor
- False imprisonment
- Voyeurism ("Peeping Tom")
- Contributing to the delinquency of a minor
- Criminal solicitation of a minor
- Public indecency
- Exhibitionism
- Assault
- Sexual assault (or any crime that is sexual in nature)
- Homicide
- Kidnapping

- Injury to a child, elderly individual, or disabled individual
- Abandoning or endangering a child
- Matters related to interference with child custody
- Failure to stop or report the aggravated sexual assault of a child

## Yellow Flag Offenses

Individuals need additional screening to determine compatibility with church policy.

- Driving under the influence or while intoxicated
- Possession/distribution of a controlled substance
- Making a firearm accessible to a child
- Theft, including identity theft

## CHILD SAFETY POLICY

### Abuse Tolerance

The Glade Church has a zero tolerance for abuse in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer at The Glade Church to act in the best interest of all children in every program.

In the event that staff or volunteers observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is their responsibility to immediately report their observations to their Ministry Area leader, the Family Pastor or the Business Administrator.

### Reporting Suspicious Or Inappropriate Behaviors

The Glade Church is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to the The Glade Church Safety Review Team and the Police Department, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency.

An element of the safe environment referenced above includes the fostering of a culture of reporting relevant information to a supervisor or a member of the The Glade Church Safety Review Team. Because sexual abusers ‘groom’ children for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to ‘groom’ a child for sexual abuse. Staff members and volunteers are asked to report ‘grooming’ behavior, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to a supervisor or a member of the The Glade Church Safety Review Team.

### Enforcement Of Policies

The Glade Church staff members and volunteers who supervise other staff members or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all The Glade Church policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from a position in age-level ministries – for both volunteers and staff members. In the case of volunteer leaders, final decisions

related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the Family Pastor and Lead Team. For any violation or suspected violation by staff member(s), any decisions about dismissal or disciplinary action will be the responsibility of the Personnel Committee.

## **REPORTING ABUSE OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE**

**For incidents in which persons are in immediate danger, call 911 immediately.**

### **Reporting Violation Of Policy**

In order to maintain a safe environment for our children, The Glade Church staff members and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of these policies. All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to a ministry-area leader or the Family Pastor.

### **Consequences Of Violation**

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by the church to be harmful to a minor or vulnerable adult will be immediately suspended from participation in any activities involving children, students or vulnerable populations at The Glade Church. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective agencies.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act should be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves children, students or vulnerable populations at The Glade Church. If the person is a staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from The Glade Church.

Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination (employee) or removal (volunteer). Volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any activities involving children, students or vulnerable populations at The Glade Church.

### **Reporting Abuse Or Suspicions Of Abuse**

The Glade Church is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behavior or suspicions of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to Child Protective Services or criminal law enforcement.

Because sexual abusers 'groom' children for abuse, it is possible that a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to groom a child for sexual abuse. Please report 'grooming' behavior, policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to an immediate supervisor, such that the church may take appropriate action to safeguard children in the program.

**We report all suspected or alleged abuse or neglect of children to the Tennessee Department of Children's Services Hotline: 1-877-237-0004**

Everyone in Tennessee is a mandated reporter. Tennessee Code Annotated 37-1-403(i)(1) requires all persons to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. "Any person who has knowledge of or is called upon to render aid to any child who is suffering from or has sustained any wound, injury, disability, or physical or mental condition shall report such harm immediately if the harm is of such a nature as to reasonably indicate that it has been caused by brutality abuse, or neglect or that, on basis of available information, reasonably appears to have been caused by brutality, abuse, or neglect." Failure to report abuse is a violation of the law and a Class A misdemeanor, carrying a sentence of up to three months imprisonment, a fine or both. Those who report and "act in good faith" are immune from any civil or criminal charges, which may result. The reporter has the right to remain confidential and anonymous.

Because many adults are unfamiliar with Tennessee reporting requirements and may be fearful of the process, The Glade Church utilizes a 'tandem or dual report' model, where permitted. A 'dual report' occurs when a The Glade Church supervisor reports the suspicion or allegation together with the individual who saw, heard or received information causing him or her to suspect abuse or neglect.

THIS PRACTICE IS NOT REQUIRED, OR INTENDED TO INHIBIT ANY STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER FROM REPORTING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT, DCS OR THE ABUSE HOTLINE DIRECTLY. Instead, it is meant to facilitate reporting, protect children and support individuals who may not feel able or willing to report alone.

