

## Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Agreement

Calvary Presbyterian Church seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment for the children, youth, and vulnerable adults who participate in our ministries and activities. As a people of faith, we are open to growth, taking risks, and change and are sensitive to different perspectives. We honor confidentiality and direct communications. We take action, not just discuss issues. By implementing the below practices, our goal is to protect the children, youth, and vulnerable adults of our church from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior, while also protecting our staff and volunteers. Calvary Presbyterian Church will not tolerate any form of neglect or child abuse whether it is in person or online. Employees working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults are considered mandated reporters and are required to report abuse to the directors who in turn report to county child welfare department or law enforcement. We will respond to allegations of abuse in a swift and compassionate manner. This policy will be implemented to create a consistent climate of safety.

### Screening of Staff and Volunteers:

All persons who desire to work with children (infants to age 11), youth (ages 12-17), or vulnerable adults in our ministries and activities will be screened. This includes Calvary staff, Calvary officers (Elders, Deacons, Trustees of the Foundation), Childcare team teachers, Youth teachers, and adult and youth volunteers. A vulnerable adult is a person 18 years and older who, because of age, disability, or other circumstances, is in a position of dependence on others or is other side at a greater risk of being harmed by persons in positions of authority or trust relative to that person. A regular volunteer works with children more than 16 hours per month or 32 hours per year. This screening includes the following:

- Written Application
  - All Family Ministry staff (those who work with children or youth) and volunteers for Calvary ministries must complete and sign a written application. The application will request basic information from the applicant and will ask about previous experience with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. The application form will be reviewed and maintained in confidence on file in a secure place at Calvary Presbyterian Church.
- Check References and Criminal Background Check
  - If the applicant is an appropriate candidate for employment or volunteer position the ministry leader will check at least two references. Then a national criminal background check is required for all employees (regardless of position) and for the following categories of volunteers.
    - Those who are paid or act as volunteer in our Family Ministry as a teacher, aide, camp counselor, on-site supervisor, greeter, or other support role to vulnerable adults.
  - Before a background check is run, prospective volunteers will be asked to sign an authorizations form allowing Calvary Presbyterian Church to run the check. If an individual declines to sign an authorization form, that individual will be unable to work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
  - Applicant can request a copy of the background check to be sent to them via email.
  - Background checks will be maintained in confidence on file at Calvary Presbyterian Church.
- LiveScan Fingerprinting
  - If adults are working directly with children or youth as a long-term (more than 4 work sessions) teacher or caregiver, they must have fingerprinting done through LiveScan.
  - Calvary Presbyterian Church will provide the Certifix LiveScan form to applicant who can choose the Certifix location most convenient to them.
- Disqualifying Offenses
  - Actions that would keep an individual from working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults would include convictions for an offense involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults and/or offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency, and any conduct contrary to our mission will prevent someone from being permitted to work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults. Failure to disclose a criminal accusation or conviction or abusive behavior on the application form will also disqualify the person from volunteering in Family Ministries or other Calvary ministries.
- Training on child abuse & neglect identification and reporting
  - An administrator, employee, or regular volunteer shall individually complete training in child abuse & neglect identification and training in child abuse & neglect reporting prior to employment or volunteering.
  - Resources: SafeGatherings training [www.safegatherings.com](http://www.safegatherings.com) or <https://mandatedreporter.ca.com>.

**Safe Boundaries:** When creating safe boundaries for children, youth, or vulnerable adults it is important to establish what types of affection are appropriate and inappropriate; otherwise that decision is left to each individual. Stating which behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate allows Calvary childcare and youth staff, directors, pastors and volunteers to comfortably show positive affection through their ministries, and yet identify individuals who are not maintaining safe boundaries with children or youth. Please see addendum for examples of appropriate and inappropriate behaviors.

- Respect one's own bodily autonomy and that of others.
- Offer appropriate physical contact only with the consent of another person.

### Adult Leader Responsibilities:

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- Be sure the children and youth for whom leader is responsible are always well supervised during church activities. The ratio of adults to children (over 5 years of age) or youth must be 2:10 on trips and retreats and 2:14 for on-site activities. California Code of Regulations Ratios: **Infants** (birth to 18 months old) -1:3 **adult-child ratio**, 1:18 **teacher-child ratio**. (B) **Toddlers** (18 months to 36 months old) 1:4 **adult-child ratio**, 1:16 **teacher-child ratio**.
- There should never be an adult or youth volunteer alone with a child or youth. Classroom doors should remain open and unlocked. Doors can be closed if there is a window in the door and two unrelated adults are in the room.
- **Two Adult Policy:** There must be two background-checked unrelated adult mandated reporters accompanying children or youth at all times including while accompanying children to the restroom. Children who are unable to use the restroom without help may be accompanied by one adult while the other adult is in the restroom space. Volunteers do not take children to the restroom. California does not consider volunteers mandated reporters.
- Report evidence of child abuse. If a director, staff leader, volunteer leader, or childcare team member is accused of child abuse, a report will be made immediately to local law enforcement and the child's or youth's parent will be notified by Calvary's Director of Children's Ministries, Director of Youth Ministries or Pastor. Mandated Reporters such as childcare team, clergy and Clerks of Session are required to immediately report to the San Francisco City and County Social Services Agency Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-856-5553 or the Adult Protective Services Elder Abuse Hotline 1-800-814-0009.
- During the ensuing investigation, our program will follow the advice of law enforcement and our attorney regarding suspension or reassignment of the accused staff member to tasks unrelated to the care of children.
- Tell the director and/or adults if a child or youth has been involved in an accident on or off campus.
- Report psychological, financial, or physical abuse, abandonment or isolation, abduction or deprivation of goods or services.
- Get help. Call 911 if emergency.
- Write up an injury report. Director will contact parent(s).
- People working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults will attend annual workshop trainings on sexual harassment/abuse, CPR/First Aid or forums offered by Calvary Presbyterian Church dealing with abuse prevention, safe church policies and procedures, and appropriate boundaries.

### Teenage Workers or Volunteers:

There will be times when teenagers can work with children (paid or volunteer) or youth during ministries and activities at Calvary. These guidelines apply to teenage workers:

- Must be at least age 14 and must be screened as specified. Must be under the supervision of two mandated reporter adults. Must not be left alone with children or take children to the bathroom.

**Covenant of Care Agreement:** Please read through and sign to show that you have understood the policies. You will be provided with a separate acknowledgement authorization form on which you give written permission for Calvary to obtain a background check, as well as an opportunity to request a copy of the background check for your records.

In all of my church relationships I will seek to:

- Treat all children, youth, and adults with respect and consideration.
- Respect everyone's rights to decline being touched or called on in a given environment.
- Maintain an attitude of respect, patience, courtesy, appropriate language, and maturity as a positive role model for children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

In situations in which I relate with children, youth, and vulnerable adults I will seek to:

- Use positive techniques of guidance, such as redirection, specific positive reinforcement, and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, and criticism.
- To have age-appropriate expectations and establish an environment that minimizes the need for discipline.
- Refrain from any behavior that could be considered abusive (physical or mental), sexist or racist.

I understand that abiding by these promises and policy guidelines is important and necessary to my participation with children, youth, and vulnerable adults as part of Calvary Presbyterian Church's ministries. If I fail to abide by them, I realize that I may be reassigned or relieved from my church-related duties at the full discretion of church leadership.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name Printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature (If volunteer is under 18 years of age)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date signed