NO PERMISSION IS NEEDED from The Glade Church before reporting to law enforcement personnel or the DCS Hotline.

While not required by state law, please report all suspicions of child abuse or neglect (or any inappropriate or 'grooming' behaviors of a colleague or coworker) to a ministry-area leader or a member of the The Glade Church Safety Review Team. This request is intended to assist the church in properly protecting kids, students, and vulnerable adults involved in Glade Church programs.

**When in doubt, report.**

**Non-Church Setting**

If you witness or suspect abuse in a non-church setting, you are still a mandatory reporter under Tennessee law.

You should call the Department of Children's Services (1-877-237-0004) as soon as possible to report any suspected or witnessed abuse of a minor. The staff at The Glade Church are always available to support and offer resources for all involved.

# SUSPECTED ABUSE - INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Everyone in Tennessee is a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect. Any person who knowingly fails to make a report required by § 37-1-403 commits an offense. [\(QR code below links to a digital version of this form\)](#)

The information recorded here will be referenced for a mandatory report to Child Protective Services and local law enforcement. The victim's information on this form must be kept confidential, with the exception of legal authorities.

**DATE OF INCIDENT REPORT:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian's name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Person making report: \_\_\_\_\_  
Role/relationship to the child: \_\_\_\_\_



**TYPE OF INCIDENT** (select all that apply)

- Suspicion or allegation of abuse or neglect of the child based on visible observations
- Suspicion or allegation of abuse or neglect of the child as told by the child
- Suspicion of potential harm to the child

**ALLEGED PERPETRATOR(S) DETAILS** (if known)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Connection with the child: \_\_\_\_\_  
Any other relevant factors: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Were there any other witnesses to the incident?  YES  NO

If "yes," provide their name, number, and involvement below:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILS OF INCIDENT**

Describe the incident, including alleged behavior of the perpetrator(s), sighted injury, or other indicators of abuse, as well as the conversation with the child. Be as thorough as you can. Details continue on separate sheet:  YES  NO

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FORM COMPLETION**

I have completed this form to the best of my knowledge and ability.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**INCIDENT RESPONSE**

Please check which of the following have been informed of this incident, and note the date.

**EXTERNAL**

- Police

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

- Child Protective Services

County: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Name of dispatcher: \_\_\_\_\_ Case #: \_\_\_\_\_

- Other (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**INTERNAL**

- Ministry Area Director

Title & Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

- Safety Team Leader

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

- Senior Pastor

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

# SAFETY REVIEW TEAM

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for kids, students, and vulnerable adults, as well as providing guidance for staff and volunteer leaders, The Glade Church will appoint and maintain a Safety Review Team, which may meet as often as needed, but not less than twice a year for policy reviews, evaluation of processes, and discussion of safety procedures.

The purpose of the Safety Review Team is to enable The Glade Church Family Ministry to carry out appropriate ministry activities while safeguarding program participants against emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

## Composition

The Safety Review Team will be composed of the age-level ministry directors/pastors and volunteer leaders from each ministry area.

### October 2024-October 2025

WEE - Stephanie Henley - Tara Baker  
PS - Bridget Scott - Alex Perrigo  
CH - Erica Tucker - Kimberlee Franklin  
MS - David Watkins - Morgan Johnson  
HS - Jeremiah Scott - Stephen Branch  
Family Pastor - Jeremy Echols

## Responsibilities

The Safety Review Team will be charged with the following duties:

1. Applying existing The Glade Church policies and procedures related to safety and risk management issues.
2. Monitoring all Family Ministry programs for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
3. Making recommendations to the The Glade Church Staff Lead Team regarding safety issues or policy/procedure updates.
4. Assist with verifying references in the new volunteer leader application process.

# SAFE INTERACTIONS WITH KIDS & STUDENTS

## Verbal Interactions

Verbal interactions between leaders and kids, students, or vulnerable adults should be positive and uplifting. The Glade Church staff members and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of kids/students.

To this end, staff members and volunteers should not talk in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, staff members and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in their ministry role.

## One-To-One Interactions With Children

Staff members and volunteers should never conduct one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interaction with children or students while participating in The Glade Church Family Ministry program. Another adult who has completed the The Glade Church application and screening process should always be present.

**You can have a private conversation in a public space.**

## Physical Contact

The Glade Church is committed to protecting those in its care. To this end, The Glade Church has implemented a 'physical contact policy' which promotes a positive, nurturing environment for our Family Ministries while protecting kids, students, and vulnerable adults. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in Family Ministries programs:

- Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members or volunteers and kids/students are important for healthy development, and are generally suitable in the church setting.
- Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to the ministry-area leader, the Family Pastor or the Business Administrator.
- Physical contact should be for the benefit of the child/student, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.
- Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other kids and adults. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation.
- Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of staff members or volunteers in Family Ministry areas must foster trust at all times. Personal conduct must be above reproach.
- Do not force physical contact, touch or affection on a reluctant child or student. An individual's preference not to be touched must be respected, unless there is a risk of this child/student harming himself or another participant.
- Staff members and volunteer leaders are responsible for protecting those under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.
- Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by a staff member or volunteer must be reported immediately to the ministry-area leader, the Family Pastor or the Business Administrator.

**In all interactions, leaders must seek to remain above reproach.**

# MONITORING PRESCHOOL & CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

## Building Safety

Every ministry supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the ministry program area is monitored during programming serving children. This includes unobserved monitoring of staff members, volunteers and children. No child will ever be left unattended in a ministry area or on a playground during regular programming, classes or activities.

## Supervision

Only parents (dropping off/picking up), screened ministry volunteers, church staff members, and children are allowed in areas where ministry to preschool and children are occurring. All other adults should be asked for identification and immediately escorted out of the area. If questions or concerns arise related to any person in the area, a ministry supervisor or security team member should be notified immediately.

## Two-Deep Leadership

Avoid being alone with an individual child in any room or during any ministry program. If one supervising adult must leave a group of children, another volunteer or staff member must be notified so that the Two-Deep Leadership rule can be followed.

**If two individuals serving in a room are related to one another, a third unrelated volunteer or staff member must be present.**

**Two trained, screened adults should supervise preschoolers and children at all times.**

If an unusual circumstance occurs and you find yourself alone with a single child, take the child to a room or building occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others. (Example: if a child is the last in a class to be picked up by a parent, move to an adjoining room where other staff members or volunteers are present.)

If you need to talk with a child alone, do it in the hallway or a highly visible area, or have another leader with you. You can have a private conversation in a public space.

After every ministry event, ensure that every room, area and restroom is checked prior to leaving.

## Playgrounds

On the playground, remember to circulate, watching children during play periods, giving particular attention to areas not easily seen from all viewpoints. (Example: under slides, in corners, behind structures).

Any two children together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area of the playground.

## Leader To Child Ratios

The Glade Church is committed to providing adequate supervision in all Children's Ministries programs. Accordingly, the following worker to child ratios will be observed:

Program	Leaders	Max	Preferred
Nursery	2	8	4
Preschool, 2 & 3 years old	2	12	6
Preschool, 4 & 5 years old	2	18	8
Elementary	2	20	8
VBS	2	20	15

If a classroom is 'out of ratio' it is the responsibility of the leader to immediately notify the program supervisor or the ministry area leader. Staff and leaders will make diligent efforts to find substitute workers to immediately bring the adult to child ratio into compliance with Church policy.

## Check-In / Security tags

Leaders will check-in and prominently wear a nametag while serving with preschoolers or children.

Parents or guardians will check-in their preschoolers and/or children. Upon check-in, each child will receive a nametag and their parent or guardian will be given a claim tag with security code. Volunteers must check each security code before releasing a child at pick up.

If a claim tag is lost, send the parent or guardian to (a) the ministry-area leader or (b) the Kids Check-In desk, where proper identification must be shown to a staff member before the child is released. (Have the child stay in the classroom; the parent may pick up the child once cleared).

## Release Of Children

At any time that a child has been entrusted to The Glade Church staff members or volunteers, the Church incurs responsibility for the safety and well-being of the child. Staff members and volunteers must act to ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of children in their charge. It is presumed an adult who drops off a child or student has authority to pick up the child.

Under no circumstance should staff or volunteers release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other person (must be middle-school or older) authorized by the parent or guardian. Other sibling children may not present security tags to pick up preschoolers or children from a ministry area. The person picking up must present a security code on the claim tag matching the child's nametag.

In the event that staff members or volunteers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they should immediately locate a staff member, ministry-area leader, or leader stationed in the hallway for support before releasing the child.

## Restroom Policies - Adults & Leaders

DO NOT USE OR OCCUPY a bathroom in use by children. Adults should use a restroom separate and apart from restrooms used by children during weekend services or when there are children present. No volunteer OF ANY AGE should enter or occupy a bathroom while children are using it.

## Restroom Policies - Preschool Ministry

Because preschoolers in the nursery may require complete assistance with their bathroom activities, all staff members and volunteers will observe the following policies:

### Diapering

- Only female adult leaders (18 or older) or the preschooler's parent or legal guardian will undertake the diapering of kids of either sex.
- Changing of diapers should be done in plain sight of other nursery workers.
- Preschoolers will never be left unattended on changing tables.
- Any special instructions given by parents in nursery will be recorded on the registration cards.
- Preschoolers should be re-diapered and re-clothed immediately upon the completion of changing their soiled diaper. The leader must use gloves and wipes provided and wash hands afterwards.
- Never leave a baby on the changing table unattended.

### Toilet training

- No preschooler will be forced to toilet train.
- Only female nursery leaders or the preschooler's parent or legal guardian will participate in toilet training efforts with kids of either sex.
- When preschoolers are taken into bathrooms the door will be left partially open.  
*Make sure other kids can't see the undressed preschooler. The leader can have a conversation with the one in the potty reminding him/her to wipe, flush, pull up pants, and wash hands.*
- Preschoolers will never be left unattended in bathrooms.
- Parents should be consulted on their child's progress in the toilet training process before leaving the preschooler with volunteers or staff members. Any special instructions given by parents will be recorded on the registration card.
- Preschoolers should be assisted in straightening their clothing before returning to the classroom setting.
- "Accidents" should be handled in a reassuring manner and by completing the changing of diapers or underwear and clothing. Extra clothing and diapers are available in the Preschool Kitchen, if the parent has not furnished a clothing change.

## Restroom Policies - Children's Ministry

If a leader must go into the restroom to check on an individual child, seek out another leader to accompany the process. If another leader is not readily available, go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance. Do not enter the restroom.

If a child requires immediate assistance, leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child in completing his or her toileting activities, while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall. Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another staff member or volunteer leader.

**If restroom use is required:**

- Only adult female workers will assist children in the restroom, unless a parent is assisting their own child.
- Only one child in the restroom at a time, in a single toilet facility.
- In the rare instance when a leader is assisting a child, the door must not be locked, and must remain ajar. In general, children should receive the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities. Encourage children to do all they can for themselves.
- Requests for a restroom break.
  - During programming, it is OK for a leader to ask a child if they can “hold it” until the session completes.
  - All students in grades 1-3 must be accompanied to the restroom by a female leader.
  - 4th and 5th grade students may go to KIDS ONLY restrooms alone with a bathroom hall pass from their room.
- Be aware if a child repeatedly asks to use the restroom and stays there for unusual periods of time. Report this behavior to a ministry area leader or leader stationed in the hallway for support if it occurs.
- A single staff member or volunteer leader should never take a lone child to the restroom without other leaders in view.

## Restroom Policy- Special Needs Ministry

Parents will offer instruction to staff members or volunteers to change the diapers of individuals with special needs. After the age of 4, parents or legal guardians will change the diapers of all individuals with special needs. If someone with special needs requires assistance using the restroom, a special needs volunteer may assist them in the restroom.

# STUDENT MINISTRY SITUATIONS & POLICIES

## Digital Communication

Most communication with students via text or email will be to a group. If communication is needed with an individual student, two adults should be included.

## Driving

Proper passenger restraints must be used while transporting students as required by law. Students may not drive to out-of-town or overnight events, camps, or retreats. Every effort should be made to prevent transporting a student alone, but if necessary, prior permission from a parent/guardian is required.

Any leader driving for an event or activity with students must have a valid driver's license and proof of insurance to show the person in charge of the event, if requested.

When one vehicle is used for an event, the two-adult rule still applies. When several vehicles are taken for an event, keeping the other vehicles in sight is an acceptable substitute for the two-adult rule, provided no child/student is alone with an adult.

## Unplanned Meetings with Students and Leaders

Unplanned contacts between a student and staff member or volunteer leader should be conducted with the same rules as planned activities as much as possible. Office meetings should have the door open or invite another adult to be present. Unplanned meetings in the community should follow similar guidelines for safety. Students and leaders should always have conversations in a place where they are visible and interactions are clearly seen.

## DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

### Discipline

It is The Glade Church's policy that staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children & students. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children or students.

**Prevention is the preferred strategy. What can be predicted can often be prevented.**

A prepared leader with a structured lesson plan will head off many behavior issues. For the steps listed below, a child is the example, but the procedure is the same for preschoolers through high schoolers. Age-appropriate conversations and adjustments can be made for the age of the classroom where behavior is out of line and discipline is required.

Be careful to make sure the disciplinary step matches the situation. The goal is to help guide positive behaviors, remove distraction, enhance learning, and invest in the growth of kids. The goal is never to embarrass a child and the technique should not be harsh or belittling. These steps can help with continuous behavior that is out of line.

#### Step 1 - Tactics to use in the classroom

- Use statements to redirect attention or behavior
- Give reminders about the rules (reference the classroom poster)
- Pull the child aside within the classroom, get on his level, and share about the behavior that's out of line and the impact it's having on the class.

#### Step 2 - Notify staff / Conversation with parent

- Leaders can share about behavior at parent pick-up. This leads to partnership and raised awareness. Parents can't work with a child on something they don't know about.
  - Helpful language: "I've noticed that [child] tends to [describe the behavior] in certain [situations], have you noticed anything like that at home?" "What insight can you share with me about how to help [child] have a better experience in the class?"
- If parents are addressed - please also make the Ministry Director aware.

#### Step 3 - Staff requests that a parent comes to observe the behavior

- This is a last resort, as it pulls the parent out of their class or worship & significantly changes the dynamic in the classroom.

- Escalating to this step must always involve the Ministry Director – and cannot come as a surprise to a parent. We can't require them to come to class if we haven't had multiple conversations with them about the behavior.
- The follow-up involves staff, parent, and teacher conversation to discuss what was (or was not) observed with the child's behavior and healthy next steps.

## Anti-Bullying

The Glade Church will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of any one person by another. In addition, we will not tolerate any behavior that is classified under the definition of bullying, and to the extent that such actions are disruptive, we will take necessary steps to eliminate such behavior.

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take on various forms, including:

- **Physical bullying** – when one person engages in physical force against one person, such as by hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
- **Verbal bullying** – when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittling or calling another hurtful names.
- **Nonverbal or relational bullying** – when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.
- **Cyberbullying** – the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including social media) that can include:
  - Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images.
  - Posting sensitive, private information about another person.
  - Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad.
  - Intentionally excluding someone from an online group.
  - Hazing – an activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers that person regardless of that person's willingness to participate.
  - Sexualized bullying – when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature, including but not limited to sexting, exposure of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.

**Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying.**

Verbal, physical or emotional bullying is not acceptable in Glade Church ministry programs. This policy applies to all children, students, staff, or volunteers.

At the first sign of bullying in any form, act decisively, and inform your ministry area leader. There is no "harmless put-down" where bullying is concerned.

**First Offense:** Issue a warning to the child and a general reminder to the group that this kind of interaction is wrong. Try not to embarrass or chastise.

**Second Offense:** Pull the offending child/student from the group (in a visible, supervised location) and discuss the inappropriate interaction or behavior. Set clear parameters and behavioral goals.

- Notify a ministry-area leader of ANY signs of bullying or verbal abuse.
- Privately, but with another adult present, confirm that a child/student who was the target of the bullying behaviors is not in danger of continued harassment and is physically and emotionally stable. Be discreet, so the child/student isn't singled out in front of the group.

**Third Offense:** Remove the offending child/student from the group activity or event. Send the child to a pastor or ministry area leader for a phone call (or in-person communication onsite) with his or her parent(s).

- Incidents at this level most likely involve dismissal from the programmed activity, even if this is an off-campus event. Parents must make arrangements to pick up the child/student from the church or from the camp/retreat site.
- Any incident of this sort must be documented and stored with Safety Review Team files. Documentation is confidential and maintained for clarity of the specifics of the incident. This provides protection of the child, the leader, and the ministry area.

## OFF-SITE OR OVERNIGHT EVENTS

An adult will never share a room with only one child/student or sleep in a bed with a child/student on a Glade Church sponsored event - except in the case of a parent and their own child, with approval and awareness of the ministry director.

Background checks must be completed and approved for all adults involved with an overnight event.

**Glade Church Safety policies will be upheld on all off-site and overnight events.**

## TRANSPORTATION

Staff members and volunteers may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for children or students. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation:

- Children/Students should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave an adult one-on-one with a child or student.
- Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with kids/students while in vehicles.
- No cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving Glade Church vans, or vehicles owned or rented by The Glade Church, unless in an emergency.
- No drivers under age 25 may drive Glade Church owned or rented vehicles.
- Any leaders driving kids or students must complete the Driver Authorization Form which includes running the MVR (Motor Vehicle Report) background check.

## **MEDICATION**

Do not administer medication of any kind to any child, student, or vulnerable adult while serving in ministry programs, including 'over the counter' drugs. Children and students may not share medications with each other either.

For overnight or off-campus events where a child or student must take medication, there should be written instructions and permission to remind.

## **INTOXICANTS**

Staff members and volunteer leaders are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while in any Glade Church facility, while traveling with kids/students, or while working with or supervising any ministry program.

## **TOBACCO USE**

The Glade Church requires staff members and volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products (smoking, dipping, vaping, etc...) in church facilities, while in the presence of kids/students/parents, or during Glade Church activities or programs. The Glade Church is a tobacco-free and smoke-free facility.

## **SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with kids, students, or vulnerable adults. They are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any kid/student in the program.

## **SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIAL**

Staff members and volunteers in Family Ministry at The Glade Church are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) on church property or in the presence of kids or students.

## **NUDITY**

Staff members and volunteers in Glade Church's Family Ministries should never be nude in the presence of children in their care. In the event there is a situation that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes during a pool party, weekend or overnight retreat, etc.), staff member/volunteer will submit a plan to the Family Pastor concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.

# PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

## Parental Contact

Parents who leave a child in the care of The Glade Church staff members and volunteers during church services or activities will be contacted if their child becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in Family Ministry programs.

## Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to visit any and all services and programs in which their child is involved at The Glade Church. Parents have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in which their child is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their children's programs at The Glade Church will be required to complete the The Glade Church volunteer application and screening process.

# EMERGENCY PLANS

Any decision to evacuate or lockdown during an event will be made by the Safety Team. Evacuation procedures and routes are posted in each classroom.

- In case of Evacuation, leaders will immediately count participants, evacuate to the closest stairwell or exit, and group the participants together to check-in and re-count. They must wait for the "all clear" from the safety team.
- In case of Sheltering for a storm, leaders will immediately count participants, follow the route to the central stairway/hallway and take shelter. They must wait for the "all clear" from the safety team.
- In case of Lockdown, leaders will gather kids/students into a classroom, secure the door lock, engage the door jammer hanging behind the door, and sit quietly away from the door. They must wait for the "all clear" from the safety team.

# RESPONSE TO SUICIDAL INDIVIDUAL

- Secure the immediate safety of the individual.
  - If they are in immediate danger, call 911.
  - Direct individual to National Suicide Hotline, 1-800-273-8255
  - Call the National Suicide Hotline and seek guidance.
  - We are all mandated reporters:
  - If someone expresses that they are thinking of hurting themselves or someone else and they have a plan, we have to report per state law.
- Contact ministry leader, pastor, or other Glade Church staff person.
  - Alert them of the situation and the steps you have taken.
- Glade Church staff member contacts parents/guardians of the individual if applicable and seeks professional counsel.

- Rely on individuals and groups who are professionally trained and hold certifications in the field of mental health.
- Plan of care put in place.
  - Securing safety of the individual.
  - Connecting with appropriate resources i.e counseling, etc.
  - Maintaining continued ministry for the individual and his/her family.
  - Securing avenues for mental health care.
- Glade church staff member keep ongoing documentation.
  - Document everything from the first contact with the individual through the plan of care and beyond.
  - The Glade Church staff member will notify their direct supervisor and the Business Administrator and send appropriate information and documentation.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement

*This page is to be signed, detached, and delivered to the Safety Review Team.*

I have received and read a copy of The Glade Church's Family Ministry Policies and Procedures and understand the importance of the material in the manual. I agree to abide by these guidelines while serving or working at The Glade Church.

I understand the manual may be modified, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated by The Glade Church. Some updates may not require the need for notice to leaders - but any substantial updates will be communicated via training and/or revised printed safety manuals. The most current version will always be posted online at [www.thegladechurch.org/resources](http://www.thegladechurch.org/resources)

I have reviewed the duties listed in my ministry position description, and I agree to fulfill these duties. I understand I may choose to end my employment or voluntary service at The Glade Church at any time (If possible, I will provide two weeks' notice to my supervisor).

I acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this handbook in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between me and The Glade Church. If applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no monetary compensation for hours worked.

I understand it is my responsibility to review new guidelines which may be created and distributed.

I acknowledge receipt of The Glade Church policies and procedures manual.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please select one:**

- Staff Member
- Volunteer Leader

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Printed Name (please print legibly)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*











THE GLADE CHURCH

